

St. Mary the Virgin, Sawston



Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Thursday 25 April 2024

at 19.30

in Church

St. Mary the Virgin, Sawston

Election of Churchwardens: 25 April 2024

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (27 April 2023)
3. Election / Appointment of Churchwardens.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting: 25 April 2024

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting (27 April 2023)
3. Election of up to FOUR members of the Parochial Church Council, THREE to serve for THREE years and ONE to serve for TWO years.
4. Electoral Roll report (Janet Martin). The revised roll can be consulted on the notice board in Church.
5. Annual Report for 2023 on the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council and the activities of the parish generally (Mary Dicken)
6. The Financial Statements of the Council for the year ending 31 December 2023 independently examined. (Alexander Henderson). Gift Aid Report (Marian Watson)
7. Appointment of Independent Examiner
8. Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church (Brian Page)
9. Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod (David Bard/Clare Glendinning)
10. Vicar's Report
11. Any other matters of parochial or general Church interest
 - Community Hall Report (Suella Hunting)
 - Craft Group (Tina Casey)
 - Flower Arranging Report (Barbara Hylton)
 - Magazine Committee Report (Dianne Conway)
 - Monday House Group (Sarah Bard)
 - Mothers' Union Report (Janet Martin)
 - Refresh (Rebecca Herrick)
 - Safeguarding (Jennifer Crompton/ Simone Few)
 - Soup and Sandwiches and Tea and Friendship (Mary Richmond)
 - SYG (Paul Whitmell)
 - Tuesday Home Group (Andrew/Joanne Beale)
 - Administration and Social Media (Joanna Johnson)
 - World-wide Mission Committee Report (Susan Lowdell)
 - Night Prayer (Dianne Conway)

Minutes of the meetings in 2023

Election of Churchwardens

This took place on Thursday 27 April 2023 at 19:30 in Church with the vicar, The Reverend Kathryn Waite in the chair.

Thanks were expressed to Suella Hunting and Marian Watson for their work in producing the booklet of reports.

Those present were: Andrew Beale, Christine Casey, Dianne Conway, Mary Dicken, Julian Few, Clare Glendinning, Rebecca Herrick, Alexander Henderson, Katherine Holloway, Barbara Hylton, Josephine John, Susan Lowdell, Janet Martin, Jane Moloney, Rachel Norridge, Brian Page, Canon John Pinder, Wendy Redgewell, Canon Pam Reed, Mary Richmond, Robert Richmond, Corinne Roughley, The Reverend Petra Shakeshaft, Hilary Streeter, Marian Watson and Rosina Whitmell

1 Apologies for absence

These were received from David Bard, Sarah Bard, Jean Green, Peter Green, Anand Pillai, Stephen Roughley and Paul Shakeshaft

2 Minutes of the last meeting (28 April 2022)

The minutes were accepted as a correct record, on the proposition of Suella Hunting seconded by Brian Page.

3 Election of Churchwardens

Corinne Roughley was nominated by Marian Watson and seconded by Josephine John, Marian Watson was nominated by Susan Lowdell and seconded by Suella Hunting.

There being no other nominations the chairman declared that they were duly appointed. She thanked the churchwardens for their tremendous contribution to the life of the Church with especial thanks to Rebecca Herrick who was standing down as churchwarden on being accepted for training for ordination.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

This took place on Thursday 27 April 2023 at 19:30 in Church with the vicar, The Reverend Kathryn Waite in the chair.

Those present were: Andrew Beale, Christine Casey, Dianne Conway, Mary Dicken, Julian Few, Clare Glendinning, Rebecca Herrick, Alexander Henderson, Katherine Holloway, Barbara Hylton, Josephine John, Susan Lowdell, Janet Martin, Jane Moloney, Rachel Norridge, Brian Page, Canon John Pinder, Wendy Redgewell, Canon Pam Reed, Mary Richmond, Robert Richmond, Corinne Roughley, The Reverend Petra Shakeshaft, Hilary Streeter, Marian Watson and Rosina Whitmell

1 Apologies for absence

These were received from David Bard, Sarah Bard, Jean Green, Peter Green, Anand Pillai, Stephen Roughley and Paul Shakeshaft.

2 Minutes of the last meeting (28 April 2022)

The minutes were accepted as a correct record, on the proposition of Brian Page seconded by Marian Watson.

3 Election of up to two members of the Deanery Synod to serve for three years

David Bard nominated by Susan Lowdell and seconded by Andrew Beale
Clare Glendinning nominated by Corinne Roughley and seconded by Rosina Whitmell

As there were no other nominations, they were declared duly elected by the chairman.

4 Election of up to three members of the PCC to serve for three years and two to serve for one year

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
John Crompton	Rebecca Herrick	Marian Watson
Suella Hunting	Barbara Hylton	Anne Little
Susan Lowdell	Marian Watson	Dianne Conway
Josephine John	Mary Richmond	Rebecca Herrick

As there were no other nominations, they were duly declared elected by the chairman., with the first three to serve for three years and Josephine John to serve for one year.

[Secretary's note: Josephine John was later found unable to serve on the PCC under Rule M15 5.]

5 Electoral Roll

Janet Martin presented the revised Electoral Roll, with eighty-six names on it, six being non-resident. Elizabeth Parker and Belinda Westwood were added on the proposition of Suella Hunting, seconded by Robert Richmond. Thanks were expressed to Janet for all her hard work. It was proposed by Jane Moloney and seconded by Brian Page that the Roll be accepted and this was agreed, all voting in favour.

6 Annual Report for 2022

The report was received, with thanks being expressed to the secretary and treasurer. The report was accepted on the proposition of Corinne Roughley, seconded by Andrew Beale, all voting in favour.

7 The Financial Statements of the PCC for year ending 31st December 2022

Robert Richmond reported. The vicar expressed thanks to Robert Richmond and presented him with a voucher from the PCC and wider congregation in appreciation for his eleven years as treasurer. Robert Richmond noted the increase in the ministry share, the income coming from Ward's Charity and transfers to the general fund from some restricted funds which are no longer needed. Over the last eleven years the PCC has moved from paying 40% ministry share to the full share, which is a great reflection on the commitment of the congregation.

Marian Watson proposed and Brian Page seconded that the accounts be accepted and this was agreed, all voting in favour.

Marian Watson's report Gift Aid for 2022 was received. Marian was thanked for all she had done.

8 Appointment of Independent Examiner
This will be made by the next PCC or by the Standing Committee.

9 Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church
Brian Page reported and explained how the quinquennial work will be carried out.

10 Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod
David Bard reported on Deanery Synod proceedings during the year.

11 Vicar's Report

The vicar gave her report. She said we live in challenging and interesting times and highlighted Issues with Living and Loving in Faith and the Blessing of same-sex couples. Deanery Planning continues, and the final plan should be submitted in the next few months. She will need to spend more time at Babraham as they now do not have a churchwarden. The PCC plans to appoint an administrator by the autumn, to take pressure off Marian Watson and Rebecca Herrick. She thanked everyone for their contribution and especially Rebecca Herrick for all she has done. She referred to last year's survey on services – everyone wanted a service at 10.00 and families wanted a range of different provisions so it is hard to please everyone. Since September Sawston has had some of Felicity Parker's time in supporting youth groups. All help is gratefully received and allows more creative work with children. There is much to celebrate with new faces in the congregation and the expansion of the new home group. Her work with the Icknield and Bellbird schools, Orchard House, Bircham House, and with funerals and baptisms continues.

12 Matters of Parochial and General Church Interest

1) Other reports

These were received from:

Bellringers	Samantha Gorman
Community Hall report	Suella Hunting
Craft Group	Christine Casey
Diocesan Synod	David Bard
Flower Arranging	Barbara Hylton
Magazine Committee	Dianne Conway
Mothers' Union report	Janet Martin
Monday House Group	Sarah Bard
Muddy Church	Katherine Holloway
Refresh	Rebecca Herrick
Safeguarding	Jennifer Crompton and Simone Few
Soup and Sandwiches and Tea and Friendship	Mary Richmond
SYG	Paul Whitmell
Tuesday Home Group	Andrew/Joanne Beale
Web Site	Rebecca Herrick
World-wide Mission Committee	Susan Lowdell

Mary Dicken expressed the thanks of everyone to the vicar for all that she does. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:22 with the Grace. Mary Dicken, Secretary to the PCC

Electoral Roll 2023 - 2024

There are 98 names on the Electoral Roll (copy attached), of whom six are not resident in Sawston. The Electoral Roll has been revised again this year in accordance with the Church Revision Rules and changes are as follows:

Added

Sebastian Aplin

Mrs Victoria N Ejike

Mr Victory U Godson

Mrs Judith Harper

Mrs Clare Hulme

Mr Stephen Hulme

Mrs Samantha Marsh

Ana Marcella Rosas

Removed

None

Change of address

None

A copy of the Electoral Roll is retained by the Electoral Roll Officer with names, addresses and date of joining. A copy without addresses is displayed on the notice board immediately inside the Church.

Any queries, amendments or new applications should be sent to the Church Electoral Roll Officer.

Janet M Martin, Church Electoral Roll Officer, 8 April 2024, Janetm.martin@ntlworld.com

Mr	Sebastian	Aplin	Dr	Joe	Hutton
Mr	Andrew	Arthur	Mrs	Barbara	Hylton
Mrs	Charlotte Angharad	Arthur	Mr	Leslie	Hylton
Mrs	Lesley	Ashley	Mr	Eric	Jacobs
Mr	Max	Ashley	Mrs	Josephine Edwina	John
Dr	David Roy	Bard	Mr	Daniel MacDonald	Lewis
Mrs	Sarah Judith Yarrow	Bard	Mrs	Enid May	Lewis
Dr	Andrew	Beale	Mrs	Laura	Lewis
	Joanne	Beale	Mrs	Anne	Little
Mrs	Roslyn Mary	Buchet	Mrs	Judith Margaret	Lovell
Mrs	Clare	Buckingham	Mrs	Anna Jane	Lovewell

Mrs	Caroline	Burgess	Mrs	Susan Mary	Lowdell
Mr	Stephen	Burgess	Mr	Roger	Mansfield
Mrs	Dorothy Evelyn	Butler	Mrs	Samantha	Marsh
Mrs	Amanda Jane	Cain	Mrs	Janet Mary	Martin
Mr	Paul	Cain	Mrs	Janet May	Marven
Mrs	Christine	Casey	Mrs	Shirley June	Mintkewitz
Mrs	Dianne Mary	Conway	Mrs	Anne Jane	Moloney
Mrs	Jennifer	Crompton		Rachel	Norridge
Mr	John David	Crompton	Dr	Cynthia	Okpokiri
Mrs	Isobel	Darling	Mr	Nnadozie	Okpokiri
Mr	John Robert	Darling	Mr	Chidiebere	Osuji
Mrs	Margaret Vera	Davis	Mrs	Eberechi	Osuji
Mrs	Janet Margaret	De Luca	Mr	Andrew Timothy Neville	Overitt
Mrs	Joanne Clare	Deane	Mr	Brian	Page
Mrs	Mary Christine	Dicken	Mrs	Elizabeth Ann	Parker
Mrs	Victoria N.	Ejike		Felicity Ann	Parker
Mr	Olorunfemi	Eletu	Mrs	Ann Patricia	Peacock
Mrs	Avril	Eyres Harvey	Mrs	Jacqueline	Pickett
Mr	Alan Richard	Farrington	Mr	Anand Mark	Pillai
Dr	Julian William	Few	Mrs	Wendy Maria	Redgewell
Mrs	Simone Gabrielle	Few	Mrs	Mary Christina	Richmond
Mrs	Pauline Betty	Finbow	Mr	Robert Geoffrey	Richmond
Mrs	Mun	Flint		Ana Marcela	Rosas
Dr	Megan	Gingell	Dr	Corinne	Roughley
Ms	Clare Patricia	Glendinning	Dr	Stephen David	Roughley
Mr	Victory U.	Godson	Mrs	Mary	Russen
Mrs	Jean Marjorie	Green	Mr	Paul John	Shakeshaft
	Peter John	Green	Mrs	Agnes	Stamper
Mrs	Judith Margaret	Harper	Ms	Avis Dulcie	Stinson
Mrs	Clare	Harris	Mrs	Geraldine	Stott
Mr	John	Harvey	Ms	Hilary Barbara	Streeter
Mrs	Rebecca Ruth	Herrick	Mrs	Dorothy	Ward
Mr	David William	Holloway	Mrs	Marian	Watson

Mrs	Gillian Ann	Holloway	Mrs	Belinda	Westwood
Mrs	Katharine	Holloway	Mr	Paul Edwin	Whitmell
Mr	Christopher Alan	Hooper	Mrs	Rosina Juliet	Whitmell
Mrs	Clare	Hulme	Mrs	Mary	Wilson
Mr	Stephen	Hulme			
Mrs	Suella Mary	Hunting			

2023 Annual Report for the Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Sawston, Cambridge

Aims and Purposes

The PCC of St Mary the Virgin has the responsibility of working with the incumbent, the Reverend Kathryn Waite to promote the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical within the parish of Sawston. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the fabric of the church of St Mary the Virgin, a Grade 1 listed building and of the burial ground. The Parish Council undertakes responsibility for the churchyard. The Community Hall Committee is responsible for maintaining the Community Hall in Church Lane and reports to the PCC.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our Church and to become part of St Mary's Church Family. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and regularly reviews the arrangements for key periods of the Church's year and looks for new ways to involve more people of the parish in worship. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning activities for the year the PCC has complied with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion.

We try to enable people to live out their faith through:

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

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of St Mary's Church.

Achievements and performance

Worship and Prayer

The pattern of services remained the same, with a Eucharist and Open Door with children's provision on most Sundays and an all-together Communion service once a month and on some other occasions. We are fortunate to have the help of The Reverend Petra Shakeshaft and of Canon John Pinder. Fr Will Lyon Tupman joined us on a placement in the

autumn and the Reverend Gordon Harper who has moved to Sawston has PTO. Rebecca Herrick was accepted for ordination training on the Eastern Region Ministry Course and has begun her training with much support from the congregation.

At the close of 2023 there were 90 parishioners on the Electoral Roll, 8 of whom are not resident in the parish. The average weekly attendance in person in Church, counted in October, was 81 adults and 13 children. There were 66 communicants at Christmas. The Christmas services held for the community had c. 1250 worshippers. There were 65 communicants at Easter.

As well as our regular services we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life; in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing; through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world. We held 8 baptisms. 3 members of the congregation were confirmed. There were 2 weddings and we held 6 funeral services in Church and 9 services at crematoria this year.

Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC represent the parish on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structure of the Church. The Deanery Eucharist for Ascension Day was held at Sawston and we welcomed many from our neighbouring parishes.

The Church Building, Grounds and the Community Hall

Normal routine maintenance was carried out under a contract with White Roofing. The work due under the Quinquennial Inspection was carried out by Herringbone Restoration Ltd at a cost of £85 432.48. The Pugin brasses will be restored at a cost of about £12 000. The heating system was out of action for some weeks but was repaired in time for Christmas. The clerestory windows were all cleaned and repaired and can now be opened.

The Church hosted a number of musical events and welcomed audiences who were not necessarily regular worshippers.

David Holloway and his team continued to maintain the burial ground to a high standard. It was decided that in future the regular mowing will be outsourced. The Community Hall has continued to host a wide range of community activities and some social and fund-raising Church functions were held. The church office continued to operate under the very efficient management of Marian Watson. In September we appointed Jo Johnson as the Parish Administrator and her contribution is very welcome.

Pastoral Care

Regular contact with all members of the Church family has been maintained by the vicar and a small team. The vicar's ministry to the bereaved is an important aspect of her work. Visits to the schools and their use of the Church building resumed. Soup and Sandwiches and Tea and Friendship remained well-supported. The Craft Group and Refresh also flourished. Refresh will celebrate their tenth birthday in 2024.

Work with Children and Young People

During the year Junior Church met during the Open Door Service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month during term time. Scripture Union Materials were mainly used. The sessions were led by Felicity and a small band of volunteers. We are in urgent need of one or two more people who might be prepared to help lead a session from time to time.

For children in school years 5-8 (ages 10-13) we have run a group at 5.30pm on the 2nd and

4th Sundays on the hall. The children and young people include some from Sawston Free Church as well as Babraham. We have used the Energize resources produced by Urban Saints. We play games, read the Bible, watch film clips, do crafts and eat a lot of pizza! These sessions were led by Kathryn and Felicity. Felicity stepped down from being the YouthInc Youth worker in September 2023, but has continued to help out with both Junior Church and Youth Work for which we are very grateful. For older teenagers in year 9+ a very small group has also been meeting once or twice a month at 7.15pm in the Hall on a 2nd and/or 4th Sunday to do some Bible study and discuss faith and life issues.

Kathryn Waite, inserted April 2024

Mission and evangelism

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith. The PCC has continued to support a number of charities engaged in mission and several fund-raising events have been held. We have maintained our support of the Leprosy Mission's hospital at Premananda, the Children's Society, Christian Aid, the Mission to Seafarers and Save the Children, along with Water Aid, SOS Children's Villages, the Mission Aviation Foundation and Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Nationwide Association of Blood Bikes.

We showed the Coronation of King Charles III on a big screen in Church and had a stall at the Coronation Fête.

We co-operated with The Royal British Legion for Remembrance Sunday. The Deputy Lieutenant, Jennifer Crompton of Sawston Hall, was present.

Our parish magazine, published quarterly, is free of charge and keeps our parishioners informed of all the important matters affecting our Church and includes articles which help to develop our knowledge of and trust in Jesus. We also contribute to *Sawston Scene*, the village magazine.

Ecumenical Relationships

The vicar and the Reverend Phil Nevard of Sawston Free Church have co-operated on a number of projects and all three ministers officiated at the Remembrance Day service.

Financial Review

A significant deficit has been seen in 2023, totaling £35k before non-cash items are considered.

This leaves a residual deficit of c.£17k from the normal activities of the church.

The unrestricted income of £60k in 2023 is only just sufficient to cover the Ministry Share, also £60k.

Not all of this is a 'permanent' deficit. The net £18k of costs arising from the 2023 Quinquennial works will be reclaimed from HMRC in 2024 as this relates to VAT recoverable on the works.

This means that all other costs of maintaining the church and providing worship in 2023 are covered from reserves. This is not sustainable in the long term as these reserves will be quickly eroded.

Ward's Charity will continue to provide support for specific items of expenditure, for example the donations received in 2023 toward the cost of the quinquennial works.

This support however cannot be relied upon to cover all the costs of the church and so St Mary's should continue exploring ways to generate additional income in 2024.

Ally Henderson, inserted April 2024

Volunteers

We should like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard to make our Church a lively and supportive community. This includes virtually all Church members, so we cannot mention individuals, but the contribution made by everyone is much appreciated. The Safer Recruitment process is enabling us to keep a closer contact with all volunteers and to support them in their ministries.

Structure, governance and management

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent, the associate priest, the churchwardens and the elected representatives to the Deanery Synod and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the Church. All those who attend our services regularly are encouraged to register on the electoral roll.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the parish, including deciding how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

The PCC met six times in 2023 with an average attendance of 85%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of committees, each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These committees, detailed below, are all responsible to the PCC and report back to it regularly. This year the committees have all continued to submit written reports in advance of PCC meetings which has meant that discussions are not needlessly repeated, and the business carried out more effectively.

Standing Committee

This is the only committee which the PCC is required to appoint. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC. It also oversees the financial affairs of the PCC.

Fabric Committee

This is responsible for ensuring the good repair and maintenance of the church, churchyard and the burial ground.

World-wide Mission Committee

This maintains contact with missionary societies and co-ordinates giving to groups outside the parish and ensures information about their activities is readily available. It arranges events to raise funds and as social occasions.

Magazine Committee

This is responsible for producing and distributing a quarterly magazine, published on the first Sundays in March, June, September, and December.

Administrative information

The Church of St Mary the Virgin is situated in Church Lane. It is in the Deanery of Granta and the Diocese of Ely within the Church of England

All correspondence should be sent to: The New Vicarage
Church Lane
Sawston, Cambridge, CB22 3JR

The PCC of St. Mary the Virgin, Sawston is a charity exempted from registration with the Charity Commission.

Bankers	Barclays, Saffron Walden, Essex
	Lloyds, Cattle Market, Cambridge
Independent Examiner	Thomas Quinn, High Street, Sawston
Architect	Ashley Courtney, Roseford Road, Cambridge

PCC members who served during 2021 are:

Vicar	The Reverend Kathryn Waite (chairman)
Associate Priest	The Reverend Petra Shakeshaft
Churchwardens	Rebecca Herrick (to the APCM) and Marian Watson (vice-chairmen to the APCM)
	Corinne Roughley (vice-chairman from the APCM)
Synod Representatives	David Bard and Clare Glendinning (from May 15)

Elected members were: Andrew Beale, Dianne Conway, John Crompton, Mary Dicken, Suella Hunting, Susan Lowdell, and Hilary Streeter.

The PCC appointed Alexander Henderson as treasurer, Mary Dicken as secretary, Janet Martin as Electoral Roll Officer and Marian Watson as Gift Aid Officer. Alexander Henderson is not a member of the PCC.

The PCC appointed Jennifer Crompton and Simone Few as Safeguarding Officers and they put in training measures to ensure compliance with the latest guidance. The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have regard to the House of Bishops' Guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Compiled by Mary Dicken, Corinne Roughley and Alexander Henderson to reflect the position on 31 December 2023.

Approved by the PCC on 21 March 2024.

Signed on their behalf by Kathryn Waite, chairman.

The Financial Statements of the Council for the year ending 31st December 2023

See separate report.

Gift Aid Report

The majority of donations to the church are done either by Parish Giving Scheme, Standing Order via Barclays Bank, Planned Giving (i.e weekly envelopes) and Annual Donation

At December 2023

15 people donate through the Parish Giving Scheme: 10 of which are Gift Aided

13 donations are received via Standing Order: 10 of which are Gift Aided

7 people donate using weekly envelopes: 5 of which are Gift Aided

Parish Giving Scheme donations for 2023 were £18498.55 this includes Gift Aid of £3338.51.

Gift Aid returns are claimed quarterly throughout the year.

The total tax reclaimed over the three quarters of 2023 is as follows:

Q1 (01.01.23-06.04.23) GASDS	£1791.94 including £262.69
Q2 (07.04.23-30.06.23) GASDS	£880.48 including £257.73
Q3 (01.07.23-30.09.23) GASDS	£859.15 including £207.65
Q4 (01.10.23-31.12.23)	

No claim was made as information was not received in time. This will be claimed at the end of March with quarter 1 of 2024.

The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) has risen slightly during 2023. Donations made through this scheme use a Direct Debit, this can be made on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. PGS collect regular donations for the parish on the 1st of the month and claims Gift Aid entitlement on your behalf. Pays Gift Aid into the PCC account once it is received from HMRC usually received in our bank account on the 10th of the month. Undertakes a basic level of donor care. Provides the option for donors to increase donations annually with inflation. Information packs with forms are available on the table at the back of church. There is also the option to remain anonymous if you wish. For up to date information please take a look at their website www.parishgiving.org.uk or telephone 0333 002 1260.

There are Standing Order forms available in church if you wish to donate via the bank and weekly envelopes are also available. If you can Gift your donations there are forms available in church. Once completed please return them in the envelopes provided.

It is the responsibility of those signing Gift Aid Declarations to inform The Gift Aid/Recording Officer in writing, as soon as possible if you circumstance change and you can no longer Gift Aid, in order that records are amended and kept up to date as possible. The GA/Recording Officer should also be notified of any change of name/address.

Marian Watson, Gift Aid/Recording Officer, March 2024

SAWSTON PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT MARY, 2024 FABRIC COMMITTEE REPORT

There have been three Fabric Committee meetings held in the church since the last AGM. Kathryn has taken over as chair since Brian's MND diagnosis.

2023 Quinquennial Works

Site works commenced in March 2023 with completion being achieved in September 2023. Following completion problems with the plinth render have been found that need to be rectified during the rectification period. Discussions are taking place between the inspecting architect, the contractor and David Holloway from the fabric committee on the best way to proceed.

Additional works to complete repairs to the graveyard boundary wall are being prepared by the inspecting architect. It is hoped these works will be completed this year together with the rectification works to the north aisle plinth.

South Aisle Door Access

Works completed.

Burial Ground

Grass cutting sessions are still ongoing with our band of volunteers, who do a sterling job, with Lilleys of Sawston Landscaping.

The boundary wall repairs to the 'closed' churchyard are still being reviewed by the Parish Council. No works have been carried out to date.

Pugin Brasses

Skillington Workshop have been to site and completed the survey work, but their report is still awaited. The report proposals will need to be agreed by the DAC prior to works commencing. The anticipated project cost is in the order of £12,000, excluding VAT, for the two Huddleston brasses.

Chancel windows

Terry Lankester has submitted a quotation to clean the glazing to all chancel windows, and rebed some of the loose panels. The quotation has been accepted and works are anticipated to commence within the next few weeks.

Church Re-ordering

No further progress.

Disposal of the Old Pulpit

The Faculty, to dispose of the redundant pulpit, has been withdrawn as its' location is not known.

Graveyard Trees

Tree surgery, following approval by the SCDC conservation office and the Diocesan Advisory Committee, has recently been completed.

Fabric Committee Members

David Bard, John Crompton, Mary Dicken, Suella Hunting, David Holloway, Brian Page, Paul Shakeshaft, Rev Kathryn Waite and Marian Watson.

Brian Page

Granta Deanery Synod Report to St. Mary's APCM, April 2024

Granta Deanery Synod held three main meetings between April 2023 and April 2024: Tuesday 12th July, 2023 (St. Andrew's Church, West Wrattling), 30th November 2023 (St. Mary's Church, Sawston), Thursday 14th March 2024 (All Saints' Church, Harston).

At the July meeting, the Rev. Mandy Flaherty, Development Officer for Schools Mission, Ely Diocese and Vicar of Harston, Hauxton and Newton, gave a talk entitled 'Schools as part of our mission plan', focussing on the role that the Church can take in engaging with all schools. There are 6 Church schools in the Deanery (Balsham, Linton, Duxford, Castle Camps, Whittlesford, and Great Shelford) and 14 non-Church schools. The Diocese has 85 Church Schools of which 39 are in the multi-academy trust (MAT). The strategy from the Diocese is to set up Parish School Covenants and this is being piloted in 3 schools. Mandy suggested that one way in which schools could become more connected to their local communities was by the development of covenants by which schools and local

communities would commit to provide mutual support. Historically, many church schools had been founded to provide education for all at a time when most secular schools charged fees which placed them beyond the means of many. This ethos of being there to serve the whole community was still relevant and could be re-imagined in a modern context. In order to support this initiative, the Diocese had instituted a training programme for school chaplains. There is a plan to roll out Chaplaincies in schools.

A report on the Deanery Finances was presented. It was pointed out that the expenses of running the Deanery were very modest. The Deanery also supported YouthInc, mainly from the proceeds of the annual Deanery Fair. The main function of the Deanery budget was to meet the Ministry Share. During 2022, there had been a shortfall and the Deanery had therefore not received to rebate of £12,500. It was pointed out that if the annual shortfall was less than this figure, it was in the interest of the Deanery to make up the shortfall from reserves and to claim the rebate.

A report was received of the proceedings of the Diocesan Synod meeting on 14th June. A detailed financial statement had been presented which allayed the concerns which had been raised at the previous Deanery Synod meeting. The main business of the Diocesan Synod had been to sign off the 2022 Annal Report which contained *inter alia* the financial details which had been requested at the previous Deanery meeting. The Diocesan Annual Report is published on the Diocesan website and can be downloaded from: <https://www.elydiocese.org/about/governance/board-of-finance/annual-reports/>

The meeting had also received a presentation and discussion piece from the Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech on *Principles and Practice of Stipendiary Clergy Deployment* intended to inform the deanery development planning process.

The meeting also received a report of the recent General Synod meeting (7th – 11th July, 2023). The details of this meeting can be accessed at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/general-synod/agendas-papers/general-synod-july-2023>

Jenny Duke presented a report on YOUTHINC. Events included ‘Summerfest’, a joint youth event for ages 8+ held on 16th July, and a music event with Chip Kendall for ages 9+ to be held on 10th November, 2023 at Duxford Community Centre. In addition, new groups for Year 5 pupils were being planned in Sawston and Hinkledux and the after-school drop -in café at Whittlesford URC. More details can be accessed from: <https://youthincsouthcambbs.wordpress.com/>

The future of the annual Deanery Fair was discussed. It had become clear that the traditional format was becoming unviable, and a replacement was needed. Jenny Duke suggested that one possibility might be to run a ‘Come and Sing’ event and it was agreed to pursue the idea.

At the November meeting, Revd Mark Rodell, Development Officer for Learning, Ely Diocese gave a talk entitled ‘Open Christian Learning’. Please see [Home | OCL \(anglican.org\)](https://www.anglican.org) which is a portal of learning material.

The Deanery Finance Report, Deanery Share 2023 update and Ministry Share for 2024 were circulated prior to the meeting. The total balance was £31,159.12 which was divided between 3 funds: Deanery Development Fund (£7387.94), Parish Grant Fund (£8479.35) and Parish Loan Fund (£15291.83). As at the end of October, 4 Churches were behind in the payment of their Share; 3 would be able to meet the full share. If the Deanery can meet the full Share then there is a rebate of 2.5%, equivalent to £11,033.13.

Revd Michael Wilcockson, Rural Dean of Granta Deanery, spoke about the process of completing the Deanery Development Plan, drawing out the main themes of the DDP and the Deanery aspirations.

Amendments to the plan were proposed and agreed unanimously including: that Pampisford would not be joining with Whittlesford as part of any Deanery future plans, the addition of references to church leaders and supporting biblical references and an amendment to the Five Year Vision, Mission and Outreach part of the Five year Vision. There was discussion concerning a proposal to consider reorganisation of some benefices “especially large multi-parish benefices and parishes which are very small, such benefices and parishes to be finalised by the lay representatives group and the Rural Dean and reported to the Deanery Synod meeting held next after 30 November 2023 for approval.” Andrew Gore responded that it was for benefices or parishes to put forward proposals for their future with support from the Diocese and the Deanery, Babraham was at risk, and there was concern regarding the size of the Granta Vale Benefice. The proposed amendment was withdrawn subject to the discussion being recorded in the minutes.

There was an update on Deanery matters including: YouthInc: Jenny Duke - parishes were currently running their own youth groups. Hinkledux and Whittlesford parishes were working together. Recruitment for a part-time worker was ongoing with our partner Youth for Christ. YouthInc were joining up with Stapleford and Shelford Youth Initiative (SSYI).

At the March meeting, there was a Lent Talk and Discussion: ‘The Hardest Problem: God, Evil and Suffering’ by Rupert Shortt, author and Research Associate at the Von Hugel Institute, St Edmund’s College, Cambridge.

The Deanery Finance Report, Deanery Share 2023 payment summary and Rebate due were circulated prior to the meeting. The 2023 Ministry Share was met in full entitling the Deanery to 2.5% rebate which will be shared back to the parishes in proportion with the amount each has paid. The total balance was £31,159.12, divided between 3 funds: Deanery Development Fund (£7387.94), Parish Grant Fund (£8479.35) and Parish Loan Fund (£17,064).

A report from the General Synod meeting of 23-27 February 2024 was presented and can be accessed at [business-done-feb-2024.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](#).

On Deanery matters, in partnership with Cambridge Youth For Christ Youthinc was continuing the search to recruit someone to work with our parish churches, in particular to enable older primary school children to build upon their experiences in Sunday school. Meanwhile local churches are joining to share resources to plan events.

Unfortunately, the Deanery Event Come and Sing 10 February 2024 2-5pm at Ickleton was cancelled due to lack of support, but it was hoped that this would be re-scheduled, date tbc. As the Deanery Fairs in the past have raised funds for the YouthInc worker, it was proposed that the next Synod meeting should consider supporting YouthInc with Deanery Funds.

The Deanery Ascension Day Service would be on 9 May 2024, Balsham Church, Preacher Cathy Watts, Warden of Readers, Ely Diocese.

It was reported that during the period of 2016-2022 (removing 2 years for the pandemic), 7 churches in Granta Deanery have grown their congregations. In Ely Diocese, 134 churches have a reduced congregation, 136 remain static and 60 churches have grown.

Rosey Feuill spoke about a quiet afternoon on the 25 May 2024 and would like churches to promote widely.

Clare Glendinning, April 2024

Community Hall Report March 2022 – March 2023

It is good to report that the Hall continues to be well used - - by both the Community (12 regular weekly bookings and by St Mary's (5 bookings each month). Those figures exclude our many one-off events – such as fund-raising jumble sales, children's parties, Church lunches etc. Of course the Church Office and Hall Meeting Room are also part of the Hall with the latter being used for various Committee meetings.

Maintenance

Routine maintenance has continued as necessary with occasional problems being dealt with as the need arose i.e. window handles, faulty lighting, replacement toilet lock (after wedding guest jammed it and then climbed out!). We tried hard to replace the carpet used for children's activities but it proved impossible to find a new one that would roll up satisfactorily so we compromised by buying a cheap thin one to add as an extra layer.

During the year Elliot painted the fences and sheds for us with Barn Paint – and everyone is pleased with how smart they now look. We hope this effect will last.

Soup and Sandwiches had a kitchen inspection in January 2024 (which passed with 5/5). To help achieve this we replaced the kitchen fridge and tidied the kitchen area.

We are especially grateful to John P for his continued dedication to keeping the hedge and flowerbed looking so good, to Elliot for finding time to mow the grass (amongst all his other activities) and to Stephen for his continued hard work as our cleaner. We are also very grateful for the efforts of several others who work quietly behind the scenes to keep the Hall looking good.

Accounts

The Hall accounts are in the Appendix. Our profit for 2023 was £11,578.16 (c.f. £7,540.59 in 2022). This is the amount that historically would be transferred to the PCC as the excess over our base level of £9,000. I should point out that we also paid the PCC our customary £500/quarter throughout the year but did not pay our share of the Church and Hall insurance costs. Most Regular User hire fees had been increased by £5 session in September 2022 and were left unchanged in 2023.

Latest Update

There have been changes amongst our Regular Users but bookings are very healthy. As always we try to maintain a mixed balance of activities amongst our Users and are happy to reduce fees to help starter groups get established.

Once again thanks are due to all the Hall Committee members for the diligent work they put into ensuring the smooth running of the Hall. Very special thanks to Jeanette, our wonderfully helpful Bookings Secretary, who efficiently keeps tabs on everything and keeps the bookings coming in!

We were sorry to lose Les Hylton from the Committee last summer and hugely sorry when Gerry Holloway resigned as Treasurer early this year. Gerry has been a tower of strength since becoming Treasurer eleven years ago and we were delighted to hold a small soiree to thank him for his hard work. The good news is that George Haddad volunteered to become our new Treasurer (GH replacing GH!) and has already found his feet. Thank you very much George, we are delighted to welcome you and Sarah to the team.

We are a small but happy team who run the Hall for St Mary's but should be delighted to hear from anyone else who might like to get involved. There are always jobs to do. We welcome ideas and suggestions to help us continue running the Hall successfully - this is St Mary's outreach in its widest sense.

Sue Hunting, 7 April 2024

St Mary's Community Hall Management Committee:

Jeanette Harvey (Booking Secretary), George Haddad (Treasurer – from February 2024)
Gerry Holloway (Treasurer – until February 2024), Katy Holloway, Suella Hunting
(Chairman), Les Hylton (until June 2023), Jane Moloney, John Poulter, Hilary Streeter
(Minutes Secretary)

St. Mary's Craft Group Report for the annual PCC meeting May 2023 to April 2024

The Craft Group has seen another very successful and busy year and thankfully continues to grow and provide a warm, friendly atmosphere when we meet.

There are twenty five members who attend regularly and one or two who come when they can - largely governed by health issues - so it is especially good to be able to welcome them when they are able to join us.

We have been able to have a Craft Stall at the Mission Committee coffee mornings which has been possible because of the donations of craft items from the members. I am, as always, very grateful to them for their generosity, especially as I know a lot of them donate to various charities as well.

Over the last year it has been good to welcome visitors, who are not members, to bring along a wonderful array of items they have made. I have also encouraged our own members to show examples of their craft work that they have done either recently or some time ago, as this is a good opportunity for all to see the wide range of skills among the members.

Our visitors have included Anita and Liz who brought some of their "Felting" work and talked about how the craft was done and what tools are used. My sister-in-law, Sandy Stopher, brought a huge array of all the various crafts she has learned, together with pictures of items she has made for other people over the years, including their daughters and grandchildren.

In preparation for Christmas, at our October meeting, Geraldine Stott very kindly offered to run a workshop for members to make a hand sewn Christmas decoration. Geraldine was able to supply Christmas material where needed and guided the members through how to make this beautiful decoration. There was a lot of work involved so the session was continued at our November meeting.

In an attempt to do something different for our Christmas meeting in December I was able to arrange for Nigel Fabb to come along and entertain us during the afternoon. Having heard Nigel perform at a W.I. meeting I felt sure that members would enjoy hearing him sing and play his guitar. Nigel has a wonderful sense of humour which he puts to good use in writing his own words to very familiar songs - and we were not disappointed. There was a great deal of laughter and enjoyment and he even managed to persuade three members to accompany him for one of his songs, on a drum, bells and harmonica. It made a wonderful change from the usual quiz! As always, every member receives a Christmas card and small gift.

At our January meeting Margaret, one of our members, brought along all the bead work that she has done in past years. There was a huge variety of jewellery and Christmas decorations and she also brought along quilting and other items that she has made.

Our Easter meeting at the end of March was marked with the usual Hot Cross Buns for all, and each member was given an Easter card and small chocolate gift.

There is always a great deal of sharing of knowledge and giving help and advice with the variety of skills that the members possess, and they are always willing to help anyone with encouragement and advice when needed.

Just before Christmas the group was able to make a donation to St. Mary's Refresh - Mother and Baby/Toddler group. The donation was used to purchase a Christmas book for each child and some new toys for the children to play with at the meetings. On behalf of Refresh, we received a lovely thank you letter from Becca Herrick.

This donation was made possible by the members paying a voluntary £1.00 at every meeting and although I do encourage members to take any craft items that have been given to the group, many choose to make a small donation, so this also boosts club funds. One craft donation was three large knitted dolls which were given to St. Mary's Refresh group for the children to play with.

My thanks, as always, goes to Jane Maloney for continuing to help with setting up and putting tables and chairs away, my thanks also to my "assistants" Dorothy Ward and Geraldine Stott and to all the members for so loyally supporting the group.

We look forward to another year of meetings and new members, or the occasional visitor, will always be most welcome.

Tina Casey, Craft Group Leader

Flower Arranging Report

Throughout the previous year, ladies of the Flower Team have continued to provide floral arrangements in church for festivals and special events. Their enthusiasm, commitment and generosity continues to grow and it is lovely to see a strong bond of friendship and support within the team.

The team currently consists of 13 regular members who provide floral displays throughout the year and 3 ladies who are stepping back, for the time being. They know they will be welcomed back anytime should they decide to do so. Several ladies now work in 'pairs' and arrange High Altar flowers – it is great to see the flower rota being signed up! We also welcomed a new member to our team, who just happens to also be our youngest member – Elizabeth Herrick. Elizabeth arranges flowers on the windowsill in the children's area, has lots of ideas and is very enthusiastic and capable. Thank you Elizabeth for lowering the average age of the team!! In April of last year, we heard of the death of one of our long standing flower ladies; Margaret Grey. Margaret had arranged flowers in St. Mary's for many years taking over from her sister Rene Phillips. Margaret loved being involved with flowers and very much appreciated the friendship and love she felt the team gave her.

As well the usual festivals celebrated throughout the year, the team were also involved once again in making up 80 Mothering Sunday posies but perhaps the most memorable event the team were involved in was the Coronation in May 2023 of King Charles III. The displays were made up of red, white and blue flowers and gave a very appropriate backdrop for the live screening in church of the actual coronation. We all had a wonderful time staging the arrangements, and it was a demonstration of the support, encouragement and friendship that exists within the team.

Finally, 'thank-you' to all who give donations towards church flowers throughout the year, to Kathryn who always finds time to pop in and see the team at work and of course to the ladies of the flower team who continue to be enthusiastic and willing as well as being incredibly generous with their giving and their time.

Barbara Hylton, March 2024

Magazine Committee Annual Report for 2023

Four editions of St Mary's Church Magazine 'Communicate' were published in 2023: in March, June, September and November. The magazine is sent out as a PDF file and put on the church website. We are now producing 200 copies in March, June and September and 250 copies in December to give out at Carol Services.

We are up to date with our invoice payments for 2023. The money from our advertisers allows us to give the magazine away free of charge and to have a few colour pages. We have lost two advertisers this year but have added a couple more advertisers this year which means that even with rising costs of paper and printing, we are currently just about covering our costs. The printer, Plumridge of Linton, tries really hard to source the best deals for paper. Advertising fees have remained the same for more than 6 years now. Currently we have one advertising space to fill. Hopefully we will be able to continue to cover our costs in 2024.

The committee communicates via email and Dropbox. Rachel Norridge receives the original copy for each edition and does an initial proof read and corrections before Dianne Conway puts the magazine together. Rosie Whitmell designs the front cover, encourages folk to contribute to the coffee and chat item. Sadly there have been no contributions for the Recipe page. Contributions for that are most welcome! Mary Dicken contributes the regular 'From the Past' pages and organises the tributes to those church members who have died. Rachel proof reads the draft copy before Dianne corrects the copy and sends it to the printer. Rachel also contacts our advertisers in June asking them to check their advert and re subscribe for the September edition.

Thank you to everyone who contributes material for the magazine and to all those who deliver printed magazines to their friends and neighbours.

We welcome new items, ideas and photographs of events. However, items submitted after the editorial date may not be included. So please make sure your contributions arrive by the editorial date. Thank you.

The next issue of 'Communicate' will be published on 2nd June 2024. The deadline for contributions is Sunday 12th May 2024.

Dianne Conway on behalf of the magazine committee.

The Monday House Group report to the APCM for April 2023-March 24

Monday House Group has had another very good year of Bible Study/fellowship.

We began this year with *The Lectio Course*, which explored the ancient practice of Lectio Divina. This was followed by two sessions of practising Lectio Divina with passages chosen by group members.

After this we embarked on a course called *Think, Live, Speak: Science and Christianity*, produced by the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion. This was very interesting and showed that science and religion are really not as irreconcilable as is often thought.

During Advent we used a booklet by Amy Scott Robinson: *They Sang*, an Advent Course based on the four songs in the Christmas story – Zechariah’s song (the Benedictus), Mary’s song (the Magnificat), the song of the angels (Gloria in Excelsis), and Simeon’s song (the Nunc Dimitis).

After Christmas we began to study the Gospel of John, using a study book in the *For Everyone* series by Tom Wright. This is proving very thought-provoking and I think it would be true to say that we are all enjoying it.

We have been pleased to welcome Will, our curate for six months, to the group, and enjoyed teasing him – just a little bit – about his stag night! We all wish him and Laura well in their new life together.

Monday House Group meetings have largely continued on Zoom this year, as it is the preferred option for several members of the group. It has not inhibited discussion, and we did have two face-to-face social evenings at Rosie Whitmell’s, which were also shared on Zoom for those who could not attend in person.

I am withdrawing as co-ordinator of the group now, and Rosie will be taking on this role. I will take with me many happy memories of the evenings of fellowship I have spent with the group over the years, and am grateful for all I have learnt alongside them.

I am sure the rest of the group will join me in wishing Rosie every blessing in her new role.

House groups offer a unique opportunity to explore faith in fellowship with other members of our church family. It is here that we can build lasting friendships and appreciate the wisdom, insight and support of those around us. We always welcome new faces to the group, and are happy for people to attend on a “drop in” basis if they are not able to make a regular commitment.

If you would like to know more about the group email the church office on office@stmaryssawston.org.uk or speak to Rosie in church.

Sally Bard, March 2024

Sawston Branch of the Mothers’ Union - Report to the St Mary the Virgin, Sawston Annual Parochial Church Meeting 25 April 2024

The Sawston branch of the Mothers’ Union is part of Granta Deanery and meets each month for prayer, fellowship, and talks on a variety of subjects. Members continue to support the wider work of the Mothers’ Union work throughout the UK and in 84 countries worldwide, and its campaigns against gender-based violence, poverty and injustice.

We also support the work of our Church locally, including: Refresh, jumble sales, flowers for Mothering Sunday, and refreshments following services. One of our members sends a card to families on baptism anniversaries. We have a popular summer tea at the Mary Challis Garden.

We currently have 22 members and officers, confirmed at the Annual General Meeting on 6 February 2024, are as follows:

Branch Lead/Secretary:
Branch Treasurer:

Janet Martin
Margaret Davis

At this meeting we agreed our annual donations to Away From it All Holidays and the Mothers' Union Worldwide Fund.

We have close links with Ely Diocese and with other local branches in the Deanery and have been pleased to welcome representatives at our meetings. This year we hosted the annual Deanery Advent Service at St Mary's, with worship led by the Reverend Kathryn Waite.

We also hosted the Sawston World Day of Prayer Service, which this year was prepared by the Christian women of Palestine. Around 40 people attended from the churches in Sawston, and we had excellent feedback about the readings, prayers and music. Most people stayed for tea afterwards and £204.15 was raised in the collection for World Day of Prayer. The 2025 service will be prepared by women of the Cook Islands and will be held on Friday 7 March 2025 at the Free Church, Sawston.

Janet Martin, Branch Lead, 25 April 2024

Refresh – Report to the APCM

Refresh is our group for parents and carers and their preschool babies and children. We run every Monday morning (during term-time) at St Mary's, and the group continues to grow and thrive with over 25 "families" attending each week. We offer free-play with many different toys, as well as play-doh and a themed craft. We continue to stick to the original ethos of Refresh – to be a place of refreshment to the parents and carers who join us, offering a cuppa, cake (usually deliciously homemade by our very own star-bakers) and when needed, a listening ear. This Easter as we celebrated 10 years of Refresh, and we remembered the countless numbers of adults and children we have welcomed through our doors over the years. What a joy to still be able to offer this service to our community and to continue to share God's wonderful love with them!

Each week we pause mid-session for our well-loved story and song time. The stories have followed different themes over the year, including hearing about different bible heroes and heroines, as well as the miracles Jesus performed and the stories he told. And of course, listening to the stories of Easter and Christmas. We have a lot of fun singing the songs together, and it's such a joy to see the children joining in enthusiastically with songs like "Jesus love is very wonderful" and "Our God is a great big God" alongside traditional nursery rhymes.

We continue to run a clothes recycling bank at Refresh, where people can bring good condition clothes for under-fours along, and take away any that would be useful to them. We hope this will go some way to helping parents, as well as doing something to help our planet. We also advertise the work of Baby Bundles, for local parents in need.

One of the huge privileges of running Refresh is seeing the joy it brings to parents and children alike. Some parents tell us how their children always want to come in when they walk past the church, as they hope Refresh will be on! Many have commented on the sense of peace it brings to them as they begin the week and how they enjoy the warm welcome that we offer. A recent attendee commented that the group "feels like home"! It is a real blessing to see the children grow and thrive over the months and to get to know so many people from our village and beyond.

Of course, none of this would happen without our faithful band of volunteers who turn up every week – Mary Richmond, Jose John and Barbara Hylton, you are all wonderful! Also a thank you to our new recruits, Anna and Sandra, and for the time they are willing to commit. Thank you too to Anne Little who has so faithfully baked and helped over the years. Thank you also to everyone who has helped make Refresh possible over the last 10 years – the bakers, the story-tellers, the chair movers, the listeners, the tea-makers, the craft creators and the pray-ers. We thank God that after ten years Refresh is still growing from strength to strength and continuing to bless families throughout the local villages.

Rebecca Herrick, March 2024

Safeguarding

Work continues on updating the new Safeguarding Hub with everyone's details which, in future, will remind people of when training or DBS checks will need renewal. Everyone with a role in church will be contacted to review of what's been done and what needs doing. Simone is currently taking a break from safeguarding duties having recently had a baby, however, if anyone has any safeguarding concerns they should contact our other PSO Jennifer Crompton or Kathryn.

Simone Few / Kathryn Waite, April 2024

Soup and Sandwiches / Tea and Friendship Report for the PCC – 25th April 2024

Soup and Sandwiches continues to meet on the second Thursday of each month at 12.30pm in the Community Hall while Tea and Friendship meets on the first Thursday of each month at 2pm in the Community Hall.

We have eleven helpers and cooks in total although not all are present at every session. Three helpers who regularly make soup at home hold the Food Hygiene and Safety Level 2 – Catering certificate and this will be due for renewal in Spring 2025. In January 2024 we were inspected by South Cambridgeshire District Council and were awarded a 5 star Food Hygiene rating. Those helpers who are in regular contact with the public hold up-to-date DBS certificates and have undertaken the relevant Church of England safeguarding training. We are grateful to several of our guests who are happy to help out on an occasional, informal basis if we are short-staffed.

There is no charge for attending either Soup and Sandwiches or Tea and Friendship and these events are not intended to be fund-raisers. However, we do invite voluntary donations and our guests are very generous. In addition, our volunteers often donate ingredients and the Church Hall Committee kindly gives us the use of the hall free of charge. Therefore, after taking a modest amount in expenses, there are sufficient funds to make donations to St Mary's and St Peter's Churches and to John Huntingdon's Charity. In the year from April 2023 to March 2024, donations have been made as follows:

£406.31 to St Peter's

£305.22 to St Mary's

£265.29 to John Huntingdon's Charity

We are very grateful to those members of the Church family who have made cakes for Soup and Sandwiches over the last year and to the Sawston Co-op which donates £15 a month for us to spend on cake in store.

The primary aim of both these groups is to enable anybody in Sawston and the surrounding area to get together in a warm and friendly environment. At Soup and Sandwiches we provide a simple lunch consisting of home-made soup, filled rolls, cake and hot drinks. At

Tea and Friendship we provide hot drinks and biscuits and the opportunity to talk together and join in some games. We are very grateful to those guests who have taken the lead in organising some games which the whole group can enjoy together. Eric Jacobs regularly runs “playing card Bingo” and David Wilkinson organises “giant dominoes”.

The number of attendees at both groups varies, and estimating quantities for catering can be a challenge. At Soup and Sandwiches we regularly have over 35 guests although we have had as many as 48. Tea and Friendship is a smaller group with anywhere between 12 and 20 guests. We frequently welcome new attendees and both groups are advertised at Granta Medical Practices by the Social Navigators.

In December 2023 we were very pleased that the Bellbird School once again accepted our invitation to bring children to sing Christmas songs and carols at both Soup and Sandwiches and Tea and Friendship. This was very popular with our guests and it was a joy to bring the different age groups together. We were very grateful to the Bellbird teachers for accommodating us at this busy time of year.

Both groups reach out across the local community. Thanks are due to all the helpers and cooks for their hard work and commitment, to our lovely, friendly guests who welcome newcomers and give us kind words of appreciation and encouragement, and to the Church family as a whole who support us with their prayers.

Mary Richmond on behalf of the Soup and Sandwiches Team



CHURCH AGM REPORT – SAWSTON YOUTH GROUP

This report covers the year from April 2023 to April 2024.

This year has had its ups and downs for the group.

The biggest down is that we did not manage to keep many young people who moved from year 6 to year 7 – leaving Junior school and starting at SVC. Out of 14 regular members in this age group we only kept 2. This meant that instead of starting in Sept 2023 with an anticipated group strength of 66 we started with 51 which I am pleased to say we have managed to retain. We have 21 registered leaders who attend most weeks.

We held two camps in the year – one for Juniors (school years 3 to 6) at the Vauxhaul Christian Centre in May 2023 and an adventure camp for the older group (school years 9 to 11) at Pateley Bridge in the Yorkshire Dales in August 2023.

Both were successful and well attended.

Many leaders undertook safeguarding training in April 2023 with external providers.

We presently have 10 young people working for their Bronze DofE Award with a test expedition after Easter 2024. We hope to move these young people onto the Silver Award and start a new Bronze group in September 2024.

Our weekly programme, both at the Marven Centre and on the SVC fields in the summer, has proved challenging and interesting with good numbers most weeks.

Our programme has included an Enrolment and Carol Service at church (both well attended) a short course led by Kathryn on Christianity Explored for our older group and an Easter “stations of the cross activity”. Each week we have a rota of leaders incl Kathryn who lead devotions at SYG for 20mins.

Our older group have undertaken a four-week course on First Aid led by an external provider and funded by the Cambridge Community Foundation.

The highlight of the year has been the Band Tour of Scotland in October 2023 where we organized a tour centering on “The Heritage of the Boys’ Brigade in this its 140 years”. This was partly funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

A weeklong tour was made visiting Glasgow (where the BB was founded in 1883), Edinburgh, Inverness, Stirling and Thurso (where the founder of the BB was born).

You can see the final video we produced on YouTube called “The Heritage of the Boys’ Brigade”.

Overall, we took nearly 100 people on this tour from across the UK with a Pipe Band from London.

Looking to the future we have a large scale residential at the Vauxhaul Christian Centre planned for May 2024 with over 50 expected and devotions led by Kathryn. Encouragingly most of our older group are going and we expect to have a large worship band to play at the event. Activities will include canoeing, archery, sports, swimming in an indoor pool and

tobogganing. We are expecting people to join us from the newly formed Ashdon BB, Soham BB and Peterborough BB.

Our focus is now to consolidate what we have, provide a challenging and interesting summer programme and work even harder to retain those who are due to move sections in September.

Our SYG band is in need of new members – it is a super band of 20+ but is made up mostly of adults rather than children and we need some children to come and learn an instrument if it is to survive into the future. Our thanks to Aaron Cain, our bandmaster, for all he does for our band.

Lastly in September 2024 I shall be standing down as Chairman of the group to make way for younger and more able leadership than I have been able to offer. I have been Chairman for most years since the group started in September 2001 and have seen over 3,000 young people join and move through SYG. It has been a real privilege to do this work and I wish my successor Alistair Montgomery all my support and encouragement for the future.

Today SYG is one of the largest voluntary youth groups in South Cambs and I hope something St Mary's can be very proud of.

If you know of anyone in school years 1 upwards who would like to give us a try, please encourage them to come along on a Monday evening.

Paul Whitmell, Chairman

Tuesday Home Group

The homegroup which meets at the Beale's house is now 2.5 years old. We still have 10 members and continue to enjoy meeting with each other each week on a Tuesday evening. It has been a privilege to share with each other life's highs and lows and we pray for each other and look out for each other in practical ways too. We've enjoyed a social evening each term: a BBQ in the summer, a Christmas celebration and a pancake day feast. In Lent we have enjoyed using a set of studies based around roads in the Holy Land reflecting on their significance in biblical times but also the current realities in this part of the world. Our group is passionate about justice issues and we have been working together with the Monday homegroup to organise a lunch to raise funds for 'Friends of the Holy Land' which will happen in April.

Andrew Beale

Social Media and Administration

The Parish Administrator joined in October 2023. The office is now open most Monday to Fridays from 9.30 am to 11.00 am, but total weekly hours of administration are twelve on a flexible basis. Routine tasks undertaken include: communications via social media, poster campaigns, the weekly newsletter and e-mail; preparation of printed materials, including service sheets; and support to church groups and events. Additional tasks include: preparation of adhoc documentation, being available for queries and questions, establishing use of a new database (starting with Life Events Diary) and GDPR compliance. The website <https://www.stmaryssawston.org.uk/> and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stmaryssawston> are updated regularly with newsletters, Communicate magazine, events and services. Events of broad reach are pushed to the Sawston Village page and attract wider attention. A Church Near You website contains our regular pattern of services with a link to our website. It is also populated with additional events for Christmas, Lent and Easter. A spring clean of the website content is underway but editorial access excludes the homepage and drop-down menus. There is opportunity to develop our social media further, with a suggested focus on audience and tone to determine content rather than content determining structure. It has also been noticed that not all events are displaying on the homepage, requiring visitors to click through to the "upcoming events" page. It may be worth to consider a revamp of the website in the near future.

Joanna Johnson, April 2024

World-wide Mission Committee Annual Report to the APCM 2024

The Mission Committee members for the past year were: Sue Lowdell (Chair), Marian Watson (Treasurer), Tina Casey (co-opted member), Jose John (co-opted member), Anne Little (co-opted member), Janet Marven (co-opted member), Dorothy Butler (co-opted member), Agnes Stamper (co-opted member). We welcomed Revd Kathryn Waite, our Vicar, to our meetings and Fr Will Lyon Tupman from 1st January 2024.

I would like to record my grateful thanks to the members of The Mission Committee for their support and encouragement during the past year. With their help we have been able to continue with our main aim of supporting our main quarterly charities, Lent Boxes, Christmas Shoeboxes, House Boxes and Christian Aid and since the last APCM we have held three fundraising coffee morning events. I would also like to record a big 'thank you' for the annual allocation of funds from the PCC to aid our

fundraising; we add a proportion of the fund (£200) to the total amount donated by the members of the congregation of St Mary's for our 4 main charities. We know how much this has helped them continue with their vital work, and it is very much appreciated.

Our agreed charities for the past year were as follows:

- (i) **SOS Children's Villages UK:** Home Charity, from 1st April – 30th June 2023.
- (ii) **Mission Aviation Fellowship:** Overseas Charity from 1st July – 30th September 2023.
- (iii) **SERV Suffolk & Cambridgeshire (Nationwide Association of Blood Bikes):** Home Charity 1st October – 31st December 2023.
- (iv) **A Rocha UK:** Overseas Charity from 1st January – 31st March 2024.

Charities for specific church events:

- (i) **The Children's Society:** Christingle Service, November 2023.
- (ii) **Save The Children:** Christmas Services, December 2023.

Invited Guest Speakers for the past year were as follows:

- (i) **Mr Josh Abbott** from SOS Children's Villages visited St Mary's on Sunday 23rd July 2023. Josh was unable to give a talk but Revd Kathryn was able to present him with a cheque for £350 and he stayed for coffee after the service and talked to members of the congregation about the work of the charity.
- (ii) **Mr Nick Keen**, Visiting Speaker from Mission Aviation Fellowship, spoke to us on Sunday 17th September 2023.
- (iii) **Mr Peter Brindley**, volunteer speaker from SERVSC, spoke to us on Sunday 3rd December 2023.
- (iv) **Ms Tamsin Filby**, Community Partnerships Manager from The Leprosy Mission, spoke to us on Sunday 11th February 2024.

For the first time since COVID 19, guest speakers from our quarterly charities and those whom we regularly support (e.g. The Leprosy Mission), have been willing to visit St Mary's and talk to us. It was very good to meet them and their talks have given us a better understanding of their charities and projects they undertake to help vulnerable people and families in the UK and overseas.

Donation to WaterAid, Overseas Charity from 1st January – 31st March 2023:

Due to the various events held in support of WaterAid during the first quarter of 2023 (i.e. WaterAid was our quarterly charity, Lent Box Appeal (Jars of Change) and Fundraising Coffee Morning), the total amount raised wasn't confirmed until after last year's APCM and therefore it has been noted in this year's report, for the record.

The amount donated to WaterAid was made up as follows:

- (i) Quarterly donations via the Mission Plate: £339.30
- (ii) Lent Boxes ('Jars of Change'): £295.62
- (iii) Fundraising Coffee Morning: £200

Donations were made to the following charities from 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024:

- (i) **WaterAid:** £834.92 (as detailed above)
- (ii) **SOS Children's Villages:** £350 (Quarterly charity 1st April – 30th June 2023).
- (iii) **The Leprosy Mission:** £300 (Fundraising Coffee Morning held on Saturday 10th June 2023).
- (iv) **The Mission to Seafarers:** £50 (collection made via The Mission to Seafarers Housebox)

- (v) **Mission Aviation Fellowship:** £300 (Quarterly overseas charity from 1st July – 30th September 2023).
- (vi) **SERV Suffolk and Cambridgeshire:** £350 (Quarterly overseas charity from 1st October – 31st December 2023).
- (vii) **The Children's Society:** £500 (Made up of donations raised at a Fundraising Coffee Morning held on 9th December, The Christingle Service on 10th December and a collection made via The Children's Society House Box).
- (viii) **Save The Children:** £250 (donations received from 2023 Christmas Services).
- (ix) **The Leprosy Mission:** £526.36 (made up of £191.36 from The Leprosy Mission House Boxes, and £335 raised at a Fundraising Coffee Morning on 3rd February 2024).

Lent Box Appeal 2023:

The Lent Box Charity for 2023 was WaterAid's Jars of Change: £295.62

House Box Donations for 2023 were:

- (i) **The Children's Society:** £102.57
- (ii) **The Leprosy Mission:** £100.03
- (iii) **Mission to Seafarers:** £15.04

Coffee Morning Fundraising Events held from 1st April 2023 to date:

- (i) **Saturday 10th June 2023:** The Leprosy Mission. Daisy Buchanan from The Leprosy Mission attended as our special guest.
- (ii) **Saturday 9th December 2023:** The Children's Society
- (iii) **Saturday 3rd February 2024:** The Leprosy Mission

Christian Aid Week 14th – 20th May 2023:

St Mary's and St Peter's donated £195.00 + £38.75 Gift Aid for Christian Aid Week.

2023 Christmas Shoebox Appeal:

St Mary's and St Peter's donated a magnificent 16 Christmas Shoe Boxes for Christmas 2023 and for the first time we were awarded an official 'thank you' certificate from Blythwood Care.

Sawston Free Church received a total of 58 Shoe Boxes from the Sawston community. They were distributed by Blythwood Care in schools, hospitals, orphanages, and care homes and to households in very low-income communities in Eastern Europe. Many went to people affected by the war in Ukraine.

On behalf of the members of The Mission Committee, we would like to thank the congregations of St Mary's and St Peter's for their wonderful support. Your willingness to get involved, donate and contribute to the fundraising we have undertaken during this past year has enabled us to help people in distress in many areas of the world devastated by war, poverty, disease, earthquakes, floods, fires and climate change and we hope to continue our mission well into the future.

Sue Lowdell, 22nd March 2024

Night Prayer 2023

Night Prayer began in September 2023. It takes place on Zoom at 8.30pm on a Wednesday Evening. It is a 30-40 minute time of prayer at the end of the day. We use a variety of styles of prayer including Compline, an order of night prayer of the Church of England, Lectio Divina, an ancient form of prayer used to meditate on scripture, Examen, where we reflect

on our day or the past week and look to see where God was at work in our lives, imaginative prayer, where we use our senses to enter into a Bible story, and Taizé and Northumbrian styles of prayer.

Currently three people take turns to lead the prayer time. Only a few people attend but we all appreciate the quiet time with God. We very much hope that more folk will join us. Click on the Zoom link on the weekly notices if you would like to share in this blessed time with God.

Dianne Conway