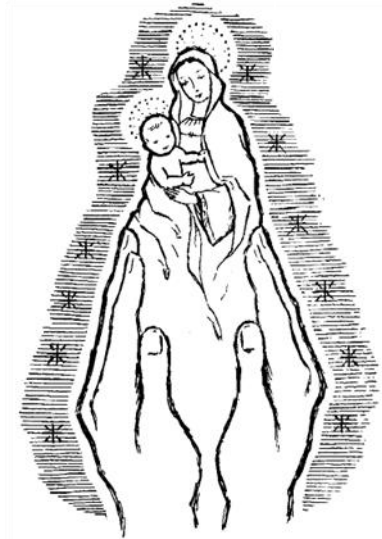


St. Mary the Virgin, Sawston



Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Thursday 8 May 2025

at 19:30

in Church

St. Mary the Virgin, Sawston

Election of Churchwardens: 8 May 2025

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting (25 April 2024)
3. Election / Appointment of Churchwardens.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting: 8 May 2025

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting (25 April 2024)
3. Election of up to FOUR members of the Parochial Church Council, THREE to serve for THREE years and ONE to serve for ONE year.
4. Electoral Roll report (Janet Martin). The new roll can be consulted on the noticeboard in Church.
5. Annual Report for 2024 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 2024 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 (Kathryn Waite)
9. Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod (David Bard)
10. Vicar's Report
11. Any other matters of parochial or general Church interest
 - Diocesan Synod Report (Jeannie Green)
 - Church Office (Joanna Johnson)
 - Community Hall Report (Suella Hunting)
 - Craft Group (Tina Casey)
 - Flower Arranging Report (Barbara Hylton)
 - Magazine Committee Report (Dianne Conway)
 - Monday Home Group (Andrew/Joanne Beale)
 - Monday HouseGroup on Zoom (Rosie Whitmell)
 - Mothers' Union Report (Janet Martin)
 - Night Prayer (Dianne Conway)
 - Refresh (Rebecca Herrick)
 - Safeguarding (Kathryn Waite)
 - Soup and Sandwiches and Tea and Friendship (Mary Richmond)
 - SYG (Alistair Montgomery)
 - World-wide Mission Committee Report (Susan Lowdell)

Minutes of the meetings in 2024

Election of Churchwardens

This took place on Thursday 25 April 2024 at 19:30 in Church with the vicar, The Reverend Kathryn Waite in the chair.

She read a passage from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians, chapter 3 v12.

Those present were: David Bard, Andrew Beale, Paul Cain, Christine Casey, Dianne Conway, Mary Dicken, Clare Glendinning, Jean Green, The Revd Gordon Harper, Suella Hunting, Rebecca Herrick, Alexander Henderson, Barbara Hylton, Josephine John, Susan Lowdell, The Revd William Lyon Tupman, Janet Martin, Jane Moloney, Anand Pillai, Canon John Pinder, Wendy Redgewell, Canon Pam Reed, Corinne Roughley, Stephen Roughley, The Reverend Petra Shakeshaft, Hilary Streeter, and Marian Watson.

1 Apologies for absence

These were received from Sarah Bard, Joanne Beale, Amanda Cain, Peter Green, Judith Harper, Eric Jacobs, Mary Richmond, Robert Richmond, Paul Shakeshaft and Paul Whitmell.

2 Minutes of the last meeting (27 April 2023)

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

3 Election of Churchwardens

Corinne Roughley was nominated by Marian Watson and seconded by Mary Dicken

There being no other nominations the chairman declared that she was duly appointed. She thanked the churchwardens for their tremendous contribution to the life of the Church with special thanks to Marian Watson who was standing down as churchwarden after completing her six-year term. She noted that Marian had a hard run with an Interregnum and Covid and presented her with a gift from the congregation in appreciation for all she had done.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

This took place on Thursday 25 April 2024 at 19:30 in Church with the vicar, The Reverend Kathryn Waite in the chair.

Those present were: David Bard, Andrew Beale, Paul Cain, Christine Casey, Dianne Conway, Mary Dicken, Clare Glendinning, Jean Green, The Revd Gordon Harper, Suella Hunting, Rebecca Herrick, Alexander Henderson, Barbara Hylton, Josephine John, Susan Lowdell, The Revd William Lyon Tupman, Janet Martin, Jane Moloney, Anand Pillai, Canon John Pinder, Wendy Redgewell, Canon Pam Reed, Corinne Roughley, Stephen Roughley, The Reverend Petra Shakeshaft, Hilary Streeter, and Marian Watson.

1 Apologies for absence

These were received from Sarah Bard, Joanne Beale, Amanda Cain, Eric Jacobs, Peter Green, Judith Harper, Robert Richmond, Mary Richmond, Paul Shakeshaft and Paul Whitmell.

2 Minutes of the last meeting (27 April 2023)

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

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

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Andrew Beale	Dianne Conway	Susan Lowdell
Barbara Hylton	Robert Richmond	Petra Shakeshaft
Anand Pillai	Pamela Reed	Dianne Conway

As there were no other nominations, they were duly declared elected by the chairman, to serve for three years.

4 Electoral Roll

Janet Martin presented the revised Electoral Roll, with ninety-eight names on it, six being non-resident. Thanks were expressed to Janet for all her hard work. It was proposed by Susan Lowdell and seconded by Wendy Redgewell that the Roll be accepted and this was agreed, all voting in favour.

6 Annual Report for 2023

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

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

Alexander Henderson reported. He noted that the key factor was that resources are being eroded because income does not match outgoings.

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

Marian Watson's report Gift Aid for 2023 was received. Marian was thanked for all she had done.

8 Appointment of Independent Examiner

It was proposed by David Bard and seconded by Stephen Roughley that Thomas Quinn be appointed as independent examiner and this was agreed, all voting in favour.

9 Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church

Brian Page reported. Thanks were expressed to Brian and the Fabric Committee.

10 Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod

Clare Glendinning reported on Deanery Synod proceedings during the year.

11 Vicar's Report

The vicar gave her report. Prayers for the blessing of same-sex couples have been approved for use in existing services, but there has been no demand so far. The PCC are happy for the prayers to be used and will discuss the issue further once prayers can be used at a stand-alone service. No weddings are booked for this year. There is much to celebrate such as Jumble Sales, Refresh, Tea and Friendship and Soup and Sandwiches. The Church building is in good repair. There are new faces in the congregation and Easter attendance was well above pre-COVID levels. The Clergy team is growing with Gordon Harper's PTO and Will Lyon Tupman's curacy. The

Church will welcome Ian in July. Joanne Beale has been accepted for LLM training and Rebecca Herrick is well on with her course. School work is flourishing with regular assemblies. There were very many Carol Services. The Brownies and Guides are coming in regularly. The Cubs champed and the Brownies hope to do so in February. SYG uses the church regularly. Felicity Parker stepped down from Youthinc and there is a need to appoint a youth worker but they are hard to find. The finances are in deficit because of the increased Parish Share.

More precarious is the situation at Babraham and they will be seeking a forward. The Deanery Plan now finalised and makes it clear that Babraham is in a difficult position. Thanks were expressed to Joanna Johnson, the Parish Administrator, for all she does, most notably in the preparation of the booklet of reports for the APCM.

12 Matters of Parochial and General Church Interest

1) Other reports

These were received from:

Community Hall report	Suella Hunting
Craft Group	Christine Casey
Flower Arranging	Barbara Hylton
Magazine Committee	Dianne Conway
Monday House Group	Sarah Bard
Mothers' Union	Janet Martin
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
Administration and Social Media	Joanna Johnson
World-wide Mission Committee	Susan Lowdell
Night Prayer	Dianne Conway

Suella Hunting expressed the thanks of everyone to the vicar for all that she does.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:07 with the Grace.

Mary Dicken, Secretary to the PCC

Electoral Roll Report for the APCM 8 May 2025: New Electoral Roll 2025

In accordance with the Church Representation Rules (CRR), this year an entirely new Church electoral roll must be prepared in advance of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in every parish in the Church of England.

Existing members of the Electoral Roll and the wider congregation were informed by email or letter.

In accordance with the CRR the formal notice was displayed on the notice board by the Church door. The congregation were also informed of the preparation of the new roll on two and subsequent Sundays by the person conducting the service. Details were also included in the Church notices and in midweek services.

A total of 89 applications for enrolment were received, and these have been recorded on the new roll published on 8 April 2025 (copy attached without addresses for data protection reasons).

No errors or omissions to the new roll have been reported to the Electoral Roll Officer to date. Of the 89 applications, 13 are new members, and 3 live outside the parish.

One application has been received after the closing date and will be added at the end of the annual meeting: Francesca Rosa

This addition brings the total names on the new Electoral Roll to 90.

	Sebastian	Aplin			Eric	Jacobs
Mr	Andrew	Arthur		Mrs	Josephine Edwina	John
Mrs	Jean Lesley Ross	Ashley		Mrs	Joanna	Johnson
	Max	Ashley		Mr	Daniel MacDonald	Lewis
Dr	David Roy	Bard		Mrs	Enid May	Lewis
Mrs	Sarah Judith Yarrow	Bard		Mrs	Anne Jane	Little
Dr	Andrew	Beale		Mrs	Judith Margaret	Lovell
	Joanne	Beale		Mrs	Susan Mary	Lowdell
	Antonio Raphael Bruno	Blair		Ms	Ellen Catherine	MacDonald
	Derrick Augustus	Blair		Mr	Roger	Mansfield
	Adriana Sandra	Bruno		Mrs	Samantha	Marsh
Mrs	Caroline Ann	Burgess		Mrs	Janet Mary	Martin
Miss	Holly	Burgess		Mrs	Janet May	Marven
Mr	Stephen	Burgess		Mrs	Shirley	Matthews
Mrs	Amanda	Cain		Mrs	Anne Jane	Moloney
Mr	Paul	Cain			Rachel	Norridge
Mrs	Christine Elizabeth	Casey			Cynthia	Okpokiri
Dr	Sarah	Caswell		Mrs	Margaret Amy	Palmer
Mrs	Dianne Mary	Conway		Mrs	Elizabeth Ann	Parker
	Kieran	Cooper			Ann Patricia	Peacock
Mrs	Jennifer	Crompton		Mrs	Jacqueline	Pickett
Mr	John David	Crompton		Mr	Anand Mark	Pillai
Mrs	Isobel	Darling			Wendy	Redgewell
Mr	John Robert	Darling		Mrs	Mary Christina	Richmond
Mrs	Margaret Vera	Davis		Mr	Robert Geoffrey	Richmond
Mrs	Janet Margaret	De Luca			Ana Marcela	Rosas
Mrs	Yvonne	Denny		Dr	Corinne	Roughley
Mrs	Mary Christine	Dicken		Dr	Stephen David	Roughley
Mrs	Victoria	Ejike			Paul John	Shakeshaft
	Avril Georgiana	Eyres - Harvey		Mrs	Agnes	Stamper
	Alan Richard	Farrington			Avis Dulcie	Stinson
Dr	Julian	Few		Mrs	Geraldine Ann	Stott
Mrs	Simone	Few		Ms	Hilary Barbara	Streeter
Mrs	Pauline Betty	Finbow		Mrs	Dorothy	Ward
	Mun Kwun	Flint		Mrs	Marian	Watson

Ms	Clare	Glendinning			Hayley Lynn	Webb
Miss	Goodness	Godson		Mr	Paul Edwin	Whitmell
Mr	Victory	Godson		Mrs	Rosina	Whitmell
Mrs	Jeannie M	Green			Dorothy Mary	Wilson
Mr	Peter John	Green				
Mr	George	Haddad				
Mrs	Judith	Harper				
	John	Harvey				
Mrs	Rebecca Ruth	Herrick				
Mr	Christopher	Hooper				
	Clare	Hulme				
	Stephen	Hulme				
Mrs	Suella Mary	Hunting				
Mrs	Barbara	Hylton				
	Les	Hylton				

Janet M Martin, Electoral Roll Officer, 21 April 2025

2024 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 and The Reverend Gordon Harper. Fr Will Lyon Tupman has continued to serve as a curate and was joined in July by The Reverend Ian Henderson who will be with us for three years. We expect Fr Lyon Tupman to leave us next year for another post. Rebecca Herrick has continued her ordination training and Joanne Beale has begun to train as an LLM. She was approved as an administrator of the chalice by the PCC.

At the close of 2024 there were 99 parishioners on the Electoral Roll, 7 of whom are not resident in the parish. The Roll is due to be completely renewed in 2025. The average weekly attendance in person in Church, counted in October, was 75 adults and 15 children. 6 people worshipped at home. There were 94 communicants at Christmas. The Christmas services held for the community had c.1240 worshippers. There were 80 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 12 baptisms. 6 of these were of children by full immersion of whom 5 went on to receive their first communion alongside one other child who had already been baptised. There was 1 wedding and we held 5 funeral services in Church and 11 services at crematoria this year. There were 7 interments of ashes.

We have been grateful for the contribution made by musicians at Open Door and organists including Kieran Cooper and John Bryden.

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 Balsham.

The Church Building, Grounds and the Community Hall

Normal routine maintenance was carried out under a contract with White Roofing. The work on the Pugin brasses is still outstanding at a cost of about £12 000. The main work this year has been to counteract damp in the walls, to which end the plaster has been removed from parts of the aisle walls by Spectrum Stone and will be replaced in 2025. This necessitated the closure of the Church for three weeks in October and services were held at Babraham. New soakaways will be constructed in the churchyard to the south of the church to take the water well away from the building. The next quinquennial inspection is due in the summer of 2025. The chancel windows are to be cleaned in the spring. Brian Page, for some years the chairman of the Fabric Committee, has been forced by ill-health to resign and his input is much missed. [Subsequent to approval of these minutes, Brian has sadly died.]

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

The mowing of the burial ground was carried out by Kester Lilley with some help from working parties. Dead trees were removed and overgrown trees trimmed.

The Community Hall has continued to host a wide range of community activities and some social and fund-raising Church functions were held. Jumble Sales are very popular.

The church office continued to operate under the very efficient management of Joanna Johnson, the Parish Administrator, who makes a huge contribution to the smooth running of the parish. She also took on the role of DBS administrator.

Pastoral Care

Regular contact with all members of the Church family has been maintained by the vicar and her 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 also took place. Soup and Sandwiches and Tea and Friendship remained very well-supported with increasing numbers leading to a necessarily greater output in soup-production. The Craft Group and Refresh also flourished. Rebecca Herrick will leave her role as the leader of Refresh next year and she will be much missed as the founding mother of this group. The Mothers' Union Branch meets monthly.

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. Various materials were used. The sessions were led mainly by Corinne and members of the ministry team (including Felicity until June) and a small band of volunteers. We still need one or two more people who might be prepared to help lead a session from time to time.

For children and young people in school years 5-8 (ages 10-13) we have run a group at 5.30pm on the 2nd and 4th Sundays in the hall. There are normally around 6-8 young people although there are more on our books! This has included some from Sawston Free Church as well as Babraham. We have mainly used the Energize resources produced by Urban Saints. We play games (Uno and Dobble are favorites), read the Bible, watch film clips, do crafts and eat a lot of pizza! Also, twice a month on a Sunday evening, at 7.15pm, 5 or 6 older teenagers in year 9+ meet to do some Bible study and discuss faith and life issues. All these sessions were led by Kathryn, Will, Ian and up until the summer, Felicity. We were delighted to welcome Hannah Elphick, the new YouthInc Youth worker, in September who has brought a wealth of experience and ideas with her.

In November a joint youth service was held at St Mary's with the other YouthInc youth groups and it was great to worship with others. At Christmas both Sawston groups came together for a Christmas special which included solving a Christmas themed escape room.

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 A Rocha UK, the Arthur Rank Hospice, the Melanesian Mission and EACH.

We are a collection point for the JHC Food Bank.

We had a water station at the Fun Run and a Light Station on October 31.

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. Fr John of Our Lady of Lourdes joins in when he can and all three ministers officiated at the Remembrance Day service.

Financial Review

The financial position at the end of 2024 has remained materially in line with position at the end of 2023.

This is an encouraging situation. In 2023, the church recorded a large deficit, and the unrestricted income was only just equal to the ministry share cost. In 2024 however, unrestricted income (excluding donations from Wards Charity) was £73k - a 22% increase compared to the prior year. Crucially, this income is greater than the ministry share payable in 2024, and is above the expected level of the 2025 ministry share.

St Mary's has continued to benefit from the generous support of Wards Charity in 2024.

Grants have been provided to cover specific items of expenditure related to the work of the Church during the year. These payments have enabled essential works to the fabric of the building and churchyard, in addition to covering other expenses which are considered vital to the continued operation of the Church in Sawston and the surrounding area.

The St Mary's Community Hall continues to be an important source of income for the Church. The income generated in 2024 (£11.6k, being 55% growth vs. 2023) has been a key contributor to the overall growth in unrestricted receipts seen in the year.

Please see Appendix for Financial Statement.

Ward's Charity

Under the terms of the Articles of Association of Ward's Charity, its aim is to provide funding to be applied to general purposes of the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Sawston, Cambridgeshire. The trustees, who include the vicar and churchwardens ex officio, explained in a letter to PCC members their views on which expenditure should be covered. This includes current expenditure, capital projects, supporting the expansion of the Church's work within Sawston and acquiring accommodation for a curate/parish worker. It does not include meeting the Parish Share at present. It is anticipated that each year the PCC will outline to the trustees the likely areas of expenditure to be undertaken in that year so that the trustees can ensure they have the necessary funds available.

In 2024 the trustees covered standard items such as the CCLI licence, organ tuning and payment to an organist, water rates, the independent examiner fees, insurance, contributions to SYG camp and the Churches Together Holiday Club, Gas and Electricity, repairs to the Church, photocopier expenses, telephone costs, Church consumables and the salary of the administrator. Additional items included the bricks for the repairs to the boundary wall to be completed, Spectrum Stone for removal of the plaster, Youthinc for the youth worker, and payments for heating repairs and regular maintenance, all totalling £55,198.85.

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, licensed curates, the churchwardens, elected members of Deanery and Diocesan synods, 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 2024 with an average attendance of 82%. 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.

Community Hall Committee

This oversees the Community Hall, dealing with bookings and day-to-day administration.

Magazine Committee

This is responsible for producing and distributing a quarterly magazine, published on the first Sundays in March, June, September and December. The current editor has given notice that she will retire from the role in 2025 and the PCC will be considering the role of the magazine and its future.

The PCC held a successful Away Day in October at Little Gidding to consider the worship life of the parish and its mission and corporate life.

Gift Aid Report

Thank you to everyone who continues to support St Mary's financially. These donations are usually done by signing up to the Parish Giving scheme which allows you to give monthly, quarterly and annually and if you are able to claim Gift Aid. This is done at the time of your donation and paid directly into the bank. It also gives you the opportunity to donate anonymously. The forms for this are available for this on the wooden table to the left of the door as you come in, or for up to date information please take a look at their website www.parishgiving.org.uk or telephone 0333 002 1260.

On payments made by standing Order via Barclays Bank, Gift Aid is claimed quarterly through Ely. We do still have a few people using the Planned Giving (i.e. weekly envelopes) and other donations during the course of the year. Can I please ask if you like to do it this way to make sure that you complete a Gift Aid Form if you are a UK taxpayer so that we are able to claim the Gift Aid back.

All cash donations through the collection bags or basket at the services and wall safe are eligible for Gift Aid through the GASDS (Gift aid small donations scheme).

As of December 2024:

21 people donate through the Parish Giving Scheme: 16 of which are Gift Aided

10 donations are received via Standing Order: 8 of which are Gift Aided

5 people donate using weekly envelopes: 4 of which are Gift Aided

Parish Giving Scheme donations for 2024 totalled £24816.36 which includes Gift Aid of £4588.25.

Gift Aid returns are claimed quarterly throughout the year.

The total tax reclaimed over the four quarters of 2024 is as follows:

Q1 (01.01.24-06.04.24) GASDS	£1445.58 including £325.33
Q2 (7.04.24-30.06.24) GASDS	£1094.28 including £248.78
Q3 (01.07.24-30.09.24) GASDS	£726.75 including £283.00
Q4 (01.10.24-31.12.24) GASDS	£931.25 including £353.00

It is the responsibility of those signing Gift Aid Declarations to inform The Gift Aid/Recording Officer in writing, as soon as possible if your 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 2025

Report of the Fabric Committee

Brian Page who had been the chair of the Fabric Committee stepped down due to ill health. The Fabric Committee is very grateful for all his church architectural expertise and experience which he drew on, in contributing towards the upkeep of the building, the churchyard and burial ground. His sage advice is very much missed.

There has continued to be a significant amount of work during the course of the year. It was realised that there was a considerable amount of cementitious plaster on the internal walls on both the north and south aisles of the building which would have been contributing to the damp issues we have experienced as it does not allow water to evaporate freely. Therefore, in October a large amount of cement containing plaster was removed over a three-week period which required the building to be closed while this work was being carried out. Plans are now being put in place for the walls to be re-plastered in order to protect them.

Missing slates on the Choir Vestry roof have been replaced and lead work has also been patched. At the same time damaged porch roof slates have been replaced and rotten wooden batten were repaired. Further work on the porch roof will be needed

The Parish Council continued to organise the grass cutting of the burial ground and also arranged for a repair of the boundary wall of the Churchyard adjacent to church Lane. St Mary's is grateful for their continued support in the upkeep of the churchyard. The burial ground grass cutting was undertaken by Kester Lilley paid for by the Vindis family and St Mary's with additional tidying and cutting done by our volunteers. Unfortunately, the November Churchyard working party had to be cancelled due to bad weather.

Copies of the History of the Church were printed and copies of this are available from the office or in the church. Risk assessments, fire extinguisher servicing and PAT testing were also carried out.

We are very grateful to Ward's charity without which most of the work on the fabric of the church could not take place.

Kathryn Waite, April 2025

Granta Deanery Synod – Annual Report 2024–2025

Introduction

Over the past year, the Granta Deanery Synod has continued to serve as a collaborative platform for parishes within the deanery, working together in fellowship, mission, and shared resourcing. This report summarises the key discussions, developments, and decisions made at Synod meetings held on 16 July 2024, 29 October 2024, and 1 April 2025.

Meeting 1: Tuesday 16 July 2024 – St Mary's Church, Linton

Finance

A discussion was held about how to distribute the 2024 Diocesan rebate and how to use Deanery funds. Three distribution models were considered: equal share, pro rata, or needs-based. Total fund balance stood at £33,304, plus an additional £11,033 rebate. Proposals included long-term support for Youthinc and initiating science chaplaincy.

Deanery Reserves

David Brock proposed that Deanery funds (after covering the Rural Dean's expenses) be returned to parishes pro rata. A wide-ranging discussion encouraged creative use of funds to further mission and outreach. PCCs were asked to discuss and report back by 1 October.

Synod Reports

Lizzie Taylor reported on the Diocesan Synod, raising concerns about attendance and follow-up on family/youth funding. Felicity Cooke was unable to report from General Synod due to illness; future updates were expected.

Deanery Matters

A proposed “Come and Sing” event was discussed for spring 2025. Hannah Elphick was announced as the new Deanery Youth Worker, to start in September 2024.

Meeting 2: Tuesday 29 October 2024 – St Mary and St Andrew, Whittlesford

Scripture and Reflection

Members reflected in groups on Luke 10:1–17, discussing themes of mission and outreach.

Synod Reports

Written reports from Diocesan and General Synod were received and noted without further comment.

Deanery Updates

The Synod reflected on the Deanery’s purpose as a unifying and mission-focused body. A Deanery celebration event was suggested but received limited support.

YouthInc

Hannah Elphick was introduced through a Q&A session. Members were encouraged to read more in the forthcoming Youthinc Newsletter.

Science Chaplaincy

Kathryn Waite presented a proposal to develop chaplaincy at Babraham and other local campuses. The approach will include a listening/support service with multi-faith sensitivity. Initial steps will focus on Babraham due to existing relationships and proximity to the church.

Finance & Reserves

2023 rebate cheques were being distributed. After considering PCC feedback, the Synod adopted Option 3: Retain £8,500 for administration and loans; use the remaining £25,000 to support mission projects in the Deanery via grant applications. The Synod affirmed pro rata distribution as the default policy for future rebates.

Meeting 3: Tuesday 1 April 2025 – St Mary’s Church, Linton

Opening and Reflection

The Archdeacon, Ven. Alex Hughes, chose Isaiah 43:1–7 for Dwelling in the Word, and members shared reflections in small groups.

Archdeacon’s Introduction

Ven. Alex Hughes introduced himself and affirmed that the Church is growing overall. He responded to pre-submitted and live questions from Synod members.

Synod Reports

Reports from Diocesan Synod (8 March 2025) and General Synod (10–14 February 2025) were circulated. Safeguarding was a key topic at General Synod.

Deanery Matters

Julie Norris reported renewed interest in lay vocations post-pandemic. Synod was encouraged to promote upcoming vocation events, including the Ely vocations fair on 7 June. Plans were made for the Ascension Day service on 29 May at Balsham Church, with Revd Lydia Smith preaching.

Finance

Suzanne Darkins’ report acknowledged that all Granta parishes had fully paid their ministry share for 2024. Suzanne remains available to support parishes with advice.

Vacancies

Jon Smith proposed a motion to Diocesan Synod to allow vacancy advertising upon notice of departure from incumbents. The motion passed with 21 in favour and one abstention.

Additional Updates

Synod was reminded to submit APCM results promptly. A Youthinc newsletter and fundraising request were distributed. The National Churches Trust’s “House of Good Report” was shared.

Looking Ahead

Upcoming Meetings:

- Deanery Synod: 1 July and 6 November 2025

- Diocesan Synod: 18 June, 11 October 2025
- General Synod: 11–15 July (York) and 17–19 November 2025 (London)

Conclusion

The past year has seen robust engagement in discussions around finance, mission, and new initiatives such as youth work and chaplaincy. The Deanery continues to balance faithful stewardship with a desire to invest in collaborative ministry, spiritual growth, and community outreach.

Paru Oatey, Deanery Secretary

Diocesan Synod Report

I did not see it coming!

Having had many years of experience both on PCC in a neighbouring parish and on the Deanery Synod, I believed that I was finally fully retired from church 'politics'. However, back in June I was elected as a Diocesan Synod member for the next three-year term and I'm still not quite sure how it happened! This report therefore will be from the personal perspective of a newcomer to Synod rather than an objective commentary on its proceedings.

The first meeting of the new Synod in October came as something of a shock following the arrival of 157 pages of documentation in my inbox prior to the meeting. (Fortunately, I had been warned by a friend who is on General Synod to be prepared to be baffled at my first meeting. She wasn't wrong!) The day began with a lovely Eucharist celebrated by Bishop Dagmar - and then most of the day's business was taken up with financial matters which I do not find very exciting at the best of times, necessary though they often are.

It was a great relief, therefore, to hear Bishop Dagmar's presidential address well into the proceedings. She updated us about the selection of a new Diocesan Bishop, noting that at a recent meeting of the Crown Nominations Committee (CNC) for Ely, it was agreed that no further lengthy consultation process was deemed necessary and that CNC1 (shortlisting) will take place on 2 October 2025 and CNC2 (interviews) on 12 & 13 November 2025, meaning a new Diocesan Bishop should be in place in the first half of 2026.

She also spoke of the (then) current and emotive topic of assisted dying (or assisted suicide) which Parliament was due to debate and she urged members to deal sensitively with each other, whatever their stance on this matter.

I found the second meeting in March much more enlightening. The agenda items, included:

- a General Synod report
- a Safeguarding report
- annual reports on Racial Justice and Disability Justice
- a mission update
- a presentation explaining the next steps in the implementation of a new selection of readings and prayers of thanksgiving, dedication and asking for God's blessing for same-sex couples collectively known as **Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF)**, following recent proposals brought to the General Synod in July 2024
- budget considerations, involving small group discussions tasked with suggesting ways of reducing a large deficit in Diocesan funds of around £200,00 per annum for this and the next few years.

To sum up: I have learnt that the Synod exists in order to "comment, consider, advise and approve" and I have gained enormous respect for Bishop Dagmar who has been carrying a

huge workload as acting Diocesan Bishop. In a year's time I hope to have a bit more insight into the machinations of the Church of England so should be able to present a more in-depth report.

Jeannie Green, April 2025

Church Office Report

The office is open most mornings, Monday to Friday. Total weekly hours of administration are twelve on a flexible basis. And it is a privilege to support you.

Routine tasks undertaken include:

- communications via social media (including our website <https://www.stmaryssawston.org.uk/>, Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stmaryssawston> with push to wider village pages, and A Church Near You <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/2851/>), poster campaigns, the weekly newsletter and e-mail;
- preparation of printed materials, including service sheets and reporting against our CCLI licence;
- preparation of the church rotas including readers, sides-persons and intercessors;
- administration of shared documents and diaries;
- administrative support to the PCC, church groups and events as required, including DBS administration.

This year the website has seen some limited development with a focus on bringing out the personality of our church. Photos of ministers, group activities, sermons and a Lenten resources page have been added. It may be worth to consider a more extensive revamp of the website in the near future.

The office now has the ability to administer DBS checks, providing this support to the PCC and our church group volunteers.

Joanna Johnson, April 2025

Community Hall Report April 2024 – April 2025

It is good to report that the Hall continues to be well used - by both the Community (13 regular weekly bookings and by St Mary's (5 bookings each month - Craft Group, Soup & Sandwiches, Tea & Friendship & Youth Group). Those figures exclude our many one-off events – such as fund-raising events, 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 by Committee volunteers (and spouses!).

Once again 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.

There have been recent problems with keeping the floor in good condition. There are often more than 300 people using the Hall each week so we have increased the floor cleaning to

three times weekly. It may also be necessary to have the floor sanded and resealed during August. This was last done in 2019.

Accounts

The Hall accounts are in the Appendix.

Our profit for 2024 was £11,776 (cf £11,578 in 2023 and £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.

Most Regular User hire fees were increased by £5 session in September 2022 and have been left unchanged since then. We are looking at increasing fees from September 2025.

Bookings

There have been changes amongst our Regular Users but bookings continue to be 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. During the year we gained a Regular Childminders' Group and another Pilates class and also gained (and lost) StudioFit. For a while it looked as if the Toy Library would have to close, shortly after buying a new shed and celebrating its 40th Birthday. However there is now good news since volunteers came forward and we are delighted that it can continue.

Committee

Once again thanks are due to the Hall Committee members for the hard work they put into ensuring the smooth running of the Hall. We have spent hours revising Risk Assessments, Booking Forms, Safeguarding Documents etc – but with as much good humour as possible. Very special thanks go to Jeanette, our wonderfully helpful Bookings Secretary and to George, our very efficient Treasurer. Their hard work keeps the systems working!

We are a small but happy team who run the Hall for St Mary's but, AS ALWAYS, should be delighted to hear from anyone else who might like to get involved. There are always small DIY jobs to do – we aim at doing as many things as possible ourselves, in order to keep costs down, and should welcome new pairs of hands.

We also always welcome ideas and suggestions to help us continue running the Hall successfully - this is St Mary's outreach in the widest sense.

Sue Hunting, 16 April 2025

St Mary's Community Hall Management Committee: Jeanette Harvey (Booking Secretary), George Haddad (Treasurer), Katy Holloway, Suella Hunting (Chairman), Jane Moloney, John Poulter, Hilary Streeter (Minutes Secretary), Rev'd Kathryn Waite

St. Mary's Church Craft Group Report for the Annual PCC meeting May 2024 - April 2025

It is extremely good to be able to report that the Craft Group has continued to thrive with one or two new members joining us in the last year. My aim is to provide a welcoming and happy atmosphere where all are welcome, even if members are not able to attend every meeting.

There are twenty six members who attend regularly and one or two who come when health permits, and it is always good to see all of them, whenever they attend.

The members make a voluntary donation, suggested at £1.00 at every meeting and this funds the refreshments served over the year. Any surplus which accrues enables the group to make a donation occasionally. Once again, after discussion with the group, it was agreed that we would make a donation to "Refresh" - the Mother and Baby/Toddler group that St. Mary's holds every Monday. The group received a warm thank you letter from Becca Herrick, on behalf of Refresh, letting us know that the money would be spent on Easter Books to be given to each attendee and some replacements for some of their worn and well-loved toys.

During our October and November meetings we were fortunate to have a Christmas decoration workshop, once again planned and organised by Geraldine Stott. Every member had the opportunity to take part with materials provided by Geraldine where necessary and patterns and guidance were also on hand. My grateful thanks to Geraldine for all her hard work.

At our "Christmas" - December meeting we welcomed Catherine Tregaskes who is a local crafter with many talents. Catherine gave us a demonstration of basketry and made a small basket as she talked to us about her craft and at the end of the meeting donated the basket to the craft group. She had brought along an enormous amount of her work for all to see and it was a very stimulating talk that she gave with lots of interest and questions from the members. Catherine had also brought materials along for anyone who wanted to make a small Christmas decoration at the end of her talk.

Each member received a (home-made) Christmas card and this year rather than a small gift, the money was spent on payment for the basketry demonstration. This meeting is always celebrated with Christmas goodies and drinks to thank the members for their support over the year.

As Easter fell before the April meeting of the group, we had to mark the occasion at the meeting at the end of March. Hot Cross buns were served and each member received an Easter Card and a small Chocolate Easter Bunny - which they could save for after Lent if required!

It has been possible to have a craft stall at the Mission Committee Coffee mornings during the last year, as usual. The proceeds have gone to whichever charity was being supported at each event. This is a good opportunity for people to see what has been made and donated by members of the group but also to buy craft items including those that have been donated by people who have heard about the group and have needed somewhere to donate the things that they have made. Unfortunately Charity Shops will not accept "home-made" items.

Occasionally I am given unwanted craft materials and these are taken along to the meetings so that the members can make use of them. Nearly all of the members donate most of what they make to various charities so it is good to be able to make these surplus goods available, although quite often members will make a small donation for whatever they take.

My thanks, as always, goes to Jane Maloney for valiantly helping by putting the tables and chairs out and away at every meeting, with occasional help from Jo Johnson. Also thanks to Dorothy Ward and Geraldine Stott who continue to give their support and also to all the loyal members who support the group.

We look forward to another successful year when new members, or visitors, will also be made welcome.

Tina Casey, Craft Group Leader, 7th April 2025

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 14 members who provide floral displays throughout the year. One lady has, for the time being decided to take a break from arranging flowers and one long standing member of the team has decided the time has come for her to hang up her secateurs. We will all miss Pauline very much and we owe her a huge thank you for the many years of dedication, support and friendship she brought to the team. We have also been fortunate to welcome Jo to the team. Jo, like so many of the team claimed not be very good when it came to arranging flowers- I'm pleased to say Jo has now found that that statement is far from true! Welcome aboard Jo; we look forward to working with you in the future. Several ladies continue to work in 'pairs' and arrange High Altar flowers – it is great to see the flower rota being signed up! We continue to meet as a group throughout the year, to chat about upcoming festivals and events and to have the opportunity to chat to one another on a social basis.

As well the usual church festivals celebrated throughout last year, the team made up 80 Mothering Sunday posies, which were distributed during the Mothering Sunday service held in church as well as being distributed to several members of the wider community. In June, Val and Yvonne marked the 80th Anniversary of The D Day Landings with a stunning pedestal arrangement in church. The arrangement contained green foliage and white flowers from which blue and red ribbons floated down to the floor marking the beaches where the Allied Forces landed. This was a simple but very effective arrangement which marked the occasion in a thoughtful and dignified way. A big thank you to both ladies.

Finally, a very big '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, to those who take time to notice the arrangements and then share a comment and of course to the ladies of the flower team who continue to be enthusiastic and willing as well as being incredibly generous in their giving and their time. Never under-estimate the difference that makes!

Barbara Hylton, April 2025

Report from the Magazine Committee 2024

I have been editing and laying out 'Communicate' for eight years. I have decided the 2024/25 issues will be my last. The last magazine I will produce will be the June–August edition 2025 due for publication on Sunday 1 June 2025.

Eight years ago, my aim was to produce an easy-to-read magazine that showcased who we are and what we do and to advertise what we plan to do next. God has been good. For most copies the contributions have almost exactly filled the pages without needing me to heavily edit or search round for pages of fillers. I would like to thank all contributors over the eight years. Your contributions have certainly achieved my first two aims. To some extent the third aim has been achieved. But with a quarterly magazine it is not always easy to plan ahead as far as is necessary to cover every future event.

I am grateful to all the committee members for their valuable support and contributions: to Mary Dicken for keeping everyone up to date with what is going on at PCC level and for curating and contributing stories of our faithful ancestors who spread the Word in their time.

Also, to Rosie Whitmell for her photography, for designing our attractive magazine front covers and for interviewing church members across the whole church fellowship. I am sure that these interviews have helped what was, eight years ago, two very separate congregations to draw closer to together. Rosie has decided to step down too after 10 years on the committee.

Thank you to Jo in the office for designing lovely posters that help to tell readers of our future events.

And finally, to Rachel Norridge who carefully proof-reads all contributions and then a second time for the final draft. Any mistakes are usually mine that are last minute additions.

Rachel also contacts our advertisers who support us by paying us to include their adverts. We are grateful for them because their financial support enables us to distribute about 200 free copies of each edition. Currently our magazine costs £700-£800 per year to produce. Over the eight years we have added an extra page of advertising to help cover rising costs of paper and printing. Our charges to advertisers have remained the same over the eight years.

I hope you will agree that our printer does a very good job. He takes particular pride in his work and spends time adjusting the colour to achieve a high standard. He helps us out by giving us a small discount for having the magazine ready during the first week of the month rather than the last week like many of his other printing jobs. He delivers the magazine from Linton without a charge.

A new team is being formed so that the magazine can continue. If you are interested in joining the new team please speak to Revd. Petra.

Dianne Conway, 15th April 2025

Monday Home Group

Since the last APCM we've remained pretty stable in terms of numbers with an average of 7 people attending on a Monday evening. We have a Whatsapp group of other members who can't commit weekly but faithfully share and receive prayer requests for one another. It's a really supportive group. In September we had to move from a Tuesday to a Monday evening due to Joanne beginning her LLM training which meant we sadly lost a couple of regulars but gained one back also.

We have used a variety of resources as a group this year: a series on 'roads of the Holy Land', the 24/7 prayer 'Prayer Course' which was a digital resource, a book on Esther, a short advent series looking at joy, hope, love and peace and a video series on Daniel. We then joined the other small groups in running the Lent Course 'Difference' which generated some great discussions.

Outside of Monday evenings at the end of April 2024 we helped to organise a fundraising and awareness raising event for Friends of the Holy Land which was really well attended, was a good bit of team work and raised over £2000. We had a great summer BBQ social with partners and children which was a lovely afternoon in the sunshine and a smaller Christmas celebration with mince pies and mulled wine! We are excited about an upcoming away day in May.

Joanne Beale, 10th April 2025

Monday HouseGroup on Zoom

The Monday HouseGroup on Zoom has been going well. We currently have a group of 9 people including myself, who attend most weeks. Will Lyon Tupman hosts the Zoom meeting using the St Mary's Zoom account, and Dianne can also do this when Will is away. However, we need to look into who can host the Zoom once Will leaves us.

We usually meet for 1 hour and use various Bible study guides as a basis for each session, ending with prayer and worship music. This year we have studied 'John for Everyone' by Tom Wright, Joshua, Lifebuilder study, '1&2 Peter and Judah' by Tom Wright and we have just finished the 'Difference' course for Lent. We usually all buy our own books, where possible. It would be nice to see more people attend our online group, so if anyone would like to attend, please just come along on a Monday using the link in the notices or contact Kathryn or myself.

Rosie Whitmell, 9th April 2025

Sawston Branch of the Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union is a Christian organisation supporting families worldwide for nearly 150 years. Started by our founder Mary Sumner in 1876 in her local parish, we have grown into an international charity with over 4 million members in 83 countries.

As a registered charity, Mothers' Union campaigns at local, national and international levels to bring about real change for gender equality and for the rights of women and girls. This includes the annual 16 days of activism against gender-based violence and the Rise Up campaign against domestic violence. Mothers' Union has consultative status on the United Nations commission on the status of women. Overseas and UK work also includes: parenting support, literacy and community development programmes, refuge support, awareness raising on Modern Slavery, organising local school breakfast clubs and prison visiting.

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. We also support the work of our Church locally, including: Refresh, jumble sales, flowers and cards 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 for members at the Mary Challis Garden.

We are particularly grateful for the support of our parish clergy in our activities.

We held our Annual General Meeting on 4 February 2025, and at this meeting we agreed donations of £100.00 each to Away From it All Holidays (for families in crisis), the Mothers' Union Worldwide Fund, and the Rise Up campaign against domestic violence.

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 and to support the annual Deanery Advent Service. The Sawston MU banner which was dedicated in 1949 was displayed at the Ely Cathedral Banner Exhibition in August 2024.

We also helped to organise the local World Day of Prayer Service on Friday 7 March 2025, which this year was held at the Free Church and prepared by the Christian women of the Cook Islands. The 2026 service will be prepared by the Christian women of Nigeria.

If anyone would like to join us and support the vital work of the Mothers' Union, please contact me or any member of the branch.

Janet Martin, Branch Lead, 9 April 2025

Night Prayer 2024

Night Prayer began in September 2023 and has continued throughout 2024. 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. However, numbers have increased over 2024. 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 special time with God.

Dianne Conway, 15th April 2025

Refresh

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" – parents/carers and their little ones - attending each week. We offer free-play with many different toys, as well as Play-Doh and a themed craft. Now into our eleventh year, 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, (homemade) cake and a listening ear.

Each week we pause mid-session for our well-loved story and song time. This year we have covered Jesus' miracles and life, Bible heroes and heroines, as well as thanking God for many things. 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.

I always say that Monday mornings are my favourite part of the week, and that's because of the joy we bring to so many through Refresh. Parents and carers often 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. It is a real blessing to see the children grow and thrive over the months and years, 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 amazing! Also, a big thank you to Anna, Sandra and Marian for all that you give to the group, as well as thank you to our superstar clergy, who are all regular helpers too. We are always on the lookout for new helpers. If you think you could offer to be there, even once a month, we would love to hear from you. It really is a wonderful ministry to be a part of!

If you can't make it on a Monday morning, perhaps you could help with moving chairs for Refresh on a Sunday after the morning services? Every week, we clear the back section of the church to make space for play. If you think you could help with this, please do speak to me or one of the ministry team.

By the time of the next APCM (2026), I will have stepped down from my role as leader of Refresh. We are looking to hand over my responsibilities during the coming year. It has been a huge privilege to be involved in dreaming up and running Refresh over the last 11 years, and amazing to see God at work through this group in our community. I pray that it may continue to serve the community of Sawston and beyond for many years to come.

Rebecca Herrick, March 2025

Safeguarding Report

During the course of the year Simone Few and Jennifer Crompton stepped down from being our Parish Safeguarding Officers. We are very grateful for all the work that they have done. Joanna Johnson was appointed as DBS administrator and has done a huge task in ensuring that all DBS checks which need to be updated have now almost been completed. Barbara Hylton has recently been appointed as our new Parish Safeguarding Officer and is currently going through the Safer Recruitment process and undertaking the appropriate training which will take a few months. She will help to ensure that everyone has undertaken the correct safeguarding training and that our policies and procedures are up to date. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility so please do complete any training or DBS checks if asked to do so by Barbara, Jo or myself.

Kathryn Waite, April 2025

Soup and Sandwiches / Tea and Friendship

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. Both events continue to be popular and there is always a lovely, friendly atmosphere.

We have eleven helpers and cooks from the St Mary's and St Peter's congregations, 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 these helpers, as well as our Vicar, are in the process of renewing their training this Spring. Soup and Sandwiches currently holds a 5 star food hygiene rating (the highest possible rating) and is due to be inspected again by South Cambridgeshire District Council in June or July 2025. We are very grateful to the Church Hall Committee which has supported us by maintaining the kitchen to the necessary high standard. We are able to prepare food safely and efficiently for our growing numbers, though it goes without saying that we all dream of having a bigger kitchen! 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 and Church family members who have been happy to help out on an occasional, informal basis when we are short-staffed, and to those people who help with furniture moving.

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. The Sawston Co-op also donates vouchers amounting to £15 a month to spend on food, and members of the Church family sometimes make cakes or desserts, for which we are very grateful. We take a modest amount in expenses and, this Spring, have paid £48 for our food hygiene training.

Money left over from Soup and Sandwiches, after expenses, is donated to St Mary's and St Peter's Churches and, every third month, to the John Huntingdon's Charity. From 1st May 2024 until 30th April 2025, Soup and Sandwiches has made donations as follows:

£521.27	to St Mary's Church (for Outreach)
£523.86	to St Peter's Church
£276.05	to the John Huntingdon's Charity

Donations given at Tea and Friendship are held in the Church account and, in December 2024, we decided that we could afford to make the following donations from the Tea and Friendship fund:

£100	to the Bellbird School in gratitude to the staff and children who have provided entertainment at our Christmas events
£100	to the St Mary's Mission Committee
£60	for the purchase of a set of 60 tumblers for the Church Hall

The primary aim of both these groups is to enable anybody (not just Church members) in Sawston and the surrounding area to get together in a warm and friendly environment. At Soup and Sandwiches we provide 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 games. Eric Jacobs regularly runs "playing card Bingo" and David Wilkinson organises "giant dominoes". These games are so valuable in bringing the group together and helping people to get to know one another.

The number of attendees at both groups varies, and estimating quantities for catering can be a challenge. Since Christmas 2025, numbers at Soup and Sandwiches have not fallen below 50 and, in April, there were 62 guests. Tea and Friendship is a smaller group with anywhere between 10 and 22 guests.

In December 2024 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. The children's singing makes our Christmas events extra special and we cannot thank the children, staff and helpers enough for giving their time so generously at this busy time of year.

The Soup and Sandwiches/Tea and Friendship team is a wonderful, friendly and supportive group. All our helpers work thoughtfully, constantly reviewing the way we operate and coming up with suggestions for improvements as our numbers grow. Although it is hard work, it really is a joy to be part of the team. If any members of our congregation are interested in being involved, then it would be very helpful for us to have one or two more cooks who would be happy to undertake the food hygiene training, as well as one or two people whom we could enlist on an occasional basis to help with serving when a session is going to be short-staffed.

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 friendly guests who welcome newcomers and give us kind words of appreciation and encouragement and to the Church family who support us with their prayers. Jo, our Church Administrator, has helped us enormously, especially in taking care of our publicity and ensuring that our fliers are always up-to-date.

Finally, we very much appreciate the support of Kathryn and our other clergy who make the time to attend whenever they can, talking to our guests and giving practical help.

Mary Richmond, on behalf of the Soup and Sandwiches Team, April 2025



Sawston

Youth Group Ltd

Sawston Youth Group currently has 44 young people on role, with 27 staff with varying roles and involvement within the group for example, staff who support our Monday activity meeting nights, staff who just support our Thursday Band nights and then staff who support in the background and/or on residential/camps.

On our Monday meeting nights, we have done a varied programme that the young people have enjoyed and been challenged with, from archery and team games to crafts. We have also held our enrolment service led by Rev. Kathryn and explored Christ at Christmas time where Rev. Kathryn provided wonderful stations which explained the Christmas story and encouraged the young people to be thoughtful.

We have recently ventured off to the Peak District where we had 17 young people doing their Bronze and Silver DofE test – who all passed! We hope to celebrate this at the end of our summer term activities.

Our Band has been busy supporting the Remembrance Parade and playing Last Post for the RBL. We will also be working on other events during the Summer.

Lastly, we have held an exhibition at Mary Challis where we showcased the history of the Boys' Brigade in Sawston, which was on show to the public between December 24- April 25.

Alistair Montgomery, Sawston Youth Group Chairman

World-wide Mission Committee Annual Report to the APCM 2025

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), Agnes Stamper (co-opted member), Liz Parker (co-opted member), Sarah Caswell (co-opted member), Revd Kathryn Waite (ex officio).

I would like to record my very grateful thanks to the members of The Mission Committee for their help and support during the past year. We have continued with the main aims of the Mission Committee; supporting our quarterly charities; Lent Box charity, Christmas Shoeboxes, House Boxes, Christian Aid week, and since the last APCM we have held four Fundraising Coffee Mornings. In addition, I would like to record on behalf of the members of The Mission Committee, my thanks to the PCC for the annual transfer of funds to the Mission Committee Account. The Mission Committee adds an agreed amount from this fund (£200) to the total amount of donations given by the congregation of St Mary's and St Peter's to our four main charities, each quarter.

Our agreed quarterly charities for the past year (1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025) were as follows:

- (i) **Arthur Rank Hospice (Home Charity) 1st April – 30th June 2024:** Founded in 1981, Arthur Rank Hospice supports people living in Cambridgeshire with an advanced serious illness or a life-limiting condition and those in need of end-of-life care.
- (ii) **The Melanesian Mission: (Overseas Charity) 1st July – 30th September 2024:** The Melanesian Mission is an Anglican missionary agency supporting the work of local Anglican Churches in Melanesia. The Church of Melanesia covers Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia in the SW Pacific. Selwyn College, Cambridge is named after Bishop George Selwyn who founded the Melanesian Mission in 1849.
- (iii) **EACH (East Anglia's Children's Hospices) (Home Charity) 1st October – 31st December 2023:** EACH supports families and care for children and young people with life-threatening conditions across Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk. Their aim is to ensure the best possible quality of life for babies, and young people.
- (iv) **USPG Partners in Global Mission (United Society Partners in the Gospel) (Overseas Charity) 1st January – 31st March 2025**
USPG brings people together from different parts of the global church in mutually enriching conversation and profound encounters, to increase understanding and deepen their discipleship as inter-cultural Christians. They accompany churches of the Anglican Communion in their struggles against injustices associated with gender, climate change, migration, the human rights of indigenous people and inter-religious living.

The Lent Charity for 2024 was Tearfund

Tearfund is a Christian charity that partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries. Their life-changing community training equips people with the skills they need to lift themselves out of extreme poverty. We collected 9 Tearfund Lent Boxes and other cash donations amounting to **£150**.

2024 Christmas Shoeboxes

9 Christmas Shoeboxes from St Mary's were delivered to Sawston Free Church before the deadline at the end of October. A total of 48 Christmas Shoeboxes were collected by Blythswood Care, together with two large bags of brand-new knitted hats and scarves. In addition, there was also a big bag of soaps, children's gifts and cash in envelopes.

Charities for specific church events:

- (i) **The Children's Society:** Christingle Service, November 2024; The Christmas Services, December 2024.

Invited Guest Speakers for the past year were as follows:

- (i) Andy Jowitt from A Rocha was our Guest Speaker on Sunday 2nd June 2024 at the 9.15am HC Service and 10.45am Open Door.
- (ii) Canon John Pinder gave a talk about the work of the Melanesian Mission on Sunday 15th September 2024 at the 9.15am Holy Communion Service and at the 10.45am Open Door Service.

Fundraising Coffee Mornings held during the past year (1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025), were as follows:

- (i) Saturday 1st June 2024 in support of A Rocha.
- (ii) Saturday 28th September 2024 in support of The Melanesian Mission.
- (iii) Saturday 7th December 2024 in support of The Children's Society.
- (iv) Saturday 1st February 2025 in support of USPG.

Donations were made to the following charities from 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025:

- (i) A Rocha UK (quarterly overseas charity 1st January – 31st March 2024) **£559***
- (ii) Arthur Rank Hospice (quarterly home charity 1st April – 30th June 2025): **£350**
- (iii) Tearfund (Lent Box Charity): **£150**
- (iv) Christian Aid Week 2024: **£123**
- (v) The Melanesian Mission (overseas charity 1st July – 30th September 2024): **£600**
- (vi) EACH (East Anglia's Children's Hospices) (1st October – 31st December 2024): **£475**
- (vii) The Children's Society (Christingle Service and Christmas Services 2024): **£395**

* Revd Kathryn presented Andy Jowitt (guest speaker from A Rocha) with the cheque for £559 on 2nd June 2024 at St Mary's.

House Box Charities 2024:

The Mission Committee agreed to nominate an annual charity to support for the month of August. This year we chose Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA), Cambridgeshire Branch. The Cambridgeshire Branch of MND is run entirely by volunteers who give up many hours of their time to help those living with MND and their families in the area.

We were very happy to continue receiving House Boxes from members of the congregation for The Leprosy Mission, Mission to Seafarers and the Children's Society.

House Box Donations for 2024 were:

- (i) Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA): **£300**
- (ii) The Leprosy Mission: **£40**
- (iii) The Children's Society: **£50**

Christian Aid Week 2024:

The congregation at St Mary's and St Peter's raised **£123** for Christian Aid.

Membership of The Mission Committee:

Retirement of a long-serving member:

On behalf of the members of the Mission Committee, we would like to pay tribute and give thanks for Mrs Dorothy Butler, who stepped down as a member of the Committee in May 2024 after many years of loyal support.

Election of new members to The Mission Committee:

In May 2024 we elected the following new members of the Mission Committee:

- Liz Parker
- Sarah Caswell

The founding of St Mary's Mission Committee 50 years ago

This year we celebrated 50 years since the founding of St Mary's Mission Committee. We have supported many wonderful charities over the years and it has been a privilege to have donated, on behalf of the congregation, towards the vital work they undertake here in the UK and overseas. Fifty years on, the Mission Committee's aims remain very much the same.

On behalf of the members of The Mission Committee, I would like to thank the members of the congregation at St Mary's and St Peter's. Your willingness to contribute, support and take part in the fundraising that we have organised during this past year has enabled us to help many in the UK and in areas of world devastated by war, disease, earthquakes, flood and climate change. Thank you.

Sue Lowdell, 31st March 2025