

St Mary the Virgin Linton



Annual Parish Vestry Meeting
followed by
Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Thursday 16th April 2015 at 7.30pm
in the Church

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

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1. AGENDA

Part A-Vestry Meeting

1. Prayers
2. Minutes of the Annual Parishioners' Vestry Meeting held on 3rd April 2014
3. Election of Churchwardens

Part B- Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 3rd April 2014
3. Matters Arising
4. Parochial Church Council Report
5. Financial report, followed by appointment of Independent Examiner
6. Electoral Roll Report
7. Fabric Report
8. Deanery Synod Report
9. Election of PCC Members
10. Appointment of Sideswomen and Sidesmen
11. Appointment of Deanery Synod Representative
12. Reports from Committees and Organisations
13. Churchwardens' Report
14. Questions from the floor
15. Closing Prayers

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2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISHIONERS' VESTRY MEETING, THURSDAY 3RD APRIL, 2014

The meeting, held in the Church, began at 7.30pm with prayers led by the Rector, The Revd. Dr Steve Griffiths. 29 parishioners were present.

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Annual Parishioners' Vestry Meeting of 25th April 2013 were accepted as a correct record.

Election of Churchwardens:

There were two nominations for Churchwarden - John Thorne and Dr Molly Warrington. Both are willing to continue serving as Churchwardens and they were unanimously re-elected. The Rector thanked them both.

3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, THURSDAY 3RD APRIL, 2014

Apologies:

J Conochie, A Foote, M Holden, J Nightingale, K Nightingale, R Read, M Younger.

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 25th April 2013 were accepted and signed with no amendments.

There were no matters arising.

Parochial Church Council Report:

The meeting received the following report from Mrs D Thurston, the Secretary of the PCC:

The PCC met five times during the year. The PCC meetings received and discussed regular reports from the Fabric Committee and from the Deanery Synod representatives. Financial matters have taken up much time at the PCC meetings this year, ably led by Michael Younger, Chair of the Finance Committee and Sue Ellis, Treasurer. The PCC are very grateful for the hard work of the Finance Committee and their guidance over the last few months; some difficult decisions and discussions have taken place at every meeting, as will be evident in the Finance Report.

The first meeting of the PCC in June reflected upon the letter the Rector had written to the congregation informing them of circumstantial changes to do with personnel. It was with great sadness that the PCC heard of Bridget Baguley's illness and that she would not be joining St Mary's as Curate, as anticipated. Along with the news that David Parry-Smith was to have a year-long Sabbatical from October and the retirement of Lesley Gore as Associate Priest at the end of December, the PCC had much to reflect upon regarding the deep impact of these changes on worship and ministry at St Mary's. The PCC pledged support for the Rector at this difficult time and decided to employ a Parish Administrator at the earliest opportunity to help ease the pressure upon him.

Duncan Keys was elected onto the PCC as an ex- officio member at this meeting. Finance and Fabric committee members were confirmed; John Organ was appointed PCC Anderson

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Trust Representative and joins Linda Read in this role. Joan Smith volunteered to look into the matter of Chancel Repair Liability.

Good news at the September meeting was the appointment of Sue Filby as Parish Administrator. Sue subsequently resigned as Lay Chair and member of the PCC. Further good news at this meeting was that Gill Powell completed her training as Authorised Lay Minister (ALM) and licensing took place on 22nd September.

The September meeting was lengthy, with much passionate debate and deliberation spent over the Liturgical choreography and accoutrements for the 10.00am service on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month at St Mary's. Decisions were made concerning seating arrangements (for congregation and choir), position of the Nave altar, use of the pulpit, use of the screen during 10.00am services and receiving Communion. Feedback from the congregation after a long period of experimentation was taken into account in all discussions; all members of the PCC were given the chance to express their opinions also. These 6 key areas were discussed in detail and at length, with arguments both for and against, some of the discussions were difficult and contentious, sometimes emotional and intense.

The November meeting saw another very full agenda. Barry Easton had circulated 2 exciting reports from the Beacon Trust, these were a great insight into the work that is going on with the youth of Linton and the PCC enjoyed reading these reports. Unfortunately Barry could not attend this meeting but he presented the reports at the January meeting and updated the PCC on future plans for the wonderful work of The Beacon Trust in Linton.

A lengthy discussion took place concerning the current financial situation and the PCC voted to accept the recommendation made by the Finance Committee to set a deficit budget for 2014 for £12,807, to negotiate with the Diocese in challenging the Parish Share and to run a Stewardship campaign as a matter of urgency. A working party was formed comprising Michael Younger, Sue Ellis, The Rector and hopefully others from outside the PCC to run a Stewardship Campaign.

Time was spent discussing the Fabric Report especially in the light of the financial situation. After much discussion, the PCC accepted a proposal that the Quinquennial repairs are carried out other than the replacement of the North porch drainpipes and the South aisle drainage works, and subject to Andrew Gore (Chair of the Fabric Committee) identifying with the architect elements of the stained glass window repairs that can wait until 2017.

The PCC discussed a letter received from The Chair of The Friends of St Mary's, sharing concerns about the role of the Friends in the future, and considering the way forward in light of current trends within the Church and the community. The Friends have raised over £100,000 in the last ten years and asked the PCC and the congregation for greater awareness, encouragement and active support for their work in maintaining the Church building, as a matter of urgency. The PCC agreed to share a programme of work with the Friends as requested by them, and pledged to be more involved and supportive of the Friends. The PCC are grateful to The Friends of St Mary's for their unfailing and substantial support.

At this meeting, there was a long discussion on the future of the Flower Festival. The Flower Festival Working Group had written to inform the PCC of their dissolution, feeling the need for fresh initiatives and a new approach for this event. They requested the PCC urgently consider the future of the Flower Festival and fundraising in general. It was decided to plan to have an event of some kind in June, with a possibility of involving other village

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organisations, however, unfortunately no-one has so far come forward to organise a fund-raising event in June; volunteers were asked for in the Pew sheet.

A subgroup for detailed discussions concerning the Chancel Repair Liability was formed at this meeting, comprising Joan Smith, The Rector, John Thorne (Churchwarden), and Sarah King. Sue Filby and Chris Kemshell were unanimously approved as Infant School Governors in November. Sue Mudge and John Organ were ratified by the PCC as Chalice Assistants and Andrew Gore and Richard Read were appointed as PCC representatives on the Parish Council Churchyard Management Group. Letters of resignation from the PCC were received from Sue Filby and David Parry-Smith.

In January, the PCC heard the good news that Nanette Blackmore is to take on the cleaning of the Pavilion again. A letter was sent to Nanette thanking her. The Living Nativity event held before Christmas was a great success and the organisers were thanked. Rebecca Richardson was approved to become a Chalice Assistant.

The PCC were shocked and saddened to hear from The Rector in his report at this meeting that he feels a minority of people at St Mary's seem unable to celebrate the movement of God's spirit in our midst. He spoke about 'murmuring' and the destructive nature of this pattern of behaviour. The PCC discussed why this is happening and ways of preventing it. The PCC resolved to continue to support the Rector, showing continued confidence in St Mary's and pledged to help combat destructive people. We reaffirmed our commitment to continue to go forward with our Mission Action Plan, ensuring St Mary's remains a Mission shaped Church. Over the last 35 months we have completed 53 of the MAP Recommendations and started work on a further 14, this is cause for celebration.

The PCC passed a resolution concerning the Chancel Repair Liability, that it will not pursue the registration or enforcement of Chancel Repair Liability on various plots in Linton. Guidance from the Diocese is awaited with regard to possible negotiations with Pembroke College and no discussion took place on this subject. It was decided to accept the proposal from the Mark 4 Group to give £1,000 charity donation to Farm Africa.

The PCC heard news from the Fabric Committee that work has started on the preparation of the ground around the Pavilion for the Peace Garden. The trial of receiving communion at 2 stations (either standing or kneeling) was reviewed and after positive feedback, the PCC decided to continue this practice. The Mark 1 group - 'to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom' - reported briefly to the PCC following their first meeting in January. The group are keen to co-opt a few more members and are concentrating on capitalising on major festivals throughout the year.

The last meeting of the year in March, prior to the APCM, was just 2 weeks ago. A decision was made on the new charge for the hire of the Pavilion of £15 per hour (£10 per hour to charitable organisations). The finances for end of year were presented and adopted unanimously by the PCC. The PCC gratefully received suggestions for future fundraising following a plea in the Pew Sheet and endorsed these; the Stewardship Campaign Committee will oversee the events and support the planning and arrangements.

The PCC ratified the planned Quinquennial works and agreed to proceed, hopefully with work beginning in August. This decision was made easier by good news from The Friends of St Mary's who have increased their offer of support for these works to the sum of £25,000 which is an enormous help. Also at this meeting, the PCC approved the nomination for Dawn

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Casterson to join the Infants' School governing body as Foundation Governor. Sue Filby was ratified by the PCC as Safeguarding Officer for St Mary's.

Financial Review

Dr Molly Warrington and Mrs Sue Ellis (Treasurer) presented the annual financial review, on behalf of the Finance Committee.

Total receipts during 2013 amounted to £88,213 and are detailed in the financial statements. Voluntary income fell overall by just over 5% from the previous year, with a slight fall in gift-aided income, other planned giving and loose plate collections, but increases in one-off gifts, donations and legacies. Fund-raising activities meanwhile increased by around 20% from the previous year, though this was partly offset by an increase in fund-raising costs. The PCC would like to record its gratitude to: the Friends of St Mary's for a grant of £791 to buy a cabinet for the new audio-visual system; to the Anderson Trust for a donation of £400 towards set-up costs associated with the Fresh Expressions initiative, Messy Church; and to the Parish Council for its grant of £800 towards general running expenses.

Total expenditure during the year was £107,343, with day-to-day running expenses amounting to £82,815, a fall of almost 2% from the previous year. This was mainly accounted for by lower outgoings on salaries, following the sabbatical leave of the Director of Music and the post of Administrator being vacant for the first eight months of the year. Despite an increase, the Ministry Share was once again paid in full, enabling a discount to be obtained. The second payment tranche of £16,825 for the new audio visual system is accounted for under the heading of major capital expenditure; this sum was taken from reserves, in line with the PCC's decision the previous year under its Mission Action Plan.

The reserves policy was reviewed by the PCC during the year. It was agreed to retain a sum of £15,000 for urgent repairs and to set aside a further £15,000 as a contingency to cover the Ministry Share and utility bills for three months. These reserves are currently held in a sterling bond fund, which fluctuates but is already exceeding last year's figures. About £7,000 of the reserves will be spent on Fabric.

Molly explained that the Balance Sheet shows designated accounts which can be changed, but restricted funds which cannot be changed. She reported that the Finance Committee have done all they can to keep expenditure down but a deficit budget has been set for next year and St Mary's faces a serious financial situation with income continuing to fall. She reiterated the importance of fundraising which will be crucial during the coming year.

John Organ asked if the audio-visual projector is included as an asset and Molly agreed that this will be included in the next budget report. The Rector commented that current times are challenging for almost all Churches in the Deanery and thanked the Finance Committee for all of their hard work with handling such complex accounts and stewarding the money so well.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

The meeting unanimously accepted the reappointment of Mr Andrew Cohen as the Independent Examiner of the accounts for 2014 (proposed by B Wallman and seconded by G Younger).

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Electoral Roll Report

At present the new electoral roll for 2014 has a total of 143 people on it; this has increased by 7 from the 136 people that were reported in 2013. The next full review is due in 2019 (these are to be carried out every six years).

It should be noted that support for St Mary's cannot be solely based on the people included on the electoral roll. There are many who regularly attend services and other events at St Mary's who do not wish to be included on the roll. Further, there are many people in the parish who consider St Mary's to be 'their church' but may not regularly attend and who are also not on the roll. You can be added to the electoral roll if you have been baptised and are over 16 and either: 'live in the parish', 'live outside the parish and have attended St Mary's for 6 months' or 'are a member of good standing at another church and have attended St Mary's for 6 months'.

The Rector thanked Beth Kirkman for her hard work as the Electoral Roll Officer.

Fabric Report

Andrew Gore, Chair of the Fabric Committee, presented the report, focussing on the three main areas, the Church, the Churchyard and the Pavilion.

No significant work to the fabric of the church or its furnishings has been undertaken during the year. A faculty for the works contained in the specification prepared by Henry Freeland, the church architect, based on the work identified in the Quinquennial Report, was granted last year. A faculty to provide step free access through the north porch was also granted. However, it became clear that the PCC's finances were not sufficient to fund the totality of the main QI works, or the north porch work. Henry Freeland and Andrew Gore identified QI work that could reasonably be delayed until after the next Quinquennial Report, due in September 2015, and a revised quotation for the reduced works has been obtained. The Friends have most generously agreed to increase their grant to the church to £25,000 to enable the core QI works to go ahead, and at the time of writing a starting date is awaited. It is hoped that the works should proceed in the summer and disruption to the interior of the church should be limited.

Andrew reported that he is cautiously optimistic that the next QI report will not identify any urgent major repairs to the main fabric of the church, in which case it should be possible to proceed with the works proposed to improve rainwater drainage. It may be that the north porch work is a single project that would match the aims and objects of the Friends. For some straightforward works, it may be sensible to look to experienced local contractors rather than specialist church contractors.

The churchyard is the statutory responsibility of Linton Parish Council and it is important to acknowledge with gratitude their work. When the PC agreed to accept the transfer of statutory responsibility for the churchyard from the PCC, much of the churchyard fabric was in a poor state. The PC has since spent considerable sums on the churchyard and is looking to spend further sums on the west wall in particular. On behalf of the PCC Andrew has asked that consideration is given by the PC to repairing the tarmac inside the gate from Church Lane. It is hoped we might be able to secure grants to provide some parking for cycles in an unobtrusive corner. We remain very grateful to the Monday Gang for the invaluable work they do in keeping the churchyard and its trees in good order.

Work started after Christmas to make good the omission of soakaways to the building and to clear, lower and gravel the areas around the sides facing the churchyard and former rectory.

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The work was delayed by the wet weather but is now well on course for completion. Apart from the digging of the soakaways, all work has been carried out by Andrew Gore and volunteers - John Thorne, Keith Nightingale, John Organ, Michael Younger and Sue Mudge. It has proved quite a major undertaking. It will be necessary for volunteers to carry out further work in the coming year to all parts of the exterior of the building and access points. It cannot be stressed too strongly that the downside of the relative cheapness of a timber building is the need for timely and regular maintenance if it is to enjoy a long life.

Funding is yet to be identified for the Peace Garden. We also face the problem of significant sucker growth that has erupted from the live roots of trees felled in the area, which renders it impractical to lay out the Peace Garden for the time being. In the meantime there is no reason why the area should not be grassed, and it is hoped that this will be carried out this springtime. A Peace Garden once laid out will require a fair degree of regular continuing maintenance. It is clear the Monday Gang will not be in a position to undertake it. The relative lack of response to requests for help with the current pavilion works, which are an isolated event, is a concern, and the enforced delay in laying out the Peace Garden must be used to establish a plan for a sustainable maintenance force to care for the Garden.

The Rector thanked Andrew Gore and the Fabric Committee for their very hard work over the year, expressing immense gratitude for the care of our beautiful building and grounds.

Deanery Synod Report

Margaret Cox, (Deanery Synod Representative) reported that there are 24 parishes in the Deanery and meetings rotate among the churches. In the past year they have taken place in All Saints, Harston, All Saints, Little Shelford and St Mary the Virgin, Sawston. Two topics - money and mission - have dominated the Agendas.

After extensive consultation, there are changes in the pipeline to the way in which the Parish Share will be calculated, to make it fairer. Whatever is decided, they will come into effect in 2015 and the amount most parishes pay will increase. At present the Deanery as a whole pays its full share. The Deanery has its own budget, with at present a healthy balance of over £35,700. Part of this can be used to help parishes in financial difficulty with their Parish Share, either as a loan or a grant. The Bishop is keen that part of the proceeds from the Parish Share be directed towards mission. There is a new Diocesan Director of Mission, Rev Peter Wood, who spoke at one meeting of his work encouraging parishes to use his support, both financial and advisory, for mission projects. At that time he had £9,000 available.

Concern has been expressed that although there is extensive housing development around Cambridge, no provision has been made for faith buildings. Particularly relevant to the Granta Deanery is the extensive new housing in the Shelford area, where, it was suggested, there is opportunity for mission. There have been personnel changes with the Rev Simon Talbot filling the vacancy in Gt Shelford and the Archdeacon, Ven John Beer, retiring.

Margaret Cox is standing down as Deanery Synod Representative this year; the Rector expressed his thanks to her for her contribution during the last 3 years.

Election of Parochial Church Council members

Continuing members on the PCC were confirmed as:

Elected in 2012: Mr J Organ, Mrs L Read, Mrs P Richardson.

Elected in 2013: Mrs H Foote, Mr D Keys (ex-officio), Mrs S King, Mrs B Kirkman, Mrs S Mudge, Mrs J Smith.

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Treasurer (ex-officio): Mrs S Ellis

Churchwardens (ex-officio): Mr J Thorne, Dr M Warrington

There were six vacancies on the PCC and eight nominations: Nanette Blackmore, Nicola Collard, Susan Filby, Michael Holden, Lucie Mordue, Judy Nightingale, Gillian Powell and Rosemary Read. Lucie Mordue and Sue Filby withdrew and the six remaining people were elected en bloc by those present, with one abstention.

The Rector thanked the 6 new members for standing for election onto the PCC.

Appointment of Sideswomen/Sidesmen

All persons on the list of Sidespeople, with the exception of John Norris, were re-appointed unanimously en bloc. Colleen Lockstone volunteered to stand as Sideswoman and was unanimously appointed by those present.

Appointment of Deanery Synod Representative

Andrew Gore pointed out the rules about Deanery Synod vacancies. Margaret Cox has completed her 3 years as Deanery Synod Rep. and is standing down. Michael Younger was elected last year (to replace Tricia Lewis who stood down after 2 years as Deanery Synod Rep.) but also stands down as it is the end of the current 3 year term. There were therefore, two vacancies and three nominations - Michael Younger was willing to stand again; Andrew Gore and Derek Lockstone. A paper ballot was duly held and votes counted by Gill Powell and Sarah King (both PCC members). The result of the paper ballot elected Andrew Gore and Derek Lockstone to the positions of Deanery Synod Representatives for the PCC.

Reports from Committees and Organisations

Reports are all posted on the website as well as included in the 2014 APCM booklet and were received from the following groups:

Linton CE Infant School; Beacon Trust Youth Work; Junior Church and Crèche; Messy Church; Tots in Tow; Mums Link; Choir; Churchyard Management Working Group; The Monday Gang; The Friends of St. Mary's; Mothers' Union; Greening the Church; Bellringers.

Questions about the reports were invited, although there were none asked. The Rector thanked all those who had written the reports and all those who volunteer for all the groups involved at St Mary's.

Rector's Report

The Rector presented his report (which can be found in full on the website as well as in the 2014 APCM booklet) and invited questions or comments; there were none. Below is a much abbreviated version:

Since this is my last Rector's Report, I would like to take the opportunity to review the journey we have made together at St. Mary's in recent years.

Jo and I came to St. Mary's in 2007. First I served as Honorary Assistant Priest under the leadership of Rev Mark Mills-Powell. I was then engaged with ministry during the interregnum before my appointment as Rector in 2009.

Since my appointment, my focus has always been constant; to help frame St. Mary's as a Mission-Shaped Church. The detail of what that would mean came out of the Listening Exercise that we undertook together throughout 2010, culminating in the adoption of our

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Mission Action Plan in January 2011. That Mission Action Plan has subsequently underpinned all that we have achieved over the last 4 years. Here is what I consider some of the major achievements that we have made together:

- Marks of Mission Reference Groups
- Development of Lay Ministry
- Community and Ecumenical Links
- Schools Work
- Children and Youth Work
- Ordinands
- Fresh Expressions of Church
- Pastoral Care
- Church Growth
- Social Engagement

For me, the last 5 years as Rector have been something of a rollercoaster ride! But I leave Linton absolutely confident in the belief that I have achieved the job that God gave me to do when I arrived. St. Mary's is now a confident, mission-shaped church, directed and underpinned by committed and visionary lay ministry. That is how it should be.

I sincerely hope that, during the interregnum, St. Mary's will stay strong in its identity as a Mission-Shaped Church. I hope that any attempt to reverse the corporate achievements of the last 5 years will be strenuously opposed. I have no doubt that, if St. Mary's stays firm in its identity, it will be a very attractive church for any potential incoming incumbent to consider. Thank you for the privilege of allowing me to walk this part of your journey with you. I wish St. Mary's the very best for the future.

Questions from the floor:

- Glynis Younger asked that a letter of thanks be sent to David and Beryl Rose who regularly take the service at Symonds House every Monday.

Action: Secretary

- John Thorne, Churchwarden, gave public thanks to the Rector as this was his last APCM at St Mary's before the interregnum. He thanked the Rector for all of his very hard work over the past years, recognising that it has not been easy all the time with ups and downs and various challenges! However, John said that he had very much enjoyed working with the Rector, had enjoyed his company and wished him all the best in his new endeavour in Enfield.

The meeting closed in prayer at 8.45 p.m.

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4. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL 2014 - 2015

Administrative Information

St Mary's Church is situated in Church Lane, Linton. It is part of the Diocese of Ely within the Church of England. The Correspondence address is 4 Bakers Lane, Linton, Cambridge CB21 4NF. The registered charity number is 1138508.

PCC members who have served from the APCM 2014 until this report was approved are:

<i>Incumbent</i>	The Revd. Dr. Steve Griffiths, Chair (from 6/10/09 to 18/05/14) Vacancy from 19 May 2014	
<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mr John Thorne Dr M Warrington	
<i>Representatives to the Deanery Synod</i>	Mr A Gore Mr D Lockstone	
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs N Blackmore (from APCM 2014) Mrs N Collard (from APCM 2014) Mrs S Ellis (Treasurer ex-officio from APCM 2012) Mrs H Foote (from APCM2013) Mr M Holden (from APCM 2014) Mrs S King (from APCM 2013) Mrs B Kirkman (from APCM 2013, resigned 27/11/14) Mrs S Mudge (from APCM 2013, Secretary from May 2014) Mrs J Nightingale (from APCM 2014, Lay Chair from May 2014) Mr J Organ (from APCM 2012) Mrs G Powell (from APCM 2014) Mrs L Read (from APCM 2012) Mrs R Read (from APCM 2014) Mrs P Richardson (from APCM 2012) Mrs J Smith (from APCM 2013)	
<i>Co-opted members</i>	Mrs S Filby (from APCM 2014 for 1 year) Mrs L Mordue (from APCM 2014 for 1 year)	

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Objectives and activities

St Mary the Virgin's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has maintenance responsibilities for St Mary's Church and for the Pavilion adjacent to the church.

Numerical performance in 2014

There were 143 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll at the end of 2014. This was an increase of 9 people over the previous year.

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Attendances at each service are recorded and annual returns made to the Diocese of Ely. The average Sunday attendance, counted during October 2014, was 81 adults and 19 children, while average weekday service attendances in the same month comprised 275 adults and 168 children and young people. On Easter Day 2014 184 people attended a service, while 228 people attended a service on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

In comparison with the previous year, there was a fall in the number of adults attending a Sunday service in October. This is accounted for in the fact that Word and Worship was not running on Sunday evenings in the autumn owing to the interregnum. It is pleasing to note that the numbers of children attending a Sunday service had increased from the previous year. Considerably more people attended an Easter Day service than in 2013, though there were fewer attendances at Christmas. Nonetheless, it is significant to note that 349 people attended special services run by the church during Advent 2014.

Attendance at weekday services is dominated by the service held weekly in term time for the church infant school. The Thursday service of Holy Communion and monthly Time Out With God service, together with regular services held in Symonds House and Nichols Court, continue to draw small congregations.

Review of the year

The PCC had six regular meetings during the year and one extraordinary meeting which was convened in response to the consultation on the draft diocesan strategy.

The Revd Dr Steve Griffiths had resigned at the end of March and his last service in Linton was 18th May 2014. Denise Thurston, secretary, ended her term of office at the APCM and she is thanked for her service in this role. The May meeting began with the appointment of Judy Nightingale as Lay Chair and Sue Mudge as secretary. Members were made aware of vacancies for Foundation Governors at the Infant School. Joan Smith and Pam Richardson were nominated to become governors. It was agreed to ask Nicola Collard to be the lay governor in place of the Rector for the duration of the Interregnum.

The financial situation has been of constant concern at each meeting as the planned giving, and hence Gift Aid recovery, has decreased while expenditure has gradually risen in spite of the Treasurer's vigilance and good housekeeping procedures. The discussion in May resulted in a stewardship group being formed. Further fundraising ideas were put forward such as the monthly mini market and a smaller-scale flower festival was proposed for October. Michael Younger's contribution as chair of the finance committee was greatly appreciated and Michael Holden later took on the role. Sue Ellis has again been a very reliable and conscientious treasurer, for which the PCC is very grateful.

The Interregnum, or vacancy, has inevitably featured on the agenda at every meeting. In May, the churchwardens informed the PCC of the process which had to be followed and reminded us that we are a Benefice of five parishes and a Team Ministry and therefore the other parishes had important roles to play too. The PCC agreed that the two churchwardens, Molly Warrington and John Thorne should be the Linton parish representatives for the recruitment process.

Regular reports from the fabric committee were submitted to meetings along with reports from the two Deanery Synod representatives.

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In July Sue Filby advised the PCC on appropriate safeguarding policies and practice which led to improved procedures being implemented. Glynis Younger submitted a report about the Peace garden, on behalf of the Mark 5 mission group. Initial work to clear the area for the Peace garden to the side of the pavilion and the separate pavilion garden, behind the building, has continued at intervals throughout the year. Andrew Gore and John Thorne have led a number of working parties to create soak away areas and clear weeds and rubble. A workman has recently erected some fencing and laid paving in the pavilion garden.

The churchwardens reported on their meetings with The Venerable Hugh McCurdy, Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech, and churchwardens from the other four parishes and the discussions on how we do or might operate as a team. Members from the five PCCs were invited to a meeting in August to hear The Revd Canon Fiona Windsor from the Papworth Team Ministry give her perspective on team working. The PCC started to think about what attributes would be desirable in a new Rector. A Team Profile was needed and would be the main document for informing potential candidates. John Thorne explained that we were encouraged to use three areas from the Diocese mission action plan (Engage, Grow and Deepen) to create our profile. He led an exercise to consider what could be the church role and characteristics of a Rector for each mission area. All five parishes were asked to do the same exercise and then to share their ideas. Molly Warrington offered to co-ordinate the ideas into one document and two informal meetings were arranged in August for PCC members to receive feedback and to see how the profile was developing.

Following the informal August meetings, some revisions were made to the team profile and a number of photographs were included. The team profile was adopted at the September meeting and thanks were recorded for the vast amount of time which Molly Warrington had spent preparing the document. The profile was then sent to the two Archdeacons - a new Archdeacon of Cambridge, The Revd Dr Alex Hughes, was collated on 14th September.

The PCC were informed that the licensing service for Nicola Collard would be on 4th October in Ely Cathedral and Nicola would be presented with her Reader's stole during the harvest service on 28th September.

Throughout the year, Molly Warrington has persevered to find priests to take the usual range of services at Linton. There have been weeks when this proved difficult, e.g. during summer holiday time and at Christmas, but we have been blessed with a variety of different visiting Ministers. The PCC is also grateful to our local retired priests; the Ven. Alan Clarkson, Canon Alan Cole, Revd Lesley Gore as well as Duncan Keys, who have all played a regular part in leading our worship. Molly has given bulletins at PCC meetings and ensured that special services such as All Souls and Remembrance were also covered.

In November, Molly outlined the arrangements for Christmas services. It appeared that no one was available to lead an informal service on Christmas Eve. Discussion ensued and it seemed that families in the village valued this service and there was a call for it to be available. Sue Ellis later volunteered her sister who is training to be a Reader in another Diocese. It was indeed appreciated by those who attended and the PCC was grateful to Jane Darlington for leading it with Pam Richardson.

Nanette Blackmore was thanked for organising the flower festival in October. It was a successful event in terms of mission and outreach as well as raising some funds.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

PCC members were advised of the Section 12 meeting scheduled for December. This is a formal part of the process for recruiting a new Rector. The meeting was chaired by The Venerable Dr Alex Hughes, Archdeacon of Cambridge and attended by Revd Dr Julie Norris, Rural Dean, and the Lay Chair of the Granta Deanery. All members of the five PCCs of the Linton Team Ministry were invited. Alex Hughes checked that various procedural points had been followed. He praised the Team Profile, suggested a few minor changes and said that it was an excellent piece of work. It was noted that Revd Graham Ridgewell had announced his retirement since the profile was written. The incoming Team Rector would be involved in the appointment of a Team Vicar. It was agreed to place an advert in The Church Times in January and the Archdeacon offered to draft one. He put forward a possible timetable for applications and proposed some interview dates. He suggested how the interviews might be structured to include a formal part as well as visits to the five churches and the Rectory.

Stewardship was discussed in detail at the November meeting and again in January. It was acknowledged that 'giving' includes people's time and talents which helps to fulfil the church's ministry and mission to the people of Linton but it is sometimes hard to separate and celebrate that aspect from financial giving, which is vital in order to pay the bills to maintain the church as a warm and welcoming building. No firm conclusions were reached in January as by then, all PCCs had been asked to engage with the Diocesan draft strategy for mission.

The Archdeacons scheduled open meetings in each Deanery so that the draft strategy could be presented and discussed by as many people as possible. A document was circulated in advance, entitled 'People Fully Alive' and it aims to extend and build upon the Ely mission statement of 'We pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ'. Following the open meeting at St Mary's Sawston, PCC members held an extraordinary meeting in February purely to discuss the Linton response to the strategy and how the Ely proposals related to our own mission action plan, which in turn would inform our stewardship needs.

In March Michael Holden presented the final accounts and reiterated that a continuing loss is not sustainable. The PCC agreed to appoint a stewardship officer who would be able to engage with the wider village community as well as church congregations.

The PCC once again is immensely grateful to The Friends of St Mary's for providing £25,000 to fund the recent works which were identified in the last Quinquennial inspection. The current project to improve the access to the church via the north porch is partially funded from a legacy. Thanks are also extended to Andrew Gore who, as chair of the fabric committee, liaises with the architect to discuss appropriate work, obtains quotations and deals with any problems which arise during works.

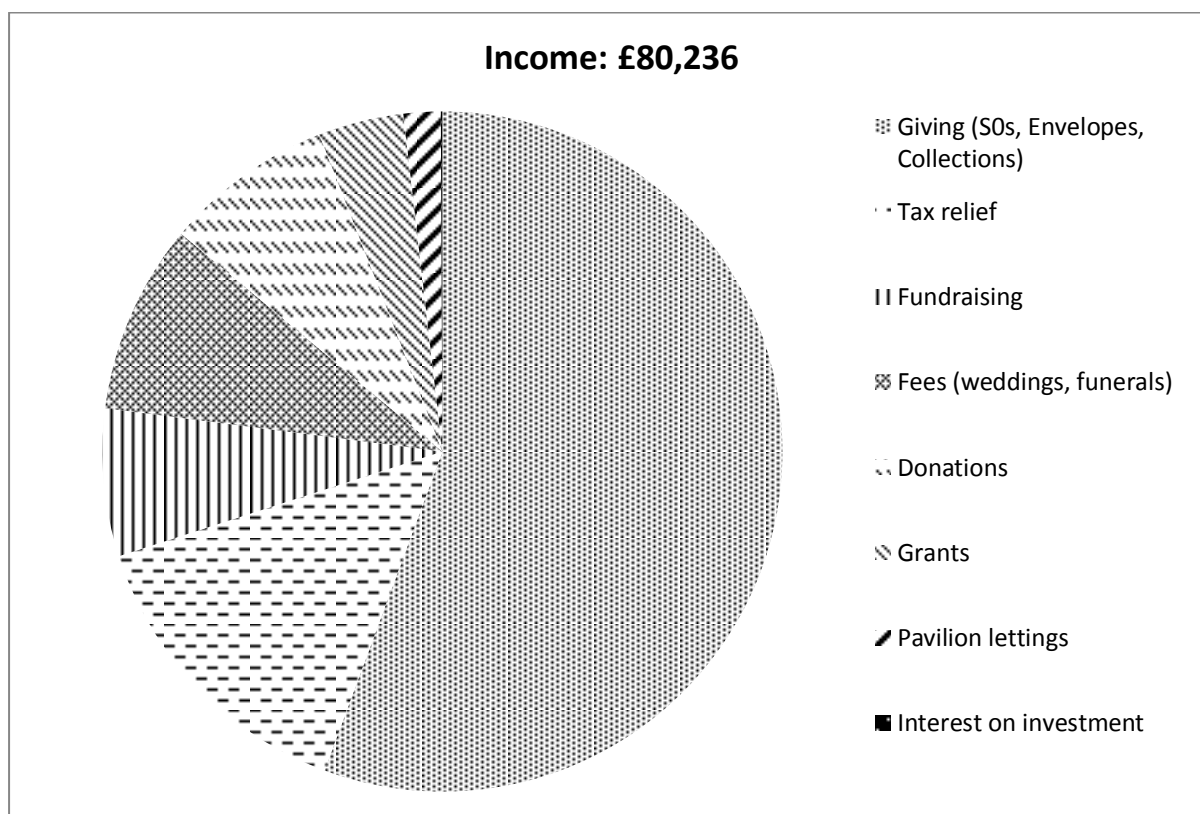
Interviews for a Rector were held in early March. There were five candidates and although there were logistical problems in scheduling the interviews and visits to all the churches, it was gratifying that potential Rectors wanted to come to lead the Linton Team. The PCC ended the year on a very positive note with the announcement of the appointment of The Revd Canon Dr Maggie Guite and we look forward to welcoming her to Linton in July.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

5. FINANCIAL REVIEW TO 31ST DECEMBER 2014

Where does the money come from?

Over 2014 St Mary's received a total of £80,260 in income, a fall of 9% from the previous year. The chart below shows the main sources of income and highlights the church's crucial dependence on regular giving. Disappointingly, 2014 saw a 15% decrease in gift-aided income, and consequently a fall in gift aid recovered, though these figures were offset to some extent by an increase in loose plate collections. Fund-raising activities produced much needed income, and the PCC would like to record its gratitude to the Anderson Trust for a donation of £650 for children's activities, and the Parish Council for its grant of £850 towards general running expenses.



Where does the money go?

Total expenditure during the year was £95,592, with day-to-day running expenses amounting to £87,889, an increase of just over 6% from the previous year.

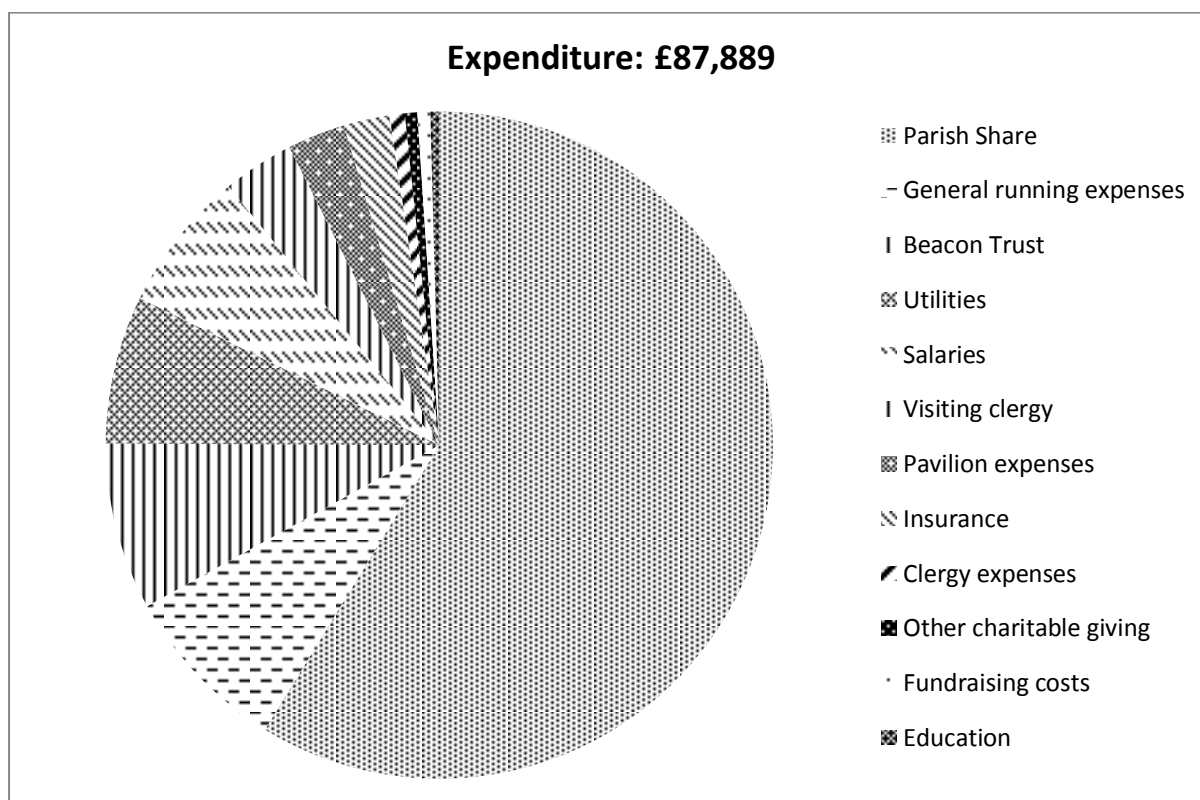
As the chart below shows, the most significant part of expenditure goes on the parish share, which accounts for 59% of outgoings. Paying the Share is important, principally because otherwise the Diocese would not provide us with a Rector (or reimburse expenditure on visiting clergy during the interregnum) – but the amount requested increases year on year and it becomes increasingly difficult for the PCC to honour its commitment to pay the full amount.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

In budgeting beyond the Ministry Share, the PCC prioritised expenditure on:

- providing a welcoming, warm and well-maintained space for space for services;
- supporting the valuable work undertaken with Linton's young people, through the Beacon Trust;
- providing administrative support, important to free up time for the incumbent to spend on pastoral activities or, during the vacancy, to ensure communication channels between church and community remain open;
- ensuring worship is meaningful and accessible to a diversity of people through, for example, the provision of music to accompany services, printing new service sheets where appropriate, or photocopying materials;
- maintaining the Pavilion as both a meeting space and an asset;
- as a reflection of God's generous giving to us, giving back a proportion of income to those in need.

These priorities are reflected in the expenditure on the chart below, and detailed in the financial accounts that follow.



Reserves Policy

The reserves policy was reviewed by the PCC during the year. It was agreed to retain a sum of £15,000 for urgent repairs and to set aside a further £15,000 as a contingency to cover the Ministry Share and utility bills for three months. These reserves are currently held in a sterling bond fund.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Financial Statements

The financial statements which follow comprise:

- A statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year, showing all resources made available to the PCC and all expenditure incurred by it, and reconciling changes to funds.
- A return of Parish Finance which shows the same information but gives a breakdown of income and expenditure.
- A Balance Sheet showing assets, liabilities and funds.
- Notes to financial statements, expanding on information in the accounting statements.

Accounting Policies

These accounts have been prepared under the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and in accordance with the Charities SORP (2005) and applicable standards. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission under the name of The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Linton, Diocese of Ely, charity registration number 1138508.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

St Mary's Linton Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 01 January 2014 to 31 December 2014

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Incoming resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Voluntary income	64,101	1,810	—	65,911	71,698
Activities for generating funds	5,629	—	—	5,629	9,120
Investment income	54	5	—	59	88
Incoming resources from charitable activities	8,659	—	—	8,659	7,305
Other incoming resources	—	—	—	—	—
Total incoming resources	78,444	1,815	—	80,260	88,213
Resources used					
Cost of generating funds	434	—	—	434	3,100
Cost of generating voluntary income	47	—	—	47	—
Fundraising trading cost of goods sold and other costs	60	—	—	60	205
Charitable activities	94,835	214	—	95,050	103,926
Governance costs	—	—	—	—	—
Total resources used	95,377	214	—	95,592	107,232
Net incoming / outgoing resources before transfer	(16,933)	1,600	—	(15,332)	(19,019)
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	18,783	950	—	19,733	—
Gross transfers between funds - out	(19,483)	(250)	—	(19,733)	—
Net incoming / outgoing before other gains / losses	(17,633)	2,300	—	(15,332)	(19,019)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains / losses on investment assets	4,116	—	—	4,116	(370)
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds	(13,516)	2,300	—	(11,216)	(19,389)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	107,160	2,551	—	109,711	129,101
Total funds carried forward	93,643	4,852	—	98,495	109,711

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Return of Parish Finance for year ending 31 December 2014

Incoming Resources	2014	2013
Voluntary Income		
Tax efficient planned giving		
Gift Aid - Bank	33,338.00	40,102.00
Gift Aid - Envelopes	3,125.70	2,938.40
Total tax efficient planned giving	36,513.70	43,040.40
Other planned giving	2,844.77	2,969.50
Loose plate collections	5,297.59	3,939.93
Giving through church boxes	430.79	381.99
One off Gift Aid gifts	2,306.39	2,142.78
Donations, appeals, etc	3,716.01	2,891.60
Tax recovered through Gift Aid	11,542.28	13,340.48
Legacies		1,000.00
Non-recurring one off grants (note 1)	3,260.10	1,991.82
Total for voluntary income	65,911.63	71,698.50
Activities for Generating Funds		
Other funds generated (note 2)	1,066.66	
Flower Festival	3,662.88	7,185.29
Christmas Event	240.36	1,442.95
Social Events (note 3)	659.79	492.68
Total for Activities for Generating Funds	5,629.69	9,120.92
Bank and building society interest	59.69	88.06
Church Activities		
Fees for weddings and funerals	7,245.00	5,422.00
Pavilion lettings	1,414.00	1,883.59
Total for Church Activities	8,659.00	7,305.59
Total for Incoming Resources	80,260.01	88,213.07
Resources Expended	2014	2013
Costs of Generating Funds		
Cost of Fetes and other events	47.89	
Flower Festival Costs	371.88	3,050.56
Christmas Event Costs	62.40	50.00
Costs of Social Events	60.19	205.96
Total for costs of Generating Funds	542.34	3,306.52

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

All Mission Giving and Charitable Grants & Donations (note 4)

Giving to missionary societies	531.00	300.00
Giving - relief and development agencies		88.90
Home mission	7,111.92	8,225.00
Total for All Mission Giving etc	7,642.92	8,613.90

Church Activities

Parish Share	51,639.02	48,959.28
Salaries (note 5)	6,022.26	2,767.99

Expenses (clergy, pastoral staff, etc)

Working expenses of Incumbent	410.65	528.73
Rector's telephone	237.50	427.50
Education	377.85	43.64
Total for Expenses	1,026.00	999.87

Parish training and mission		42.00
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Regular Church running expenses (insurance, cleaning, admin)

Visiting speakers/ locums (note 6)	3,036.65	132.00
Church running - insurance (note 7)	1,960.35	3,453.08
Organ / piano tuning	392.70	539.96
Church maintenance	404.11	791.66
Upkeep of services	4,785.00	4,214.66
Administration	1,527.09	2,722.37
Flowers (note 8)	124.63	31.54
Total for Regular Church running expenses	12,230.53	11,885.27

Church utility bills (gas, electricity, water, oil)

Church running - electric	490.36	757.25
Church running - gas	5,809.74	3,569.61
Church running - water	21.94	22.02
Total for Church utility bills	6,322.04	4,348.88

Costs of trading (magazine, hall, bookstall costs, etc)

Magazine expenses		170.00
Pavilion running - electricity	485.88	601.93
Pavilion running - maintenance	1,959.00	1,074.32
Pavilion running - water	22.29	45.12
Total for Costs of trading	2,467.17	1,891.37
Total for Church Activities	79,704.02	70,894.63
Total for Resources Expended	87,889.28	82,815.08

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Major Capital Expenditure	2014	2013
Church major repairs - installation		16,825.26
Pavilion Depreciation	7,703.10	7,703.10
Total for Major Capital Expenditure	7,703.10	24,528.36
Total Expenditure	95,592.38	107, 343.44
	2014	2013
Total Income	80,260.01	88,213.07
Resources Expended	87,889.28	82,815.08
Major Capital Expenditure Including Depreciation	7,703.10	24,528.36
Total Expenditure	95,592.38	107,343.44
Balance	(15,332.37)	(19,130.37)

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

St Mary's Linton Balance sheet (Summary) As of: 31 December 2014

	Total Funds £	Prior Year Funds £
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets Pavilion (note 9)	38,515	46,218
Investments (note 10)	41,406	37,290
	<hr/> 79,921 <hr/>	<hr/> 83,508 <hr/>
Current assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	18,573	26,202
	<hr/> 18,573 <hr/>	<hr/> 26,202 <hr/>
Net current assets less current liabilities	<hr/> 18,573 <hr/>	<hr/> 26,202 <hr/>
Total assets less current liabilities	<hr/> 98,495 <hr/>	<hr/> 109,711 <hr/>
Total net assets less liabilities	<hr/> 98,495 <hr/>	<hr/> 109,711 <hr/>
Represented by		
Unrestricted		
Unrestricted - General fund	31,384	44,099
Designated		
Designated - Contingency	15,000	—
Designated - Fabric Fund	8,020	13,142
Designated - Magazine	722	722
Designated - Pavilion (note 11)	38,515	49,195
Restricted		
Restricted - Bells	892	889
Restricted - unused	—	—
Restricted - Churchyard	500	—
Restricted - Contingency	—	—
Restricted - Music	328	327
Restricted - Peace garden (note 12)	3,080	1,270
Restricted - Youth & Children	50	65
Funds of the church	<hr/> 98,495 <hr/>	<hr/> 109,711 <hr/>

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Notes to Financial Statements

Return of Parish Finance

1. Grants received this year are £650 from the Anderson Trust for Messy Church which was largely spent on small tables and £850 from the Parish Council for general running expenses.
2. The income in other funds generated relates to mini market raising around £209 and income received from the diocese to cover priests taking services
3. Social events covers coffee after both Friday and Sunday morning services
4. Charitable giving paid this year amounts to £7,000 to The Beacon Trust supporting youth work in Linton and a collection of £531 to Watoto following the concert given by the Watoto children.
5. Salaries relates to payments made to our organists and parish administrator
6. Visiting Speakers shows amounts paid to clergy who take our services during the interregnum.
7. Our insurance premium is £3,364.45 per annum but is being paid by monthly instalments at no extra cost.
8. Flower expenditure has been at a minimum. Further expenditure is covered by separate collections at the end of some services and the generosity of the flower arrangers.

Balance Sheet

9. Pavilion at cost £77,031 less depreciation at £7,703.10 per year brings the figure down to £38,515.
10. Investments £41,406 is the value of the Sterling Bond Fund held at Barclays and is considered our reserves but of course investments can decrease in value as well as increase. This year it has increased in value by 11%.
11. The Pavilion fund has been amended to reflect the written down value of the cost of building. Income and expenditure for the Pavilion are entered in the general fund.
12. The peace garden fund represents the donations received so far for this project. Further funds have been promised in line with the list at the back of Church but have not been collected yet.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Mary's, Linton

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2014, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and s.43 of the Charities Act 1993 ("the Act").

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, SORP 2005 edition, issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements – to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and – to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(Signed)



Andrew Owen
Chartered Financial Planner
Little Gables, Radwumber End, Saffron Walden CB10 2UD

15th March 2015.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

6. ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

The Electoral Roll is the Parish Church's register of electors. It is the list of those qualified to attend and to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting where the elections take place for membership of the Parochial Church Council and for representation on the Deanery Synod. Your membership therefore has an influence on the work of your church and helps make our voice heard at Deanery and Diocesan level.

I took over the role of Electoral Roll Officer after the PCC meeting in January 2015. At that time there were 142 people on the roll. At this present time there are still 142 people, 6 having been taken off & 6 people being added.

The next full review is due in 2019 (these are carried out every six years). As has been said in previous reports, it should also be noted that support for St Mary's cannot be solely based on the people included on the electoral roll. There are many who regularly attend services and other events at St Mary's who do not wish to be included on the roll. Further, there are many people in the parish who consider St Mary's to be 'their church' but may not regularly attend and who are also not on the roll. However, it is seen by the Diocese as a measure of the "health" of the Parish when considering whether the Parish warrants a curate or another clergy member.

You can be added to the electoral roll if you have been baptised and are over 16 and either: 'live in the parish', 'live outside the parish and have attended St Mary's for 6 months' or 'are a member in of good standing at another church and have attended St Mary's for 6 months'. If you would like to be added to the electoral roll or have any questions concerning the electoral roll, please feel free to contact me on lucie.mordue@gmail.com

Lucie Mordue, April 2015

7. FABRIC REPORT

The Fabric Committee has met formally on three occasions during the year.

Church fabric

Following a further delay because of the possible need, identified at a late stage, for bat surveys, the QI repair works began in early December and are substantially completed. Significant deterioration to the coping stones on the east wall of the chancel was identified during the works; the copings were fully restored. The opportunity was taken to clean the exterior of the stained glass windows at the east end of the chancel and Resurrection Chapel. We are grateful to the Friends of St Mary's for their generous financial support.

Work to create step free access to the church from the north porch has been largely completed and the porch should be available for regular use by the end of April. We are grateful to the estate of the late Mary Fuller for financial assistance towards the cost. The congregation will be aware of the unexpected discovery of a large leaking drain pipe and void beneath the porch which delayed work and increased the cost. An insurance claim has been made, but not admitted to date by our insurers. If necessary an appeal for funds will be made.

The Committee would like to record its thanks to the management and staff of Bakers of Danbury, the contractors, for the quality of their work and degree of care taken, and their responsiveness to the need to maintain the day to day operations of the church and worship.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

The next Quinquennial Inspection will take place this spring. This Diocese continues to meet the cost of inspections. It is hoped no major repairs will be identified as being necessary. It would be helpful if members of the congregation would advise the Committee of any defects to the fabric of the church of which they have become aware, for onward transmission to the appointed architect.

Fixed installations and services

Paul Meeks has carried out a fixed installation test of the electrical system. No significant problems were identified.

The meter for the church water supply was inadvertently buried by the owners of the old rectory. Arrangements are being made, in conjunction with Cambridge Water and the Diocese, for the meter to be restored.

Significant repairs to the boiler system proved necessary, but there is no reason to suppose further major repairs will be needed in the near future.

Sue Ellis and I met with an adviser from our insurers who undertook a comprehensive review of the church's insurance provision and requirements and provided helpful general advice on insurance matters. He suggested PAT testing should take place every 2½ years to coincide with the five yearly fixed installation test.

Church furnishings

No articles or goods have been permanently removed from the church during the year, and no such items acquired.

It has been agreed, subject to any consent required from the Archdeacon, to relocate the information boards to the area currently occupied by the Children's Corner, and the Children's Corner to the area occupied by the boards. Nicola Collard is responsible for the project, in conjunction with Margaret Smith.

The pavilion

Having completed the drainage works prior to the last APCM, the Committee has taken steps to deal with vegetation growing around the pavilion and organised working parties to clear and level the site. The landscaping works agreed by the Mark V Group have been carried out recently, and further landscaping work is anticipated in the coming year. The question of further maintenance is under consideration.

Repairs have been carried out to the rear steps of the pavilion, and anti-slip material laid in the main entrance area. No significant work has been carried out to the interior of the pavilion. Further external maintenance will be required in the coming year.

The churchyard

The fabric and vegetation of the churchyard is the responsibility of the Parish Council. The next tranches of repairs to the flint walls is due to take place in the near future, with further work planned for 2016. A meeting of the joint Parish Council & Parochial Church Council Committee is scheduled to take place on 10 April where this and other matters will be discussed.

Concerns expressed by a family about identifying where ashes have been placed in the Remembrance Garden has resulted in John Thorne carrying out a great deal of work to create a plan of the area which is as accurate as possible and allows for future burials of ashes to be accurately recorded.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

The rectory

Two mornings were spent pruning and clearing a large amount of wood and general growth and tidying the area. The garden now looks presentable, and the grass will be kept mown until the new incumbent takes up residence.

The Committee would like to express its thanks to the volunteers who have put a lot of time and energy into voluntary activities during the course of the year.

Andrew Gore

Chair, Fabric Committee, on behalf of the Churchwardens

8. DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The current deanery synod's term of office runs from 1 June 2014 - 31 May 2017. Derek Lockstone and I represent Linton.

The synod met for the first time on 15 July. The meeting was principally concerned with a presentation from Paul Evans, the new Diocesan Secretary, who spoke about his role and the developing Diocesan strategy. This strategy was the subject of a further discussion at an open deanery meeting on 11 February.

The autumn synod meeting took place on 6 November and included a presentation by Rev Dr Jessica Martin, Priest in Charge of Duxford, Hinxton & Ickleton on the Pilling report. She talked about the concept of generous disagreement.

I am also a member of the Deanery Standing Committee which meets from time to time to maintain an oversight of matters requiring attention, such as vacancies and finance.

The synod next meets on 21 April.

It has not proved possible to appoint a synod secretary, although Andrew Westwood-Bate is handling some communication matters. The synod needs a secretary to function properly, and I would ask everyone to consider putting themselves forward for the role. It is not onerous. Please speak to me for further information.

Andrew Gore

9. REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

9.1. BELLRINGERS

We've had a great year of ringing at St Mary's.

Our practice nights are well attended and Sunday morning ringing has gone from strength to strength with attendance often outstripping practice night.

We rang for a number of weddings during the year as well as Remembrance, Christmas and New Year, and were privileged to ring a quarter peal to bring the Flower Festival to a close.

Our overall position in the Gipson Trophy striking competition was equal third with Chesterton out of four teams. I'm not downhearted about that as I believe our ringing was

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

consistently good in virtually all the fixtures. We had an excellent tower outing in Suffolk in December with Little Shelford and several of our ringers continued their ringing at many other towers in the area, as well as regularly attending district training sessions and courses. We have two young learners at the moment, aged ten and twelve who are both making excellent progress, but new recruits of any age are always welcome.

We welcomed new neighbours to church cottage during the year and they came up for a visit to the tower. We welcome visitors any Wednesday at 7.30 so please come along if you'd like to see who makes all the noise on Sunday morning!

We have had quite a few positive comments passed to us during the course of the year from people who enjoy the ringing, and we look forward to continuing to welcome worshippers to St Mary's for another year.

Jackie Latham
March 2015

9.2. BEACON TRUST YOUTH WORK

St Mary's has supported the Beacon Trust both financially and practically since its foundation in April 2008. It is a Christian charity, supporting youth work across Linton, both faith-based and non-faith-based, but its Christian values underpin all aspects of its work. It is ecumenical, recognising the value of difference as well as uniformity of practice and belief. Barry Easton, the full-time Youth Worker employed by the Trust, is supported by a Management Team made up of volunteers from all three of the Churches in Linton. 2014 has been another busy and exciting year for the Trust. The following is a brief resume of some of the activities and developments that took place in 2014:

Slum Challenge. Over the weekend of April 4th-6th over 50 young people left behind their mobile phones, electronic games, make-up etc and built their own 'slum' in the grounds of the URC. They had no hot water and ate two frugal meals a day, whilst they were asked to reflect on their position in light of a number of scriptural verses from Exodus and St Mark's Gospel. The stimulus for this was the Streetchild World Cup, held in Rio de Janeiro in March, highlighting the desperate situation of streetchildren all over the world and the young people, for a very short time, were able to gain a small sense of what it feels like to be rejected and excluded by the outside world. One of the most poignant moments, not only for the slum challenge, but also for the church-going community of Linton was the youth-led service of Holy Communion, held outside with the backdrop of the 'slum', on Sunday morning. Revs Steve Griffiths and Chris Kemshell officiated and, for all the people there, this was a moment of true communion.

Youth Work Training. During May Half Term, six young people from Linton joined others from South Cambridgeshire on a three day residential training course, resulting in them all gaining the JNC Level 1 qualification in Youth Work and Safeguarding. They were supported over the three days by Barry Easton and two student leaders from the Beacon Trust. It is good to record that these young people continue to engage with the Beacon Trust youth work as volunteers.

LVC Work Experience. For the first time two students from LVC undertook a week's work experience with the Beacon Trust. They were required to submit CVs and participate in group interviews with key members of the Beacon Trust Management Group, all quite

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

daunting but very good experience. The reports they wrote at the end of the week demonstrated how much they had learned and developed over the week. *“...During this I learned a valuable lesson in that I should not judge people before I get to know them. The people in the drop-in were people I would not talk to...but now it is a different story...I should have learned about them before I judged them...”*

Skate Park Group and Linton Parish Council. On September 18th six young skateboarders, armed with a report and detailed plans of how they would like to develop the recreation ground, attended a meeting of Linton Parish Council. Together they delivered their report and ideas to the Council members, including images and the actual voices of the young people who use the ramp. *“This is a place where I am free, a place where I am accepted for who I am.” “Sometimes we feel pushed into a corner of Linton that nobody wants.”* The report had an enormous impact on the councillors and, in return, the young people offered their services as part of a community action group. A Skate Parks company has met with the young people to help them design their plans and we await further developments.

Redzone Christmas Dinner. Redzone is the Linton Youth Club, who meet every Thursday evening in term time at LVC. It may surprise many people that some of the young people in our community will not enjoy a ‘proper Christmas dinner’ at home with their parents and carers and this prompted the leadership team to explore ways in which turkey and ‘all the trimmings’ could be served to the young people who attend this club. Eight volunteers from St Mary’s and the URC cooked different parts of the meal at home and, through a huge feat of coordination, it all came together in a great Christmas feast for 39 enthusiastic and highly appreciative young people.

Ongoing Youth Work Provision. As well as the new developments and training opportunities, the Beacon Trust continues to maintain the regular youth work provision within Linton.

Redzone Youth Club, as mentioned above, provides weekly activities and themed evenings.

Streetspace is the detached and attached work happening weekly on the recreation ground and in the LA4Y drop-in building. Through these sessions Barry has been able to engage significantly with some of the more marginalised and disaffected young members of our Linton community.

The Beacon Trust continues to develop its relationships with the **Linton Village College (LVC)**, delivering pastoral support to students and attending meetings supporting young people’s welfare and social development within the community. Barry helps with assemblies, Personal, Social and Health Education days and individual lessons.

Welcomed by the new Headteacher, James Puxley, the Trust has been able to develop links with **Linton Heights Junior School**, delivering assemblies and, later in the year, aiding the transition of Year 6 pupils to LVC.

Sports based activities are held on two days each week, teaching fair play, equality and competitiveness in a safe and friendly environment.

Currently the Beacon Trust is exploring new ways in which it delivers its **discipleship teaching on Sunday evenings**, looking for ways to develop it into something more exciting and contemporary.

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We believe that the teaching of the Gospel message can be realised outside the confines of the church building and, in recognition of this, we have increased the frequency of our visits to **Nichols Court** to monthly. These visits are a blessing to old and young alike.

We believe that, through this work, young people are reaching local business and community members alike, breaking down community divides and going some way to remove the stereotypes that separate us within our society. These are Linton's young people and we celebrate them all.

Gill Powell, member of the Beacon Management Team.

9.3. JUNIOR CHURCH AND CRÈCHE

Junior Church and Crèche is on offer every first, second, fourth and fifth Sunday mornings of the month during the 10am service. Due to the fact that we have Messy Church on every third Sunday we don't have Junior Church in the morning, as families tend to come to Messy Church instead. We have been operating as such from the beginning of 2014 and it has been working well.

The children join the grown-ups in church initially for the welcome, notices, and after the first hymn the whole congregation joins in prayer for the children before they head out to the pavilion.

We have a voluntary team for both Junior Church and Crèche most of whom are parents of young children at present. We have had to say goodbye to a couple of members of the team recently, which take the number of volunteers down to 3 for Junior Church and six for Crèche. The crèche team follow a rota, which means that help required is nicely spread out through the months so no one or too few individuals bear any undue pressure. I am hoping we have more people to volunteer their gifts and join the Junior Church team. It is an important and inspiring team of which to be a part.

The team are committed in providing a stable ministry to the children, following fantastic new and varied resources as a guide.

Historically there have been wide fluctuations in numbers, and we have seen a mild levelling of numbers expected from week to week. A lot of thought has gone into what we provide particularly on Baptism Sundays, when numbers can be much larger, and being sensitive to a style and content of teaching appropriate for new faces who may not be regular church goers.

The teaching, caring and nurturing our children at St Mary's is of vital importance and making them feel special and included within our congregation is paramount. When the children come back and join the service to receive communion or a blessing, there is the opportunity for the children to show and tell the rest of the congregation what they have been doing, which is empowering for them and wonderful for us, to hear a simple Christian message taught by our children!

Plans are being made to re-establish the children's corner in the church itself. The area will become bigger and more integral to the body of the church. A "den" for the children where they can have a space to play, read and pray.

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We have a strong and cohesive team. Great building blocks to stand firm for the coming year and develop. I hope to welcome more helpers as we work on keeping our material and teaching exciting, fun and relevant for the children.

Nicola Collard

9.4. LINTON CE INFANT SCHOOL

I am pleased to report that the school now has a full complement of Church Foundation Governors, having operated for a significant period with several vacancies. Whilst the role of the Governors is now even more onerous it can be very rewarding and vacancies will continue to occur and need to be filled by the community of St Mary's.

Thanks go to Nicola Collard, who has undertaken to be the Rector's representative during the Interregnum and has willingly provided the interaction between the school and St Mary's.

Direct links via the Friday morning services have been maintained and, again, thanks go to Nicola Collard, Barry Easton and Chris Kemshell, the URC minister, for their work in preparing for and leading these services.

No other links currently exist between the school and church other than through the Foundation Governors. This is since Margaret Cox and Judy Nightingale 'retired' after providing many years of classroom help, identified specifically as 'church links'.

RE teaching and values education remains strong in the school and the last Diocesan review identified this as being maintained as 'outstanding'.

In the current 'Education Climate' many challenges still exist for the school; not least attraction and retention of staff in the small rural environment together with continued funding pressures. With careful management we are still able to make improvements.

Most people who visit the school provide positive feedback on the ethos, warm environment and quality of learning, but, even more importantly, on the happy children. This is almost entirely due to the dedication of the Headteacher and every member of staff.

As has been said many times, visitors are always welcome and actual help even more!

Lawrence Powell, Chair of Governors

9.5. MARK 5 GROUP

"To strive to save the integrity of creation and to sustain and renew the earth"

The group has met on five occasions over the year. The main focus of the group during the year has been to develop the area from the steps at the back of the pavilion across to the brick wall of the old Rectory which can be used by those using the pavilion for coffee after services and for those hiring the pavilion for parties. The area has been planned to have lawn, a patio area, hedging and some herbaceous plants. To date the patio areas have been laid and fencing erected around the area to provide a safe space for children.

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It is hoped that the ground will be cleared and levelling for the laying of the turf area, the planting of hedging and plants.

The next stage of work for the Peace Garden will involve applying to funding bodies for grants and for the completion of the project in the future.

The group continues to encourage the use of Fairtrade products by the church. The recent Fairtrade stall was well supported by our church family.

Glynis Younger

9.6. MESSY CHURCH

This year Messy Church has seen team and families grow in faith and faithfulness. We began with a series of three sessions: Who is God? Who is Jesus? And Who is the Holy Spirit? We created masterpieces such as Hubble-style paintings, stained glass crosses and ice cream cones filled to the brim with angel delight!

We celebrated communion together at our final session of the summer term. Thanks to Rev Pam Reed for presiding. We made the bread and juice we shared, decorated our own altar cloth and brought our intercessions as a prayer tree. The sense of awe and reverence was indescribable and we all felt the presence of God.

The autumn term saw us finding out about the life and work of Amy Carmichael in India, which we presented at the Flower Festival. We followed this with Messy Remembrance when we explored themes of war and peace by making bridges from straws and made edible poppies; and Messy Thanksgiving when we brought all our “thank you”s together as a thankful wreath.

We hosted the village Christingle service again in December, where we learned how we could be part of something wonderful. We heard about the work done by The Children’s Society among children living in extreme poverty – in this country! We raised a fantastic £790.46 to help them give children a chance of a better life. Rev Julie Norris helped us at this event. Thank you Julie!

January saw us learning more about Epiphany. We made wise men figures and hand-print camels and discovered that we can guide people to Jesus too. February’s Messy Church thought about Jesus being tempted in the desert, and our March session was titled “Loving Easter”. I hope you have a chance to look at the cross we made, which is next to the altar. It isn’t perfect, in fact it is very messy but we think it represents our messy lives and we all know that the cross is the only answer to the mess in the world.

Our numbers have stabilised at approximately 20 children and 15 adults each month. The team has been dwindling during the year as team members are led in different directions. We still have a core team and three teams on a one-month-in-three rota.

Please may I ask you to support and encourage the team in three ways:

1. Pray. For the team, as we prepare each month; the families who come along, for a deepening of the relationships we are forming and increasing hunger to know more of God.
2. Help. We need more team members – this is a really inter-generational ministry and we need team from all generations. Maybe you could donate something for the tea we share after

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Messy Church? Or do you have a skill you could share? We are of course grateful for help following the 10am service with moving furniture.

3. Come along! We meet at 2.30pm on the third Sunday of the month.

I will be very happy to talk more about any of the above. I am usually at the 10 o'clock service, or my phone number is 891952.

Sarah Thorne

9.7. MOTHERS' UNION

The Linton Branch of the Mothers' Union usually meets on the third Monday of the month, at 8pm in the Church Pavilion. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The 2014 programme was varied, and included a talk on Tradition in the Church, creating floral decorations, a talk about the valuable work of J's Hospice in Essex, and a beetle drive. Our Toy Sale in November was again successful, and the Deanery Carol Service in Babraham provided an opportunity to meet with Mothers' Union members from nearby villages.

So far in 2015 we have visited Uganda with Jean & Peter Wheeler, explored life with the Chaplain of Carver Barracks, and been uplifted by our Lent Meditation led by The Revd. Kathy Bishop. In April we intend to enjoy Molly Warrington's photographs and hear about her recent trip to the Far East. In May we will be discovering Mum's Link with Nicola Collard. Other meetings for the year include talks about Cursillo, Guide Dogs, the work of the Chaplain at Fulbourn Hospital, and a Christmas Social. On November 7th we will hold the annual nearly new Toy Sale at Linton Village Hall.

As well as the regular meetings, we offer each other practical support and prayer at difficult times in our lives and aim to uphold the world wide Mothers' Union purpose and values of Christian family life. If you would like to know more about the Mothers' Union (we are a very friendly group) please don't hesitate to contact Margaret Smith or Ann King, or check out www.mothersunion.org.

9.8. MUMS' LINK

Mums Link is a group for mothers with young children. The basis of this group is to provide an informal gathering where mums can meet in an honest, relaxed and friendly environment. It is largely very much a support group.

Mums Link is a loosely structured Christian based meeting whereby mums can unburden/discuss and encourage on the issue of the day, incorporating bible study and prayer.

Meetings are usually one Tuesday evening of the month and in a move to accommodate changing needs, we have introduced a morning meeting once a month.

On the 4th May this year, it will be Mums Link's fourth Birthday! We currently have twelve members, eight of whom meet regularly. Apart from the meetings and seeing one another at the school gates we communicate via a Facebook page. Through this we can update one another with any issue at all including requests for prayer.

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The group is a place where people feel welcome and it provides a safe comfortable place to belong. By bonding together through prayer, study and discussion, we are hopefully equipped to reach out to others in need within our lives and community.

The level of love and support has been shown quite markedly over the past year. There has been great need within the group and this need has been supported unconditionally and affirms what we stand for. It has served to bring us closer together, demonstrate how much we care for one another and is an amazing witness to the community in which we live.

Nicola Collard

9.9. MUSIC MINISTRY

For the much of the period that this report covers, I was on sabbatical leave as Director of Music. I returned to playing the organ and direction of the choir during December 2014. During the period, music has been provided by several organists, the music group and the choir. I am grateful to all those who have continued to support the music at St Mary's.

The carol service in 2014 took a slightly different format and was much appreciated by a large congregation. During Lent, we have sung plainsong for several services (including Ash Wednesday) and plan to return to fuller settings with organ accompaniment for the outburst of joy at Easter.

The choir is preparing for the Ely Diocesan Royal School of Church Music Festival on Saturday 16 May 2015. Later, on Saturday 19 September, we will be joining with many other choirs in the Archdeaconry of Cambridge Church Music Society Festival in King's College Chapel, Cambridge. These services are open to everyone to attend. If you wish to sing with the choir in any of these events, please contact me.

David Parry-Smith, Director of Music

9.10. THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

The Friends of St Mary's have had a productive year. We have funded the recent repairs to the stonework and windows at the east end of the church, costing around £20,000. As the work came in slightly under budget, cleaning the glass of both windows was also undertaken while the scaffolding was in place; the difference in the colours as a result is a great improvement.

Our events over the past year have included a Summer Barbecue at "Richmonds", four Afternoon Teas in July and August, a Concert by the Kings' Taverners from Haverhill in September and a Quiz Evening in November. We had our traditional New Year Coffee Morning in January, and most recently, an Afternoon Tour of St Mary's, led by Alan Clarkson. We are deeply grateful to all our hosts and everyone involved in organising these events.

There have been some significant changes in the membership and the practices of our Committee this year. We have reorganised our capital investment to produce, hopefully, a better return. Our current stall items are being run down and we shall be looking again at what we stock. We are also managing with a smaller Committee of seven. We thank Gill Lee for her contribution in the past few years and welcome Di Morse. We are hugely grateful to

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Molly Warrington for the help and advice she has given us, in spite of the many extra tasks she has had to take on as Churchwarden in this interregnum. We also thank Andrew Gore for all his support and co-operation as Chair of the Fabric Committee, and Sue Ellis as PCC Treasurer; we value this good working relationship with the PCC.

Finally, my thanks go to all our Friends who have supported us over the past year and to a very loyal and hard-working Committee.

Judy Nightingale, Chair

9.11. THE MONDAY GANG

The members of the Gang (in alphabetical order!) Brian and Margaret Cox, David Harries, Derek Moss, Richard and Rosemary Read and Lian Watkin continue to meet on Monday afternoons. With a good summer last year and no drought everything in the churchyard grew well. This has created quite a challenge in disposing of grass cuttings and the prunings from the hedges and lime trees.

Three native British trees, two hollies and a rowan, were planted last spring near the path to south porch and pavilion.

The repair work during the winter to the east wall of the chancel has affected the grass in that area but as the weather warms up the grass will recover and grow.

The aconites and snowdrops continue to spread and have produced a really heart-warming sight during this spring. The cow parsley is springing up everywhere and, pretty as it is in flower, we will not allow it to smother the primroses, daffodils and bluebells.

Margaret Cox

9.12. TOTS IN TOW

This is a group for parents and carers with children from the age of 0 to pre-school age. Meetings are every **Wednesday between 10 and 11.30am**, meeting in the village hall.

Tots has been running for over 20 years now and has proved popular and valuable within our community. A nominal fee of **£1.50 per family** is charged to ensure the group is as accessible as possible for families in the village.

The children have great fun here. **Play time** is on a big scale here! There is a large soft baby area equipped with baby bouncers and toys, book corner, cars, Lego, slide, jigsaw/playdoh table etc. and a craft table which is prepared for and manned by Rosemary Turner. We are vigilant in trying to keep equipment clean, sorted and updated.

About midway through the session we break for **refreshments**. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided for the grown-ups, (we are sometimes lucky enough to have homemade cake made for us on occasion too!), and all the children sit down for a little bowl of healthy snacks and a drink, which the children love and the parents appreciate. We now have a steady rota for kitchen helpers week on week.

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In the last ten minutes there are **songs**, sometimes a story and short simple prayer or 'Two Little Eyes to Look to God' song to finish. Any relevant notices are said during this last bit of the session.

This group is as much a **support** for the parents and carers as it is for the children. There is always somebody available with a listening ear and we provide a wide selection of Christian based and general resources to borrow and other information to introduce links to the church. The personal contact at this group is of great practical importance and relevance.

From the beginning of last year I have invited various local individuals to sell or promote their **local business**. For example, Beth Purser from Hilltop Bakery set up a table, Emily Saunders did a photo session, we welcomed Sue Frankish to come and sell her homemade crafts etc, other things include children's haircuts, health visitor and Crazy Ceramics. While attracting people to come to the group, it helps promote local business and maintains good, strong links with the community and in turn with St Mary's. This has tailed off recently due to the fact that the majority of organising has fallen on my shoulders and with growing commitments, I haven't been able to organise as much as I would have liked.

Our **FaceBook page**, remains hugely popular. This is a great vehicle to keep parents and carers up to date with information about the group and for followers of the page to add their comments...all of which have been very supportive and encouraging to date.

It is also a great way for me to post notices, those general to the group and relevant church activities, ie. Messy Church, Flower Festival, seasonal services etc. and keeping information up to date eg. Needs for the Haverhill Foodbank. We have a donation box for the Foodbank on the welcome and signing in table and I make sure that supplies get deposited at the back of the church regularly.

Numbers have remained high, (about 20 families on average), so consistently that we have purchased another small table and chairs to accommodate the children for activities and snack time! We continue to see lots of new faces from week to week.

I often get such positive feedback from parents and carers. They comment on how much they appreciate such an honest, supportive and friendly place.

I continue to encourage potential volunteers to help at this group.

Tots in Tow is 'church' in our community a very real expression of love, care and inclusivity.

Nicola Collard

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10. CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

The year since the last APCM has been an incredibly busy one, with the interregnum beginning soon afterwards and continuing up to this APCM and beyond. We had only a very short period in which to get up to speed with all that needed to be done to run the parish and then to plan ahead for a new Team Rector. We have, however, been immensely grateful for the willing and tireless support of the Ven. Alan Clarkson, Canon Alan Cole and the Revd Lesley Gore; without each of them taking on many more services over the last year we would have found it extremely difficult – in fact impossible - to continue to keep going such a range of services.

Besides the clergy we have had incredible support from lay ministers and others who have taken services over the past year. We are very grateful to Duncan Keys for his willingness to lead a Service of the Word once a month when there are no Baptisms; to Nicola Collard, Barry Easton and Chris Kemshell (Minister of Linton Free Church) for the brilliant school services they have led; to Pam Richardson and Nicola for keeping alive and developing, with Lesley, the quiet, reflective service of Time Out With God; to Michael and Glynis Younger, David and Beryl Rose and Lorna Mulholland who, again with Lesley, have taken on the weekly services at Symonds House, so important to residents there; and to the Messy Church and Junior Church teams, who have put enormous energy into developing and expanding ministry and mission amongst the children.

In her role as Rector's Administrator, Sue Filby has also been really helpful and supportive, acting as front line contact for families requesting baptism and for an unprecedented number of wedding couples. We have had twelve different visiting priests over the last year and Sue has played a crucial role in liaising with them, patiently taking into account their different needs and requirements. Nanette Blackmore has also taken on huge amounts of extra work over the interregnum, and we are indeed most fortunate in having such a dedicated and committed Verger who gives so much of her time voluntarily in the service of St Mary's. Andrew Gore has guided us through various building projects and given a great deal of his time organising working parties in the pavilion and rectory gardens.

There are many others not specifically named above – including PCC members and officers (especially our treasurer and secretary), organists, choir and music group members, bell ringers, cleaners, gardeners, flower arrangers, coffee makers, rota organisers, deacons, readers, intercessors, chalice and church wardens' assistants, committee members and chairs, youth leaders and fundraisers – who, together with every other congregation member, are a vital part of the Body, and who have continued to contribute to the life and work of St Mary's.

It has been a challenging year but a rewarding one. We have had a sense of the church being led by God's grace, and as a congregation we have also come to learn more of His plan for us as a church, both through the challenges as well as through coming to know each other better. We have renewed friendships with congregation members in the other four parishes which make up the Linton Team and we have supported one another. Now we look forward to the arrival of the Revd Canon Dr Maggie Guite and to an exciting new phase in the mission and ministry of St Mary's and our sister parishes.

Thank you all!

John Thorne and Molly Warrington