



# ST MARY WITH ST LEONARD, BROOMFIELD ANNUAL REVIEW 2022

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting is scheduled to take place on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

It is planned that the meeting will take place following the 9.30am service.  
The Vestry Meeting (for the election of Wardens) will be followed by the APCM.

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Whereas every effort has been made to include all the activities in the life of St. Mary's Church within this Annual Review, there may be some omissions. We apologise for these and they are in no way deliberate. However, we hope that you will agree that this review gives a flavour of the many diverse groups that are active within the parish to promote our worship of God and to proclaim the Good News in the wider community.

**Carol Knott**  
(PCC Secretary)

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Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council  
for the year ended 31 December 2022

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### 1. Administrative Information

St. Mary with St. Leonard is a parish church within the Chelmsford Deanery, one of the twenty-three deaneries which make up the Diocese of Chelmsford, within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, 10 Butlers Close, Chelmsford, CM1 7BE. St. Mary with St. Leonard is part of the North Chelmsford Mission and Ministry Partnership (NCMMP). The NCMMP was formed in 2016 to enable its member churches to work together and support each other in mission and ministry to every community in the Partnership area. The Partnership comprises 11 churches and one Pioneer Ministry under a Bishop's Mission Order (St. Francis Community Beaulieu) within the Diocese of Chelmsford. The eleven churches are: Boreham, Broomfield, Great Leighs, Little Leighs and Little Waltham, Great Waltham with Ford End, the Chignals with Mashbury, North Springfield, Pleshey and Springfield All Saints. More about the NCMMP is contained in the North Chelmsford Mission & Ministry Report included later in this Annual Review.

As from 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 St. Mary's PCC became a charity in its own right under the title "The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary with St. Leonard, Broomfield" with the charity number of 1173143.

PCC members who have served from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 are:

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott	(Chair)
<i>Associate Priest:</i>	Rev'd. Diana Garfield	(Until May 2022)
<i>Curate:</i>	Rev'd. Dawn Butcher	
<i>Authorised Local Preacher:</i>	Andrew Mussell	
<i>Permission to Officiate:</i>	Canon John Brown	(From August 2022)
<i>Wardens:</i>	Susan Garwood	(Re-elected March 2022)
	Andrew Mussell	(Re-elected March 2022)
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod:</i>	Ros Mercer	
	Kathy Rouse	
	Jill Readings	(Lay Co-Chair of Deanery Synod)
<i>Other PCC members:</i>	Sue Browning	(Resigned March 2022)
	Rachel Butterworth	
	Sarah Clark	(Press Officer)
	Lis Hardy	(Parish Safeguarding Representative and NCMMP Representative)
	Carol Knott	(Hon. Secretary)
	Alun Powell	(Hon. Treasurer)
	Trudy Stevens	(Minutes Secretary)
	Jim Tibbott	
	Karen Paxton	
	Yvonne Heaver	
	Charlotte Dodsworth	
	Christine Bailey	(Elected March 2022)

## **2. Structure, governance and management**

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

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and may stand for election to the PCC. As St. Mary with St. Leonard's Church has Charity Status, all PCC members become Trustees.

The PCC generally meets bi-monthly and members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish, including deciding how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The PCC has a Standing Committee to progress decisions agreed by the PCC.

There is a Funding Team responsible for reporting back to the PCC and referring to it for any decisions that need to be approved. The Funding Team is a small group of PCC members that focuses on fundraising and applying for grants for repairs to the fabric of the church and the grounds. It is composed of: Alun Powell, Rachel Butterworth and Trudy Stevens (Rev'd. Diana Garfield was also a member of this group until her retirement in May 2022).

The work on the organ (fully re-leathered and cleaned) was completed earlier than expected and re-dedicated on Mothering Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022. Details of how this was funded are contained in the Treasurer's Financial Report.

In last year's review we reported that in November 2021 we received a grant offered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) awarded for the conservation of the Rutherford fresco as centrepiece to a heritage project for learning, conservation and well-being. The fresco is on the wall of the ringing chamber in the tower. The work on the exterior of the tower and the spire, to make it weatherproof, began in June 2022. However, once the old shingles were removed from the spire, the architect and structural engineer discovered more extensive work was needed. This has meant a cost increase of some £85,000+VAT above the original quote (to cover further professional fees, materials, labour and scaffolding costs). Thus the team continues to try to secure additional funding for this work. More details about the funding of and progress with the project can be found in the separate Rutherford Project report later in this review.

The funding team has also worked hard to secure grants to fund the repair of the lychgate, which will cost around £20,000 (see the Treasurer's Financial Report for details). The work on the lychgate will be done once the external work on the tower and spire are completed.

The PCC met six times during the year, with an average level of attendance of 72%; a noticeable decrease of almost 8% on 2021. The Standing Committee met on five occasions.

During 2022 the majority of PCC time was spent discussing and making decisions on: ensuring that St Mary's remained Covid-safe; ensuring compliance with regulations and guidance from the Diocese; worship; finances and spending; repairs and maintenance of the church building and grounds; funding and other decisions for the works required to the organ, lychgate and the Rutherford project; Eco church; NCMMP matters; and fundraising events.

## **3. Aims and purposes**

St. Mary with St. Leonard's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of St. Mary's Church; St. Leonard's Hall attached to the Church; and Broomfield Churchyard.

#### **4. Objectives and activities**

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. Mary's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and contributes to discussions on how our services, groups and activities can involve and meet the needs of the diverse groups of people that live within our parish. We are always looking for new opportunities to worship God and build fellowship in this Church.

In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- worship and prayer, learning about the gospel, developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus;
- provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish;
- missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the church of St. Mary's and its associated buildings and land.

During the year we continued to seek ways to continue offering worship, prayer, pastoral support and to maintain our church fellowship. The following reports demonstrate what was achieved.

#### **5. Achievements and performance**

##### ***Worship and prayer***

At the start of the year our worship remained affected by Covid considerations. By April our worship returned to a pattern similar to that prior to the pandemic. We offer a range of services, both on Sundays and during the week. A calendar of all services and other events is made available in the Round Tower parish magazine; on St. Mary's website; and advertised on our Facebook page. We also now have a presence on Instagram.

Our regular Sunday worship usually follows the pattern: a 9.30am service in church each week, mostly these are Parish Eucharist services. On a once-a-month basis there are: an 8am BCP Holy Communion service in church, followed by a 9.30am Family service; a 5.30pm sung Evening Prayer service; a late afternoon/early evening Eco church service, generally held in the churchyard meadow area (weather permitting).

Our regular weekday pattern of worship includes: 9am Morning Prayer in church Monday to Friday; plus a weekly 9.30am Thursday morning Thanksgiving Eucharist; and, once a month, a 10.30am Wednesday mid-week Eucharist in church.

We usually have two bible classes weekly, both on Wednesdays. One, entitled 'Baffled by the Bible', is at 1.45pm in St. Leonard's Hall. The other is held at a church family member's house or garden. Our Friends with Faith group is a bible study group catering for parents and carers of children of all ages. A report from each of these groups is included later in this review.

The electoral roll numbers declined by one during 2022. The estimated number of people in our 'worshipping community' as at the end of 2022 was as follows (the numbers in brackets show the figures as at 2021, for comparison): Total 138 (147); Children age 0-10 yrs: 18 (23); young people age 11-17 yrs: 8 (11); Adults aged 18-69 yrs: 46 (38); and adults age 70+: 66 (75).

St Mary's offers Festival and other special services at various times through the year including Holy Week, Easter, Harvest Festival, at Christmas and Christingle. We take opportunities to share worship with other organisations, including the local Primary School, and partner with the uniformed organisations on Remembrance Sunday.

We usually include in this report statistics on average Sunday attendance during the year and numbers attending Easter and Advent services; and in the past have shown comparisons with the previous year. Because both 2020 and 2021 were extraordinary years, owing to the pandemic, such comparisons are not appropriate. Social distancing rules restricted numbers who could attend services at the beginning of 2022 and some of our church members and village residents remained cautious. The total number of people attending worship at Easter was 133. The number attending for special services from Advent Sunday until 23<sup>rd</sup> December, e.g. the Village Carol service and school nativity services, was 393. The total number of people attending worship on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day was 291.

### ***Ecumenical relationships***

St. Mary's has a Covenant with Broomfield Methodist Church.

### ***Mission and evangelism***

Our aim as a Christian Church in this community is to make Christ's love known to everyone. We enable this through teaching, worship, bible study and discipleship groups; through baptisms; services and groups for parents with babies and young children; and through groups that give opportunities for fellowship for young and older people alike.

St. Mary's Ladies Group, the Film & Lunch Club and the Beetle Drive group are all held once a month. All the meetings are listed in the Round Tower parish magazine and on the church website. You will find reports from these groups contained in this review.

As part of our work towards achieving a Silver Eco Church award, Rev'd. Carolyn commended a book as our Lent Course this year – "Saying yes to life" by Ruth Valerio. All sessions in 2022 were held online via Zoom from 1<sup>st</sup> March through to 19<sup>th</sup> April. The 'Baffled by the Bible' group read a chapter a week throughout Lent, then on Zoom the group discussed the chapter and the questions posed. The church was open on Tuesday afternoons during Lent to provide an opportunity to pray for peace.

With respect to St. Mary's work with children, families and young people, there is a family service one Sunday a month. Our Friends with Faith group, catering for parents and carers of children of all ages, meets fortnightly on a Tuesday. Our Little Lambs support group for parents/grandparents/carers with pre-school aged children meets weekly on Thursday mornings in St. Leonard's Hall. The Puppet Crew met weekly during the first half of 2022 and performed at the Mothering Sunday service. However, puppet ministry was paused later in the year: their numbers have dropped since 2019, with two members of the group moving away to study and two others taking on more or different work. Perhaps in the Spring or Summer of 2023 we will organise a workshop to train some new people to help with Puppet Crew. It is always a joy to have children worshipping with us and we aim to find ways to teach our children the Christian Faith. You will find reports from all these groups later in this review.

St. Mary's joins with the NCMMP for youth-focused provision, led by members of the Clergy and people who work with young people across the MMP. The Light Group, a group for children of school years 6-9, was able to begin again in 2022 and is held on the first Tuesday of the month at 5.30pm in St. Leonard's Hall. More details are included in our Curate's report.

A 'Living in Love and Faith' (LLF) course began in January 2022, the Church of England's resource material for helping churches in learning and praying together as part of discerning a way forward in matters of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. The course was attended by Rev'd. Carolyn and two members of St. Mary's congregation.

Other organisations who use St. Leonard's Hall are: Friends of Broomfield Hospital and the Chelmsford & District club of Soroptimists International.

In 2021 St. Mary's was awarded a Bronze in the Eco-Church initiative. Rachel Butterworth and her team continue to work towards achieving the next level award - Silver. You can read more about this in Rachel's report in this review.

### ***Review of the year***

In terms of variety of services and social events, with the further easing of Covid restrictions we were able to hold more events than in the past two years and to start fundraising again in 2022.

#### *Worship:*

In January of 2022 we still found ourselves subject to some Covid restrictions, once again having to wear masks and not meet for refreshments after the Sunday morning service. We continued to put daily prayer on Facebook and on our website along with most of our Evening Prayer services.

On 30<sup>th</sup> of January we held our annual Christingle service in church, bags with everything to make a Christingle were handed out for people to make themselves during the sermon.

From February Covid restrictions loosened and we were able to worship more freely, without masks, and we resumed serving refreshments in the hall after our Sunday morning services.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March an Ash Wednesday Eucharist with Ashing was held in church. Our APCM was held on 20<sup>th</sup> March: 43 people attended. On the same day our first Eco Church service was held in the churchyard in praise of God's creation.

On 27<sup>th</sup> March there was a Mothering Sunday Family Service with the puppet crew performing and distribution of flower posies. The church organ was back in commission and re-dedicated at this service. Our thanks go to all those who donated towards this work and the organisations which have made grants to enable this restoration to go ahead. Thanks also go to Andrew Stevens and his team for the careful way they worked on this beautiful instrument and the sensitive way they managed the dismantling and repair within the church building.

Holy week began with a Palm Sunday Procession and Family Eucharist on 10<sup>th</sup> April. On Maundy Thursday, there was an evening Eucharist with washing of feet in church and reflections at the cross on Good Friday. On Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, the church was open in memoria for reflection and thanksgiving for all the lives lost during the last two years of the pandemic. Members of the pastoral team were on hand to give support. On Easter Sunday we held a 6.30am Sunrise service in the churchyard, a 9.30am Family Eucharist, and a 5.30pm Family Eco church service in the churchyard with an Easter Egg Hunt in the church meadow.

In May we were able to recommence holding 9am Morning Prayers in church from Monday through to Thursday each week. The PCC took the decision to stop posting Morning and Evening Prayer online as by then very few people were engaging with these posts. The Facebook page was updated and an Instagram account set up. Also at the beginning of May, the Light Group started up again for children in school years 6-9.

During Christian Aid Week in May there were no door-to-door collections, but there were envelopes available in church for people to make a donation via the church. The envelopes were returned on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May at a service to give thanks for the gifts and ensure the donations got to Christian Aid. Also on 22<sup>nd</sup> May we celebrated Diana's long ministry in this church at the 9.30am service, with refreshments in the hall afterwards.

On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June we closed out the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee celebrations with an Act of Worship at 5.30pm, with bells rung, giving thanks for Queen Elizabeth II and her 70 years of dedication to the UK and the Commonwealth. The Church was beautifully decorated and we had lots of visitors over that weekend.

In July, thanks to our Church sitting team, the church began to be open again for private prayer and visitors on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9.30am to 12.30pm – if you are able to join the team that enables us to open the building for the whole community please speak to Rev'd. Dawn.

Our Songs of Praise service was held on 24<sup>th</sup> July in the Churchyard, followed by a strawberry tea. Our annual Pet Service took place on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August as part of the Eco Church service.

8<sup>th</sup> September saw the sad death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September there was a special Evening Prayer and Memorial Service to celebrate her life. The church was open every day during the period of National Mourning until the state funeral: to welcome people from the village to take a few moments to reflect, write a message of condolence, light a candle or lay flowers in remembrance of a much-loved Sovereign. On Sunday the 18<sup>th</sup>, the day before the state funeral, there was an hour's vigil with quiet music and some readings from 5.30pm. On Monday 19<sup>th</sup>, the day of the funeral, the church remained open from 9am morning prayer until 11am. The following day, prayers were said outside church and the last post played at 8.15am, as children were passing through on their way to school, to mark the close of the period of National Mourning; this was followed by Morning Prayer at 9am. Thanks go to everyone who assisted in keeping the church open, to Chris and David Marcus for muffling and unmuffling the bells and to all the bellringers who rang to announce the death of the late Queen, to proclaim the new King Charles III, and prior to the state funeral.

Because of the period of National Mourning, our Harvest Festival service was held on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September, a week later than original planned. Tea and coffee were donated by Broomfield Primary School and thanks to all who donated so generously we were able to support some families whose children attend the school and the remainder went to The Food Bank. Those who received parcels were delighted with them.

Rev'd. Dawn's Priesting took place on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October and on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October she presided over her first Eucharist. There was a celebration in the hall afterwards with plenty of cake.

During the weekend of All Saints and All Souls we held our Bereavement Service on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October. An opportunity to name those we have died over the past two years and light a candle in their memory.

Rev'd. Carolyn led the Armistice Day service at the War Memorial on Church Green on 11<sup>th</sup> September, attended by members of the local community and the British Legion. On Remembrance Sunday The Blue Knights, a motorcycle club of ex-uniformed services personnel, formed a guard of honour as members of the British Legion, Broomfield Scouts and Broomfield Football Club joined the parade into church. For this year's Remembrance service Sue Cole organised for each pew to have a knitted poppy with a name for each of the 56 Broomfield men who died in WW1 and WW2 – knitted by the congregation and labelled by Sheila Hasler.

Four evenings of reflections were held in church on Wednesday evenings throughout Advent: a quiet hour of led prayer and reflection to prepare for the coming of the Christ Child into the world. 'Carols around a campfire' were held in the churchyard on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December with hot chocolate and cookies, just before the snow arrived. The Village Carol Service was held on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December. Broomfield Primary School had two Nativity services in church on the morning of Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December and it was a delight to see so many children coming into our church.

We were once again able to hold two ‘crib’ services on Christmas Eve, for the first time since before the pandemic. Plus Midnight-Mass on Christmas Eve and a Christmas Celebration in church at 9.30am on Christmas Day.

*Social and community events:*

During 2022 we were able to start holding some much-needed community and fundraising events.

A Rutherford Project Launch Event was held on 30<sup>th</sup> April – an opportunity to hear all about the project and see the architect’s drawings, with presentations by Trudy Stevens, Rev’d. Diana, Penny Clements (our Architect), Neil Wiffen (about dendrochronology) and by Rosemary Rutherford’s great-niece Naomi Courtney-Luck.

Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Events were held across the village from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June: our bells rang at 10.30am on the Friday while the Parish Council celebrated the planting of the new tree on Church Green. We had a stall at the Broomfield Festival of Hope on the Saturday where we were able to raise awareness of the Rutherford Project - there were 124 attendees and 32 children coloured in window decorations.

On 31<sup>st</sup> July Ian and Ros Mercer kindly held an Open Garden event, raising £120 for church funds.

St Mary’s participated in the Ride & Stride event organised by the Friends of Essex Churches on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September and also made this our Gift Day. Whilst the day was rather overshadowed by the death of the late Queen Elizabeth II, the church was open with refreshments for cyclists and walkers, and general visitors could make a donation to the life and work of the church. The total donated for the Gift Day was just over £2,000 which, with Gift Aid, added about £2,500 to our income for the year.

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September saw a Quiz night in St. Leonard’s Hall, with Rev’d. Carolyn having to step in at the last minute to be quizmaster - it went so well she is considering an Annual Vicar’s Quiz! Over £300 was raised.

Beavers and cubs visited the church on 6<sup>th</sup> October, one volunteer commented on how nice it was to have so many young people enjoying the activities in church and going outside to see the beauty of the stained-glass windows and showing interest in the churchyard.

In October a scarecrow was put up by the lychgate as part of the Scarecrow Trail organised by Broomfield Primary School PTA, with all funds going towards the playground refurbishment by the Village Hall.

Another talk in the People & Stone series was held on 29<sup>th</sup> October “Broomfield’s Princely Saxon Burial”, this time given by Ken Crowe, formerly of Southend Museum. It was well attended and raised £390 for the Rutherford Project. More are planned for 2023.

A Table Top Sale was held in the Hall on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November. Around £450 was raised for church funds. On Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November we held a Traditional Christmas Fayre which raised over £600 for church funds.

St Mary’s, along with other organisations in Broomfield, worked together on a Warm Space initiative to ensure that each day of the week a Warm Welcome Hub is open for people. St. Mary’s provides free hot drinks, soup and a roll on Tuesday lunchtimes 12-2pm. The initiative runs from the beginning of December 2022 through to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Whilst not many people have come along so far, this could change once the weather is colder and the cost-of-living crisis deepens.

St. Mary's continued to support various charities throughout 2022 including the collection of used stamps, old or foreign money and ink cartridges, for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, with items being dropped off at Glynis and Brian's. A MacMillan Coffee Morning was hosted by Trudy Stevens on 24<sup>th</sup> September. Shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child were collected at the morning service on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Other charities were supported by the Ladies Group and Eco Church. We continue to support the Children's Society and St Mary's continues to be a collection point for donations to the Foodbank.

*Acknowledgements:*

As a PCC we are very pleased to be able to support the Clergy. We give thanks for Rev'd. Carolyn and her wise leadership. For Rev'd. Diana who we hope is enjoying her retirement. We give thanks for Rev'd. Dawn Butcher our Curate, now Ordained as Priest. For Andy Mussell our Authorised Local Preacher and Churchwarden. And for Canon John Brown who has Permission to Officiate and has led some of our services. We thank all the Ministry team for their hard work and dedication. Also, we thank the Pastoral Assistants who continued to provide support and comfort.

The PCC is very grateful to all the committed volunteers who continue to work tirelessly in the background. A big thank you to the members of the fundraising team: Alun, Rachel and Trudy, for all their hard work and perseverance in obtaining grants for the organ work, the Rutherford Project, and the Lychgate. Sincere thanks go to all those people and organisations who have made donations – without them this work would simply not be possible.

Thanks go to all those involved with the Rutherford Project for their time and effort. In particular to Trudy Stevens who took over the lead on the Rutherford Project and spends very many hours working tirelessly in her role. There have been many challenges to overcome.

We thank our Churchwardens Susan Garwood and Andy Mussell for their hard work. Andy Mussell will be stepping down as Churchwarden at our APCM in 2023, to focus on his Ministry. We thank him for all he has achieved, in overcoming the challenges of getting internet installed to support live-streaming and the Rutherford Project exhibition, and for sorting out various maintenance issues in the most cost-effective ways. We continue to pray for a new Churchwarden to come forward to share the work with Susan.

Alun Powell, our faithful Treasurer for many years, has continued to provide a great service to us in what continue to be difficult circumstances. Alun spends very many hours working on our finances and we are fortunate indeed to have him steer us through some difficult decisions.

Thank you to all the members of the churchyard working party who work each Tuesday morning throughout the year, come rain or shine, to maintain this special place for the community and wildlife of Broomfield.

Thank you to all those people who have stepped up to help with fundraising events, those who ran stalls, served refreshments, made cakes and jams and soup, who donated items, and those that came along and spent some money. It all contributed to much needed fundraising.

There are many people who enable St. Mary's to continue providing worship, fellowship and support to our community here in Broomfield. You will find reports from many of them contained within this Annual Review Report. There are also many others who give of their time and effort behind the scenes. You are all very much appreciated. God bless you all.

*Carol Knott*  
*Hon. Secretary to the PCC*

## Financial Report

### *Summary*

Overall, the Parish experienced a deficit of £65,813 in 2022. Both the general (unrestricted) fund and the restricted funds were in deficit, the former by £5,081 which was an improvement on the deficit of £11,266 recorded in 2021 and the latter by £60,732 as work on the tower and spire finally started and the bills started to roll in.

Although the reduced deficit in the general fund is to be welcomed the major reason was the decision by the PCC not to pay the Parish Share in full. This was not a decision taken lightly but payment in full would have meant a general fund deficit of nearer £30,000 at a time when the Parish was also concerned about the financing of extra work needed on the spire and tower.

### *Unrestricted funds*

#### **Income**

Underlying general or unrestricted income showed a strong post-pandemic recovery in 2022. **Planned giving** via the standing order and envelope schemes brought in £38,733 compared with £35,548 in 2021 while the return to a normal pattern of services meant that **loose collections** nearly doubled to £3,437 from £1,889 in 2021 and a low of £925 in 2020. **Money raising** events returned, largely in the autumn, with a quiz evening, a table top sale and a Christmas event contributing to the total of £2,366 raised during the year. The total in 2021 was just £645. Donations to general funds were also higher in 2022 at £8,706 compared with £4,517 in 2021, while gift aid recovery for general funds was £10,970 marginally up on the 2021 figure. Overall these income streams were £10,000 above their 2021 level which was an excellent result and bodes well for 2023.

Many thanks to all those planned givers, donors and supporters of church events who helped achieve this result. We cannot sit on our laurels, however, and it is important that we all assess, on a regular basis, our financial support of St Mary with St Leonard's. We do need more members of the congregation to commit to joining the planned giving scheme and it is also important that current members look at their giving on a regular basis and, if you feel able to increase your giving, we would be very grateful.

However, 2022 was the first year since 2017 for the parish not to receive any **bequests**. I mentioned in last year's report how important these had become in supporting the Parish's finances. In the period 2018 to 2021 bequests added an average £43,000 a year to our finances which both allowed us to pay our parish share in full and add to our assets. As a result, in spite of the marvellous improvement in most income streams in 2022, overall general fund income at £79,802 was down from the £92,901 recorded in 2021.

#### **Expenditure**

The major item of expenditure was the Parish Share although, as referred to above, the PCC decided not to pay it in full. Initially the decision was to pay £50,000 but at a later meeting this was increased to £55,000. It must be noted that this was a difficult decision to make and the PCC is committed to paying the share in full when financial conditions allow.

Elsewhere, the cost of utilities rose sharply to £4,527 from £1,916 in 2021. Partly this was a timing issue with some 2021 expenditure carried over into the 2022 figure. Mostly, however, it was a reflection of the sharp rise in energy prices witnessed during the year a factor which is continuing to affect our 2023 bills. I would ask all church users to think about the use of energy in the church. Do I need to fill the kettle to make one cup of coffee? Do I need all the lights on when I'm only using a part of the building? Should I keep the doors closed when the heating is on? As an Eco church these are questions we should

be asking anyway but the high cost of our energy bills brings the problem closer to home. The cost of insurance for the building and hall rose to £3,850 from £3,191.

Spending on the churchyard amounted to £5,166 compared with £6,219 in 2021. Maintenance of the old churchyard accounted for £327, tree work for £240 and a tree survey for £2,640. Maintenance of the churchyard extension amounted to £1,959.

Repairs to, and maintenance of, the building amounted to £5,960 down from £8,485 in 2021.

In total, expenditure out of the general fund amounted to £84,882, leaving a deficit of £5,081.

### ***Restricted funds***

#### **Organ Fund**

The restoration of the organ was one of the successes of the year. After some years of fundraising through filling tubes with coins, sponsored slimming, organising many concerts and making numerous applications for grants, the organ fund started 2022 with £25,931 in place. Donations during the year together with two more successful grant applications added £7,931 to the war chest allowing the renovation to go forward.

The final cost for all the work was £37,895.20 - £36,943.20 for the organ itself and £952 for additional electrical work. Although this is a large amount of money it should be remembered that the replacement cost for an organ of a similar kind would have been £500,000.

That would have left the fund £4,033 short but an application to the Listed Places of Worship body, which provides grants to cover the VAT on big projects, was successful in gaining a further £6,316 leaving the organ fund in surplus at the end of 2022 by £2,282.

We were very fortunate in receiving the following grants and we thank the Trusts and organisations involved for their generosity:

The Walter Farthing Trust	£5,000
ON Organ Fund	£800
AllChurches Trust	£1,500
Tudwick Foundation	£3,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	£3,000
Listed Places of Worship	£6,316

But we should also remember that none of these grants would have been received without the sterling work of Trudy Stevens in the thankless task of filling in numerous application forms. This is equally true, if not more so, of the work Trudy has put in towards raising funds for the Rutherford Project

## **Spire Fund**

At the beginning of 2022, the spire fund stood at £67,568. Donations to the fund during 2022 amounted to £3,578 while money raising schemes raised a further £1,329. In addition, the local Tom Amos charity provided £10,000. There was a grant of £750 towards the dendrochronology work carried out on the spire timbers and there was a drawdown of the grant provided by the Heritage Fund of £39,951.

As you will be aware once work started on the spire it became apparent that there would be significantly more expense than originally budgeted for. Trudy Stevens has approached a significant number of charities for help and we are extremely grateful to The Round Tower Churches, FSJ Charities Trust and the IM Foulerton Charitable Trust each of whom has agreed to (and paid) £5,000 towards the additional work. In addition, Friends of Essex Churches has agreed to provide £30,000 and The Congregational and Charitable Trust £5,000 once work is complete. That still leaves us some £35-40,000 short and I ask you to pray that Trudy is successful in her applications to further charitable organisations.

## **Lychgate Fund**

A generous donation of £8,000 was given to the lychgate fund during the year. The donation was gift aided adding a further £2,000. In addition, we were successful in obtaining two grants, one of £8,000 from the Essex Heritage Trust and one for £2,000 from the Tom Amos charity. These will be payable once work on the lychgate starts. It is to be hoped that we will be able to reclaim VAT on this work in the same way as for the organ renovation and, if so, this project will be fully funded.

## **Other Funds**

There was no movement in the stained-glass window fund; the cremated remains area fund; and the sound system fund.

## ***Reserves Policy***

At the May 10<sup>th</sup> 2021 PCC meeting, the PCC agreed to the following Reserves Policy.

It is PCC policy to try to maintain unrestricted funds at a level sufficient to cover one year's unrestricted (general fund) expenditure. This should not only be sufficient to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow but also allow the Parish to meet emergencies, to offset any shocks to the parish's income such as the Covid pandemic and to maintain our Parish Share commitments.

It is customary for parishes to have a much lower target than this with the aim of, say, having sufficient reserves to cover just three months of general expenditure. There are several reasons, however, to have a much more conservative approach including:

- (1) the fact that St. Mary's general income over the last few years has relied heavily on bequests and one-off large donations. By their very nature, however, we cannot assume that these will be repeated every year and we therefore need to hold sufficient funds for those years when such generosity is not apparent.
- (2) The Covid 19 pandemic has shown that one off shocks to income can be extremely damaging. In 2020 general income (excluding bequests) amounted to £64,000 compared with nearly £90,000 in 2019 a drop of £26,000 equivalent to around three months expenditure.

At end 2022 unrestricted assets stood at £110,472, compared with an average level of expenditure over the past three years of around £100,000, satisfying the reserves policy criteria.

## ***Expenditure Approvals Policy***

The expenditure approvals policy (agreed at the May 10<sup>th</sup> 2021 meeting) is that: expenditure of up to £100 can be approved by the Vicar; expenditure of between £100 and £500 can be approved by the Vicar acting in conjunction with the two church wardens and/or the Treasurer; with expenditure above £500 needing to be approved by the PCC."

## ***Outlook***

It is clear that the Parish's finances are now recovering from the ravages of the pandemic. Planned giving, collections at services, money raising, donations and fees are all showing a recovery. At the same time the completion of the organ renovation and the attainment of full funding for the lychgate repairs have partly reduced the need to channel funds to capital projects and away from the general running of the Parish. But the need to fund capital projects has not gone away, however, given the extra work and funding now needed to complete the tower/spire repairs. That will continue to be a problem for some months to come.

But that still leaves another problem and one which is more important in the long run. We have become overly dependent on bequests to make our accounts balance. And yet we simply cannot assume that we will receive that level of extra funding year after year.

A return to money raising, healthier fees, donations and collections are helping and the pressure to raise funds to maintain the fabric of the building will abate and support that improvement. But these will only narrow the gap. We need to become less dependent on bequests to balance the books. Bequests should not be seen as a normal method of paying our way.

Closing the gap will require something more. We are extremely grateful to all our parishioners who have supported the church in Broomfield financially during a very difficult period but, if we are to return our finances to the black, we need more members of the congregation to commit to joining the planned giving scheme as well as current members looking at their giving on a regular basis and, if able to increase levels of giving, that would be very well received.

***Alun Powell***  
***Honorary Treasurer***

# Parochial Church Council of St. Mary with St. Leonard, Broomfield

## Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 December 2022

**Table 1: Receipts and Payments Account**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<b>RECEIPTS</b>					
<b>Voluntary receipts</b>					
<b>Planned giving</b>		38,732.60		38,732.60	35,547.50
<b>Collections at services</b>		3,436.67		3,436.67	1,889.27
<b>All other voluntary giving</b>	4a	8,706.09	91,525.46	100,231.55	44,185.42
<b>Gift Aid recovered</b>		10,970.55	2,000.00	12,970.55	10,913.50
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>	4b	2,366.13	1,328.74	3,694.87	1,880.85
<b>Investment income</b>	4c	1,579.24		1,579.24	135.24
<b>Church activities</b>	4d	14,010.26		14,010.26	13,885.80
<b>Charitable income</b>			1,102.84	1,102.84	24.55
<b>Deanery Synod/NCMMP</b>					312.00
<b>Total receipts</b>		79,801.54	95,957.04	175,758.58	108,774.13
<b>PAYMENTS</b>					
<b>Church activities</b>					
Diocesan parish contribution		55,000.00		55,000.00	77,269.53
Clergy and staffing costs		1,954.52		1,954.52	926.36
Church running expenses	4e	27,927.96	154,964.60	182,892.56	32,371.34
Charitable giving	4f		1,083.61	1,083.61	215.93
<b>Costs of generating funds</b>			641.00	641.00	379.00
<b>Deanery Synod/NCMMP</b>					1,980.40
<b>Total payments</b>		84,882.48	156,689.21	241,571.69	113,142.56
<b>Excess of receipts over payments</b>		-5,080.94	-60,732.17	-65,813.11	-4,368.43
<b>Cash at bank and in hand at 1 January</b>		115,552.64	106,175.75	221,728.39	226,096.82
<b>Cash at bank and in hand at 31 December</b>		110,471.70	45,443.58	155,915.28	221,728.39

**Table 2: Statement of Assets and Liabilities**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<b>Cash funds</b>				
Bank current account	42,151.28		42,151.28	61,420.96
CCLA deposits	64,253.36	45,443.58	109,696.94	158,172.39
Other cash and deposits	4,067.06		4,067.06	2,135.04
	<b>110,471.70</b>	<b>45,443.58</b>	<b>155,915.28</b>	<b>221,728.39</b>
<b>Investment assets</b>				
Tithe Chancel Fund		9,465.40	9,465.40	10,427.61
J Gyne Foundation		1,838.86	1,838.86	2,084.21
		<b>11,304.26</b>	<b>11,304.26</b>	<b>12,511.82</b>
<b>Total monetary assets</b>	<b>110,471.70</b>	<b>56,747.84</b>	<b>167,219.54</b>	<b>234,240.21</b>

Notes:

- (1) The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the receipts and payments basis.
- (2) The income from the J Gyne Foundation is for ordinary church purposes. Income from the Tithe Chancel Fund is undistributed and is added to the capital sum.
- (3) The movements in restricted funds during the year were:

**Table 3: Restricted Funds**

	Balance b/fwd	Receipts	Transfer	Payments	Balance c/fwd
Organ Fund	25,930.93	14,246.47		37,895.20	2,282.20
Spire Fund	67,568.04	70,607.73		117,710.40	20,465.37
Lychgate Fund	0.00	10,000.00			10,000.00
Stained Glass Window	12,500.00				12,500.00
Cremated Remains Area	24.74				24.74
Sound System Fund	58.37				58.37
Charity Fund	31.75	1,102.84		1,083.61	50.98
North Chelmsford MMP	61.92				61.92
	<b>106,175.75</b>	<b>95,957.04</b>		<b>156,689.21</b>	<b>45,443.58</b>

**Table 4: Further Analysis of Receipt and Payments Accounts**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£
<b>Receipts</b>				
<b>a) All other voluntary giving</b>				
Donations general	8,706.09		8,706.09	10,801.45
Donations organ fund		1,930.60	1,930.60	
Donations Project Rutherford		3,578.30	3,578.30	
Donations Lychgate fund		8,000.00	8,000.00	
Grants (organ)		12,315.87	12,315.87	10,300.00
Grants (Project Rutherford)		65,700.69	65,700.69	
Grants (Lychgate)				
Legacies				23,083.97
	<u>8,706.09</u>	<u>91,525.46</u>	<u>100,231.55</u>	<u>44,185.42</u>
<b>b) Activities for generating funds</b>				
Parish Magazine - advertising	825.00		825.00	425.00
Christmas	600.85		600.85	1.50
Other	940.28	1,328.74	2,269.02	1,454.35
	<u>2,366.13</u>	<u>1,328.74</u>	<u>3,694.87</u>	<u>1,880.85</u>
<b>c) Investment income</b>				
Dividends				
Interest	1,579.24		1,579.24	135.24
	<u>1,579.24</u>		<u>1,579.24</u>	<u>135.24</u>
<b>d) Church activities</b>				
Fees for weddings, funerals etc	11,657.33		11,657.33	9,590.32
Parish Magazine - sales	1,096.24		1,096.24	465.50
Other	1,256.69		1,256.69	3,829.98
	<u>14,010.26</u>		<u>14,010.26</u>	<u>13,885.80</u>
<b>Payments</b>				
<b>e) Church running expenses</b>				
Music	1,675.78		1,675.78	2,187.32
Cost of services (utilities)	4,526.97		4,526.97	1,916.06
Cost of services (insurance)	3,850.26		3,850.26	3,190.69
Printing & stationery	49.84		49.84	65.97
Church building running expenses	4,050.29		4,050.29	2,542.98
Parish Magazine - printing costs	1,501.94		1,501.94	1,363.67
Church repairs & maintenance	5,960.40		5,960.40	14,885.63
Spire		117,069.40	117,069.40	
Organ		37,895.20	37,895.20	
Churchyard	5,166.48		5,166.48	6,219.02
Other	1,146.00		1,146.00	0.00
	<u>27,927.96</u>	<u>154,964.60</u>	<u>182,892.56</u>	<u>32,371.34</u>
<b>f) Charitable giving</b>				
Children's Society		90.00	90.00	
LMDC		334.90	334.90	
Ukraine (IRC)		230.00	230.00	
Toilet Twinning		120.00	120.00	
RBL Poppy Appeal		308.71	308.71	215.93
		<u>1,083.61</u>	<u>1,083.61</u>	<u>215.93</u>

Approved by the PCC on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Signed



Rev'd. C A Tibbott  
PCC Chairman



Mrs C Knott  
PCC Secretary

*Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of the Parochial Church Council  
of St. Mary with St. Leonard, Broomfield*

I report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on pages 11 to 18.

**Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and Examiner**

The Church's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for the year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement.**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent examiner's statement**

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

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act; and
  - to prepare accounts, which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(Signed)



Richard Wood

20<sup>th</sup> February 2023

# VICAR'S REPORT

The year of 2022 will be remembered by many of us as the year when a lot of time was spent on the repair and restoration of many parts of the church fabric and all the work that went into that. From January to March the organ was restored. Then in June the work began to repair the spire, repoint the tower, replace the windvane, and restore the Rosemary Rutherford Fresco ~ collectively known as 'The Rutherford Project'. In the meantime, a faculty has also been sought for the repair of the lychgate, which, had the work on the spire and tower gone to plan, would also have been completed in 2022. As it is, although the faculty for the lychgate has been granted, the tower and spire works were still not complete at the end of the year, so the lychgate has had to wait!

After much disappointment and long consultations, our Churchwarden Andy, finally managed to find a way to instal internet into the Church Building, Link, Hall and Committee Room in the autumn. This is proving to be useful both for meetings held in the hall but also in church as we can now offer to live-stream services. At the last minute we decided to live-stream, via Facebook, the Village Carol Service which had over 600 views online!

Our ministry team has changed again, as Rev'd. Diana took retirement in May and Rev'd. Dawn Butcher was Ordained Priest in a service here in Broomfield led by the Bishop of Bradwell. We are also blessed that Canon John Brown moved into Broomfield and after undertaking all the necessary safeguarding training was granted Permission to Officiate by Archdeacon Elizabeth in the summer. In April I stepped down as Priest in Charge of Great Waltham and Ford End, but happily Rev'd. Dan Pierce was licensed to our six neighbouring parishes in November. He will also continue his pioneer work in Beaulieu which remains a Bishop's Mission Order supported by all eleven parishes in the North Chelmsford Mission and Ministry Partnership.

In the Autumn, we also appointed an administrator to undertake some work for us for 6 hours a week. We are delighted that Anna has joined us and is getting used to working on a new system called 'iKnow Church', which all the NCMMP churches have bought into. In the long term this should be beneficial to all the churches and ministers as we seek to support one another and work more closely together.

By the autumn of this year the PCC had backed a whole series of fund-raising events as we take seriously our need to pay our Parish Share in full, which we were unable to do in 2022 due to the works mentioned above and the need to keep money back in case of need. Thank goodness we did! Members of the PCC were involved in lots of grant applications, and we have been fortunate that some of these came to fruition. A special mention to Trudy Stevens who has been at the forefront of this work. We owe Trudy a huge debt of thanks for her commitment to the Grants and Faculty process.

We are also delighted to report that David Marcus became our Tree Officer and has worked really hard to ensure that all the necessary surveys and works to keep the Churchyard trees healthy have been undertaken in a timely manner. The Working Party has been continuing its work throughout the year and the churchyard continues to look wonderful.

Occasional offices are now more usually known as 'Life Events', and as this is the terminology used across the Church of England and on the iKnow Church System, we also will be using this phrase. So, our Life Events in 2022 were as follows:

- 3 infant baptisms
- 6 child baptism
- 1 adult baptism
- 8 weddings

Members of the ministry team officiated at 26 funerals of which 12 were held in church, all the others were conducted at the Crematorium. We also conducted 19 interment of ashes services in the churchyard. Pastoral care of the bereaved continues to be a priority for the ministry team.

Although the mission of this Church in Broomfield has been curtailed slightly in 2022 by the various works to the building which has taken a lot of energy, I am delighted that the Rutherford Project has begun to impact on the mission of the church to the people of Broomfield. Last year, in my report I talked about our need to care for this ancient church building, as it stands as a symbol to the people of this parish, of God's presence both yesterday, but also today and as the scaffolding attests to... for tomorrow as well. We are enjoying providing some old and new fund-raising and community events and looking forward to the future. Recently, at a Ministry Team meeting, Canon John reminded us of a report into the work of rural churches which recognised the work of 'Mission through Ministry'. As we continue to look at new ways of engaging people in the work of the church, through the ministry of life events and the sheer joy of this ancient building let us pray that we move forward in mission together.

As we look forward to our ministry and mission together in 2023, and considering all that we have had to deal with since the beginning of 2020, I want to encourage you with these words from Romans 5:1-5

“Therefore, since we are justified by faith,  
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand;  
and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.  
And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings,  
knowing that suffering produces endurance,  
and endurance produces character,  
and character produces hope,  
and hope does not disappoint us,  
because God's love has been poured into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

I have every confidence that our building works will be finished in 2023 and that the ministry we offer will continue to bring people to know our Lord Jesus Christ. We still have a little while to persevere, but Scripture tells us that will lead to endurance and the character of this church family will develop. We are to be people of hope. We have much to hope for. The Rutherford Project, will, I am certain, bring people into the church building. As we continue to care for all things temporal, we will have many opportunities to also care for the spirituality of those who otherwise would not come to faith.

So, we face 2023 with renewed hope and enthusiasm. For our God is a great God, who is the same always. It is through his grace that we have both the means and the experience to share our faith with others.

*with every blessing*  
*Carolyn*

# THE CHURCHWARDENS' FABRIC REPORT

## ***Building:***

The fire inspections in the church building are being carried out on a regular basis following contractor visits to ensure that all signage and extinguishers were up-to-date. The link door was removed and rehung after adjustments were made to allow it close and lock in accordance with insurance requirements; the locks in the door to the hall have also been serviced.

Our boiler has recently been serviced and continues to operate despite the extreme cold we recently experienced.

A regular cleaning schedule has been adopted for all areas of the church including anti-bacterial cleaning to ensure that the church remains as clean and safe as possible. Cleaning is taking place around any event in the church diary and also at regular intervals to maintain standards.

An internet antenna has been installed in the church spire that allows a telephone network signal to be fed to an internet router in the church; a secure Wi-Fi network has been placed throughout the church to allow complete coverage. The church now has a landline installed in the vestry and meeting room which can receive voicemails and allows a central number to be advertised; any message left is converted to email and sent, which now means that we are always contactable by the community we serve. The internet has enabled us to conduct meetings using internet-based material and also to stream services live with a reliable connection, we hope to use its potential in the future particularly around our community space and with the Rutherford exhibition.

## ***Grounds:***

The Lychgate works have been quoted and a Faculty applied for. We are expecting a decision early in 2023 with the hope that work can commence as soon as works on the tower and spire are complete.

The pot holes have been repaired outside the car park after meetings with the contractor who was working on the new cycle path. This has been done following the completion of the cycle way works.

The roof of the Church has been repaired where some slates were identified as missing and the guttering has been cleared. Outside the vestry door the guttering has been replaced and angled to stop water from running down the church wall causing plant growth and damage.

There have been several instances of anti-social behaviour in the churchyard at night. Also some stolen items have been dumped in the churchyard including a large television and a child seat for a bicycle (the seat was linked to a bike theft at the Hospital). We have collated these incidents and have liaised with a DC from Essex Police to compile these so that there is a complete record. We are hopeful that random police patrols will begin at night.

Our Tree Officer, David Marcus, has been hard at work organising the work needed to keep our trees safe and well. He met with the Diocesan Tree Advisor, obtained several quotations for necessary work and applied for permission from Chelmsford City Council; so there has been much achieved. A schedule of work has been produced to attend to the needs of all our trees and our thanks go to David Marcus for his efforts in this area having been faced with such a large amount of work. More details are contained in his churchyard working party report. We must also thank all members of the churchyard working party who continue to volunteer their services, and for helping with any tree maintenance work that does not require a specialist contractor.

*Andrew Mussell and Susan Garwood*

## ELECTORAL ROLL

The Electoral Roll numbers have remained fairly constant during 2022 with 121 people listed currently compared with 122 in 2021. Sadly, some members of the congregation have died and others have moved away. However, due to an increase in the congregation from people moving into the district, others have joined the Electoral Roll.

*Kathy Rouse*  
*(Electoral Roll Officer)*

## NCMMP

St. Mary with St. Leonard Church is a member of the NCMMP which also includes the parishes of St. Mary's – Great Leighs; St John's - Little Leighs; St. John the Evangelist - Ford End; The Chignals with Mashbury; St. Mary with St. Lawrence - Great Waltham; St Martin's – Little Waltham; Holy Trinity - Pleshey; St, Francis - Beaulieu; St. Andrew's - Boreham; plus St Augustine's and All Saints in Springfield.

The NCMMP council composed of clergy and lay representatives of the member churches meets every three to four months to discuss how the churches and their communities can work together and support each other in mission and ministry to every community in the NCMMP area, whilst cherishing the diversity and local identities of our churches.

Working in collaboration across the churches is increasingly important in the present times of reduced clergy numbers to ensure that the ministerial needs of all parishes are met. Our clergy require support from all their congregations to assist with tasks where possible to enable clergy to prioritise their ministerial roles. Rev'd. Dan Pierce was licensed in November as the incumbent for the churches in Gt. and Lt. Leighs, Gt. and Lt. Waltham, Ford End and the Chignals as well as St. Frances, Beaulieu. All Saints at Springfield and Holy Trinity Pleshey are now in interregnum.

A Youth and Children's Network and an Eco Church network have been set up across the NCMMP and we will continue to look at joint initiatives in the coming year.

The NCMMP has been acknowledged in being successful in forging collaboration between member churches and it is important we build on that strength.

*Lis Hardy*  
*(Lay NCMMP Representative for the PCC)*

# DEANERY SYNOD

The Deanery Synod met four times during the year.

The 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the current session of the Chelmsford Deanery Synod was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February at St Andrew's Church, Chelmsford. Synod was informed that the Deanery Plan would be held in abeyance following discussions with the Archdeacon and the Bishop. The main presentation of the evening was by Kintsugi Hope, a UK based charity concerned with mental health and emotional wellbeing. A Kintsugi Hope Group is a safe and supportive space for people who feel or have felt overwhelmed, providing tools for self-management in a facilitated peer mentoring style setting.

The 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Synod was held on 8<sup>th</sup> June at St. Margaret's Church, Downham. There were two presentations. The first was by members of St. John's Church, Moulsham who described how they had set up a space for local Ukrainian families and their hosts to meet for a couple of hours per week to share experiences and offer mutual support. The second presentation was about the work of the St. Vincent de Paul charity which has a local base at Springfield. One of the main activities was a furniture bank, collecting surplus furniture and distributing it to people in need. People who were moved into emergency accommodation often had no furniture whatsoever.

Bishop Guli, Bishop of Chelmsford, addressed the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Chelmsford Deanery Synod held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September at The Orchards, Great Baddow. Details of the new Parish Share scheme were outlined and the element of mutuality emphasised. The Bishop said she wanted to work towards greater levels of trust between the Diocese and the parishes, with a greater sense of mutuality and a greater enablement of local people to make decisions locally. There was a challenge to parishes to offer solutions to problems they perceived rather than just being "told what to do".

The 9<sup>th</sup> Deanery Synod was held on 1<sup>st</sup> December at Beaulieu Community Centre, the base for St Francis Community Church. Rev'd. Dan Pierce described his work in the rapidly growing new development area of Beaulieu and Channels, trying out different expressions of church to engage people living in the emerging neighbourhoods.

Synod meetings also include some business in relation to clergy appointments and departures and sometimes a report from the Deanery Treasurer. Most Synods conclude with a time of prayer for parishes that indicate particular needs, and this is also an opportunity for members to engage with each other in small groups and offer mutual support.

Deanery Synod representatives are laity – Jill Readings, who is the Lay Chair of the Synod, Ros Mercer and Kathy Rouse, plus our clergy team.

*Ros Mercer*

# WORSHIP & MINISTRY

## THE CURATE'S REPORT

2022 marked my first full year at St Mary's as Curate, and it has been a joy to see the church reopen more fully after the Covid restrictions that remained in place when I joined in 2021. The flourishing of St Mary's in this year has been wonderful, particularly this Advent and Christmas, when we welcomed many families into church at our Crib services and I saw many new faces at Midnight Mass. It remains a challenge for us all to look forward with hope and expectation of what God is doing - giving thanks for the year that is past, I am excited to see what lies ahead.

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022, I was ordained Priest here at St Mary's by Bishop John Perumbalath, Bishop of Bradwell. It was so special for me to be ordained at St Mary's where I am serving, and my sincere thanks to Rev'd. Carolyn, Jill and the Choir and all who were involved in the service. I do appreciate it was a lot of extra work! My continued thanks to each one of you for your support of me and my family as I learn how to inhabit this Priestly identity.

Highlights for me this year have been the Light Group, Eco Church and pastoral visits:

Light Group, for those in school years 6 to 9, relaunched in April 2022 and meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month. Our usual evening consists of a game, a discussion and pizza! Some of the topics we have considered together have been Justice, Who am I?, Who is God?, All Saints and All Souls, Christmas and Who is Jesus? We have a core group of 8 young people attending regularly and it is fantastic to listen to their thoughts on Christian faith and God. They frequently challenge the adult team (myself, Rev'd. Carolyn, Jill & Steve Readings, and Joan Vine)! Please pray for the Light Group and the faith that is growing in each one of these young people.

Our Eco Church services started in March 2022. The aim was to develop our worship as an Eco Church by worshipping outside and thinking about and taking care to consider the rest of Creation within our worship of God, our Creator. Thanks to Rachel Butterworth, Glynis Worboys, Chris Bailey, Heidi Mussell, Sheila Hasler and Karen Paxton who have offered their enthusiasm and creativity to the activities that have made Eco Church fun for everyone.

Perhaps one of the greatest privileges of ordained life is to spend time with people; to journey alongside others through life events but also in the ordinariness of daily life. Pastoral visiting is a sincere privilege, to sit and chat, to share Holy Communion and to pray together. It has been my pleasure to get out this year and meet some of our church members who are no longer able to join us physically in church and also to visit Madelayne Court and Ayletts Residential Homes.

It has been a privilege to serve in this Parish and thank you all for your support and love.

*Rev'd. Dawn Butcher*

## AUTHORISED LOCAL PREACHER'S REPORT

It has been another year that God's grace has been evident through change, and as a Church we have adapted and accepted these many changes. I have been particularly inspired by the increased involvement that the Church has in our community, there have been many new faces at services and new ideas coming through that have engaged many people. It has been very exciting to see the church family expand and continue to work together. The Rutherford project continues to hold an exciting future for us as we become more involved in the community.

It was wonderful to have the Church open for people to visit. We have held times of quiet and accepted all who wish to enter. The Church should always be accessible to all and I have been particularly moved by the work of everyone involved in making this happen.

I have been involved with ministry at Great Waltham this year and I also presided at the Remembrance Sunday service there in lieu of Rev'd. Dan Pierce's licensing. Although I missed being at Broomfield I still have family connections with Great Waltham, and following the loss of my uncle Victor Blows (who served the British Legion there) and my cousin last year, it felt especially poignant. It is amazing how the comfort of God can arrive with us at times of need in many unexpected ways.

The family services continue to be inclusive and I have tried to relate the Gospel at these services in different ways; I have been told that an egg and spoon race was a different thing to see in a service (I have to confess to seeing a few thumbs holding the eggs on the spoons). The fun that we share together in these times is still time in God's ministry, this event showing the importance of encouraging and supporting each other.

It is always a great privilege to be involved in ministry in God's Church, I am grateful to be able to be part of such a strong spirit-led church family. I look forward to the year ahead knowing that God will be with us all as we continue to pray for his guidance. We do truly serve God today, tomorrow and in the future.

*Andy Mussell*

## CANON'S REPORT

In June 2020 my Permission to Officiate in the Diocese of Chelmsford came to an end. I had not been feeling particularly well, and as a result decided not to renew it. In mid-September I received a desperate 'phone call from a churchwarden in whose church I had assisted on a number of occasions during their vacancy. Although they now had an incumbent he had to exercise ministry in a number of parishes and was not available to do so on this particular day. Could I come? I responded that I would be delighted to do so, but thought I needed to consult with the Bishop of Bradwell for this one-off. Permission was refused. I would have to undergo a DBS check and take part in a Safeguarding course if I wished to renew PTO. Somewhat reluctantly but expectant of further calls from over-stretched clergy and desperate churchwardens, I submitted 'to fulfil all righteousness.'

When the then Archdeacon of Chelmsford learned that Jean and I were planning to move to Broomfield she immediately suggested that I be linked with St. Mary and St Leonard's. I informed her that prior to Carolyn's installation I had officiated on occasions during the vacancy, and had always received a very warm welcome, so looked forward to re-making my links.

I take this opportunity of thanking Carolyn, and Dawn, for inviting me to share in ministry with them. Jean is a Methodist, so you don't see so much of her. She is still linked with Moulsham Lodge Methodist Church where she is a steward and musician.

Over the past months I have particularly valued the opportunity of sharing with Carolyn and Dawn, and sometimes others, in the Monday to Friday 9.00am Morning Prayer, and the weekly Thursday Eucharist during term time. I have also greatly valued the opportunity approximately once a month to officiate at Sunday morning Eucharists and the monthly Evening Prayer. Further, to be asked to preach on occasions keeps me stimulated in studying and interpreting the Scriptures which I have always felt a great privilege. And recently I have contributed on a more or less monthly basis to The Round Tower, a task which always reminds me of the monthly magazine articles I wrote as priest in charge of two sets of parishes in the Brentwood Deanery. The magazine used to be delivered free of charge to every household in the parishes: I regarded it as a great opportunity regularly to say something hopefully appropriate and significant about Christian Faith, often with a controversial component. From time to time I had comments back from non-church parishioners which assured me that putting fingers to the keyboard was time well-spent!

So thank you for your welcome.

*Canon John Brown*

## SERVERS

The congregation has now been invited to return to the traditional format of taking Holy Communion, with the congregants kneeling at the Altar rail to receive both the wafer and the wine. Many people choose to only receive one sacrament in the form of the wafer, having been reassured by the Clergy that this is acceptable to God. Servers continue to offer the Chalice to those who wish to take the wine.

During the year Margaret Ginn decided to retire and we thank Margaret for all her dedicated work as a server and wish her well as she takes a well-earned rest.

The Serving team now consists of five members: two who serve at 8am and three who serve, and assist with the extra chalice, at 9.30 am on a Sunday.

Servers have continued to participate in the Company of Servers meetings and 3 members went to St. Leonard's Church at Lexden in September. We met and networked with Servers from across Essex and listened to a very inspiring talk about St. Hilda. This was followed by the AGM.

We continue to feel privileged to assist the Clergy at the Altar during the Eucharist.

**Chris Bailey, Margaret Clarke, Lis Hardy, Sheila Hasler, Kathy Rouse**

## THE PASTORAL CARE AND VISITING TEAM

This year has seen a return to being able to visit people again in person at home, which has been gratefully received all around. Initially strict guidelines for home visits were used to protect those who remain vulnerable – whilst we continue to be vigilant and apply good practice guidelines and work within our risk assessments, a sense of normality has returned as the year progressed.

We are regularly visiting church members who can no longer join us in church physically and sharing Holy Communion where requested. Please do let me know if there is someone who you are aware of who would appreciate a visit from one of the Team.

This year we were also able to return to visit in person Madelayne Court and Ayletts Residential Homes. We visited both homes in November for a Remembrance Day service and in December for a Christmas service. Arrangements are now in place for a monthly visit to both Homes.

Many thanks to the Pastoral Team members who visit and have maintained contact throughout this year. Most of them do so quietly and under the radar. Thank you to all you faithful servants.

*Rev'd. Dawn Butcher*

## RUTHERFORD PROJECT

Although the last Quinquennial Report indicated the urgency of the spire repairs, we had already appreciated the importance of this work and started the necessary fund raising, achieving £70,000 before COVID stopped our efforts. Fortunately Rev'd. Diana managed to negotiate a substantial award from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF); they agreed to pay £135,721 which was 2/3rds of the estimated costs. However, this came with conditions: the project had to involve strong community participation as mere building projects could not be funded. Thus Project Rutherford was conceived:

*An historic wartime fresco as centrepiece to a heritage project for learning, conservation and well-being*

The project has three main foci:

1. Repair and restore the spire and tower
2. Promote the work of Rosemary Rutherford
3. Create a space for personal reflection and meditation

The formal launch took place on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April, a gloriously sunny afternoon in which we welcomed 98 interested parties. This was particularly gratifying as more than 70 people were not regular church members; thus we had already started to realise the NLHF aim of involving the local community and attracting individuals from outside.

We were delighted to have three members of Rosemary's family present that afternoon: her niece Jenny Weston, and great niece and nephew, Naomi and John. Naomi's account of her great-aunt's life and work gave us a real flavour of the Rutherford family and the 'person' behind this skilled artist. We are delighted and appreciative that the family are fully supportive of the project and continue to assist us in many ways.

### **Repair to Tower and Spire**

The aim of this part of the project is to replace the woodpecker-holed cedar shingles with oak shakes backed with zinc; remove the loose Portland cement mortar on the outer surface of the tower, substituting it with more appropriate lime-based pointing; and to restore and reinstate the weathervane.

The work began with a minor hiccup as, scheduled to start on 6<sup>th</sup> June, the scaffolders were delayed by bad weather then COVID; they finally began on 13<sup>th</sup> June.

As the work involved exposing the ancient timbers in the spire, this presented an opportunity to examine them and determine their exact age. Our local historian, Neil Wiffen, managed to secure a grant from the Essex Society for Archaeology and History for this to be undertaken and our sincere thanks go to him and to this organisation. Some of the timbers were eventually dated to the late 15<sup>th</sup> Century, possibly 1485.

Unfortunately, the removal of the shingles revealed the timber structure to be in a far worse state than previously indicated; some of the timbers were in a poor condition but there was also indication of poor structural integrity. It appears that the repairs following the 1943 bomb damage were less than perfect in terms of timber used and workmanship.

Some extra work was always envisaged, given the age of the spire, but the costings for this degree of repair far exceeded the allowance made and our contingency fund. The NLHF were unable to assist with further funding so a number of other charities have been approached for help to meet the extra £85,000 needed. To-date we have achieved £50,000 and are extremely grateful to:

The Friends of Essex Churches for £30,000

The Round Tower Churches for £5,000

FSJ Charities Trust for £5,000

Ian M Foulerton Charitable Trust for £5,000

The Congregational and General Charitable Trust for £5,000

We wait to hear regarding a number of other applications to various charitable funds.

Work was delayed for several weeks as it took a while to obtain the necessary engineer's reports, procure the required timbers and brackets, and finally free up Bakers' carpenters to work on the spire. This began again in October and all was progressing well, indeed they were down to working on the final largest timber, when an ongoing problem with the scaffolding came to a head and the men were ordered off the site.

Apparently there was a problem with the scaffolding not precisely meeting the original design. Although the designer and health & safety inspections stated it was safe (thus the men had been using it), it was not to his exact plan and therefore could not be signed off; this affected Bakers' insurance, and so they could not use the scaffolding.

Unfortunately the scaffolding provided a degree of stability and protection for the spire structure once the battens and shakes had been removed, so it could not be replaced. However, after considerable consultation with another scaffolding designer, the engineers and Bakers, suitable modifications have been determined. These will involve the partial deconstruction of the current scaffolding once temporary bracing of the spire is in situ. Scaffolding to the new design will then be erected, allowing Bakers to resume the timber repairs and to fit the new firrings, prior to the shakes being laid.

The original schedule was to have the building work to the tower and spire completed by October 2022; it is now looking to be Easter 2023. No doubt the *topping out* ceremony when it does finally occur, will prove an extremely joyous event!

### **The life and works of Rosemary Rutherford**

The second arm of the project is to engage our community in Broomfield and beyond with the rich heritage in our church building, focusing in particular on the work of Rosemary Rutherford, whose father was vicar of St Mary's from 1929-58. Rosemary was a little-known East Anglian artist and, although we recognised we house some of her beautiful work in our church, we knew little else about her. Clearly some research had to be undertaken.

A team of volunteer researchers started to identify and gather information about Rosemary and her life and work. In this we were particularly fortunate in gaining the support of the Rutherford family, who are closely involved in this element of our project. The team's investigations have identified a substantial amount of material, beautiful stained-glass windows adorning many churches, both local and further afield (two are in New Zealand), as well as a significant number of paintings lodged in various collections and museums.

Information and images have been collected and collated and our aim is to use them to create an exhibition about Rosemary's life and work as well as to inform a booklet and an academic text. As we will be able to display only a limited amount of material, QR links to data on the internet will enable interested parties to follow up on the themes. The exhibition is to be sited at the back of the north aisle in church and will comprise five panels detailing her life and work, a table case displaying her artistry in, and the techniques of, fresco and stained-glass work, and screens displaying copies of her artworks.

A Faculty for the removal of the rear four pews in the North Aisle, to create the exhibition space, has been granted although we are still waiting confirmation that we have met all their conditions. Patrick Readings has designed and is constructing the display cases. We are particularly grateful to Ian and Ros Mercer who, with Kathy Rouse, Cathy Pearson and Naomi Courtney-Luck, have researched and collected material about Rosemary Rutherford for display in the exhibition and for the accompanying booklet.

The information will also be used to develop a number of workshops and talks for interested people. These are organized as part of the *People & Stone* series and will include a publication on Rosemary's life and work. The following have been organised for 2023:

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January:

*Deep history in the church walls* by Ian Mercer

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February:

*Stained glass and Rosemary Rutherford* by Chris Parkinson

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March:

*Life and Art of Rosemary Rutherford* by Naomi Courtney-Luck

and we aim to have more talks throughout the year. Ticket sales and donations from these will help to supplement the funding for the exhibition, so we can create a more professional display than originally envisaged.

Another team of volunteers is creating educational materials for both Primary and Secondary schools, in line with their curricula, and for other interested parties, for example creating a Rutherford Trail around the building and churchyard. A trail relating to Christianity has already been developed for Beavers and Cubs, in line with one of their badges, and piloted with great success in the autumn.

To enable people to engage with the project, the church building is now open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, as well as the usual times throughout the week. This has attracted a number of people who have heard of the venture and come to view the historic building and art, as well as those who are grateful for the peace and beauty of the sacred space. Our thanks go to all the volunteers who help maintain the stewards' rota, thus ensuring the church is open and a warm welcome offered to all who visit.

A talk about the project was given to the Broomfield U3A group in December, thereby spreading awareness and updating members of the local community on what we are doing.

### **A space for personal reflection and meditation**

The third arm of the project involves the conservation of the fresco within the tower and the development of a quiet, private space for reflection and meditation.

Clearly this cannot be achieved until the external building work is completed and so has had to be put on hold until that is achieved. It is, perhaps, one of the more exciting phases of the project as this will provide an invaluable facility for those seeking privacy and Rosemary's fresco of *Christ Stilling the Storm*, providing an apt focus for the distressed, may prove her artwork to have healing qualities, not just beauty.

The installation of internet and the development of our church website has always been an important part of the project's ability to engage with the wider community. We are extremely grateful to Andy Mussell for all the effort entailed in achieving the internet connection and to Andrew Vine for his ongoing work developing our new website. Both of these elements are vital to our work outside of the church.

We were very sad to see Rev'd. Diana leave us on her retirement as she has worked so hard to establish the project but her work is being carried on for the PCC by the Core Management team comprising: Alun Powell, Jim Tibbott, Malcolm Taylor and Trudy Stevens. Grateful thanks are given to all who have volunteered and assisted in many capacities; anyone interested in joining the teams would be warmly welcome. Please contact any of the core members.



*Trudy Stevens*

## ECO CHURCH

Eco Church is a project that has been set up by A Rocha UK, a Christian Charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world. The aim of this project is to equip Christians and churches in the UK to care for the Environment. At St Mary's this work has been ongoing since April 2021.

Eco Church focusses on five key areas: worship and teaching; management of church buildings; management of church land; community and global engagement; and lifestyle. We currently have the Bronze award status and have been working this year to gain our Silver award which we hope we will achieve in 2023.

We have worked this year to promote better environmental action amongst our congregation. We run a monthly Eco Church service outside at 4.30pm on a Sunday. With a mixture of crafts and activities around the churchyard. Each month we focus on a different environmental subject (e.g. energy, trees, bugs, harvest) and it has been regularly attended by around 25 people of all ages, including families. We have become a Fairtrade church again and now have a Fairtrade stall at our church service around once a month. A few times a year we host guest speakers from Christian environmental organisations.

Our Round Tower magazine now has a regular Eco Church section where we give updates on our work but also encourage environmental activity and action. To support the funding of projects in poor communities around the world, to build basic toilet facilities and have access to clean water and learn about hygiene, we have twinned our two toilets. To help fund sustainable projects that are being set up to collect people's rubbish, dispose of it safely and recycle as much as possible in order to promote waste reduction, we have also twinned our bins. As part of our Eco church activity we are also committing to praying regularly for a different environmental charity each month.

Although we are currently Bronze status overall, the individual breakdown of each category shows that we are already at Gold standard for worship and teaching; Silver standard for both the management of buildings and land; and bronze for both community and global engagement and lifestyle.

We have a small Eco Church group working on the above which includes Rachel Butterworth, Sarah Clark, Sheila Hasler, Yvonne Heaver, Karen Paxton, Kathy Rouse and Glynis Warboys. We are also part of the NCMMP Eco Church Network which enables the churches to support one another and share information and ideas about our Eco Church journeys.

*Rachel Butterworth*

## WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP (1)

This Group, which has been in existence for over 50 years, has been hosted by a number of Church members during the passing of time and eventually Chris Watson and I shared the leadership until she became unwell. From September 2021 until our final Advent Study on December 7th 2022, we have discussed numerous subjects including Paul's letter to the Philippians, selected favourite Proverbs from the Old Testament and compared them with some of the proverbs and sayings of today. We looked at the lives of three important women in the Bible, several parables of Jesus and what they mean for us today. Then our Lent Course was based on Teresa White's lovely book 'Hope and the Nearness of God'.

Our next session began by reflecting on the hope that we have in Jesus through texts from the Old and New Testament followed by several weeks when we looked at passages from the Bible on 'Anxiety' 'Acceptance' 'Endurance' 'Perseverance' 'Attitudes' 'Freedom' 'Leadership' and 'Guidance'. Our Advent Course was based on Essex Clergyman Stephen Need's book 'Following Jesus in the Holy Land'.

Since Christine's passing in May, my age has been against me as far as continuing to lead the Group on my own. Sadly and reluctantly I have felt the need to retire.

As always my thanks to all who have attended so regularly and to Ros Mercer for hosting the Group and always greeting us with a welcome cup of coffee.

*Mavis Tebby*

## WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP (2) – 'BAFFLED BY THE BIBLE'

Sadly Rev'd. Diana retired last year but, as a result of her encouragement and guidance, we were able to pool our resources and continue with our sessions. We have looked at Revelation, Women of the Bible and enjoyed revisiting the readings from the Advent Season. We are learning together through discussion, questioning and noticing the relevance of the Scriptures to our own lives. All are welcome to join us as we continue to explore together the richness of God's Word to us.

*Christine Bailey*

## LITTLE LAMBS

Virginia and I have enjoyed another year with ten to twelve families attending Little Lambs.

We are pleased that Rose, whose children have moved on to school, has continued to join us. She is a very welcome pair of hands when we are busy.

Visitors are always welcome, especially Daddies, grandparents and recently a Great Grandma visited us. The children love to see Glynis and Karen with their guide dogs.

Among our boys and girls this year are three pairs of twins, bringing us joy as they mix and play with the other children.

*Margaret Deacon*

## FRIENDS WITH FAITH

This group meets every alternate Tuesday during term time from 9.30am for an hour, and is run by Rev'd. Carolyn Tibbott. It is a group for parents and carers of children of all ages to meet for mutual Christian support and discussion. If parents and carers have pre-school children, they are able to play whilst we chat.

All meetings this year have been face-to-face and no longer on Zoom. We have moved to meeting in the Lady Chapel, which provides us with a lovely reflective space to meet.

We continue to enjoy open and relaxed spiritual discussions. It is a group valued by its members providing shared support, a great opportunity to talk about issues beyond day-to-day childcare and also explore members' Christianity. Discussions are mostly based around scripture, and we are currently following the book of John. Additionally, we are able to give support to each other through open chat both face-to-face and via our WhatsApp group. All discussions have enabled us to deepen our Christian understanding and faith and find the support we all need from each other.

All new members will be warmly welcomed, especially those with little ones who are not at school and can play while we chat.

*Rachel Butterworth*

## SUPPORTING WORSHIP

### PUPPET CREW

During the first three quarters of 2022 the puppet crew were able to perform as usual at the family services despite two of our young members, Rhianne and Eve having gone off to university. However, things were becoming rather problematic for us owing to illness and changes in work schedules among the existing members which made our regular meetings difficult. Even so, we practiced for the Harvest Festival Service only for it to be postponed owing to the passing of our dear Queen Elizabeth II. Regretfully the puppet crew decided perhaps it was time to take a break to consider how we could proceed without any additional members, so the Puppet Ministry has closed for the time being. It is hoped that in the next year or so, new people will come forward to help start up the Puppet Ministry again. Grateful thanks must go to Michelle, Debbie, Rhianne, Claire, Eve, Glynis and Joan for their many years of work and dedication.

*Michelle Curtis*

### CHURCH MUSIC

It's been almost a year since our beautiful organ was restored and it's making a wonderful sound. Two of my organist friends came to play it and both were extremely complimentary about the quality of the instrument. One in fact said that it was now the best organ in all the parishes in Chelmsford!

My thanks again to our wonderful choir whose enthusiasm for bringing lovely music to you every week is to be commended. We have been using our new hymn book now for almost a year and we have found some good, new hymns, chants and songs within its pages. We continue to choose music for communion which compliments the readings of the day. This year we will be introducing you to some new hymns too, particularly during Family Services. We must always ensure that we reach a younger audience with our choice of music and there are many lovely melodies which have been written with some very pertinent messages, so please enjoy learning them and singing with gusto.

The choir have sung at a few weddings during the year but sadly also at funerals of our dearly loved church members.

Thank you to Jane for playing regularly at our services. As I have said a number of times in the past, we are so very lucky to have one organist, let alone two. Singing to a backing track isn't quite the same.

*Jill Parkin*

## ST. MARY'S BELLRINGERS

Thanks to the woodpeckers, our bells have been subject to the nesting habits and droppings of the birds for many years. So, we were very pleased that in the summer of this year we saw the long-awaited commencement of the works for the repair to the timber spire and the Tower. The Rutherford Project has seen the bell tower surrounded by scaffolding with more inside immediately above the bells. Fortunately, we have still been able to ring throughout the process.

The year saw the happy occasion of the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and we rang in celebration of this in conjunction with thousands of towers across the country. This celebration ringing has been recorded nationally for future ringers to look back on as it was a rare occasion unlikely to be repeated.

The year has also seen the sad death of Queen Elizabeth II which was marked with half-muffled ringing. We then removed the muffles to ring "open" in celebration of the proclamation of King Charles III and then muffled them again to ring fully muffled for the Queen's funeral, again in conjunction with thousands of towers across the country.

We have also rung out for Climate Change, on the eve of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) to raise awareness of this matter.

There were plans for a full peal to be rung by a band of visiting ringers. A full peal lasts for just under 3 hours and consists of 5040 changes. It was organised by a former Broomfield ringer on the anniversary of when he rang his first peal at Broomfield 60 years ago in 1962! It is an incredible accomplishment to be still ringing to that standard today. Sadly though this was called off due to illness but hopefully will go ahead next year.

And finally, as your local band, we have rung for Sunday Services and weddings throughout the year.

For further information or if you're interested in learning to ring please contact Chris Marcus (Tower Captain) by email at [broomfield@eacr.org.uk](mailto:broomfield@eacr.org.uk) or by telephone 07730 796 422.

*Chris Marcus*

## BIBLE READING FELLOWSHIP (BRF)

These booklets, which are published three times a year, are enjoyed by several of our church-goers. They offer daily texts from the Bible followed by comment by several well-known professionals. The cost is around £15 for the years' subscription.

The most popular booklet is New Daylight, which also comes in a larger print format. Other publications are: Guidelines, which gives a more in-depth Bible study; and Upper Room, which suggests a Bible reading followed by meditations which are written by readers themselves.

For further information there are past issues situated on the bier where you will also find information regarding the work of BRF.

*Margaret Ginn*

## CHURCH WEBSITE

Once again, the church website has been very active during the year, not as much as throughout lockdown, as most of the services are attended now, so live-streaming from the website isn't necessary although, a few of the services have been filmed. The calendar is updated monthly so that people can always turn to the website if they are unable to attend church or to pick up the weekly notice sheet. Some of the background information has been updated too. So, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Andy the webmaster for all his work updating, backing-up and maintaining the website and putting up notices that cannot be done by the ministry team or myself.

*Joan Vine*

## SAFEGUARDING

The PCC has previously agreed that we would adopt the Church of England Safeguarding Policy – Promoting a Safer Church – This has to be reviewed annually and was last adopted by the PCC on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and will be reviewed at the PCC meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

In accordance with this policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a risk to others.

Safeguarding telephone numbers are displayed in the church, church hall, parish magazine and website.

The appropriate levels of the Safeguarding training have been undertaken by numerous members who volunteer for roles within our church. A discussion regarding Keeping Yourself Safe and an awareness of Safeguarding issues has been held this year for Church Sitters and as we move forward with the Rutherford Project a similar session will be held for new volunteers.

The Basic Awareness Safeguarding training is available for any member of the congregation. As Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility; if you are interested in undertaking the Basic Awareness course then please contact me.

*Lisbeth Hardy*

*(Parish Safeguarding Officer)*

# THE WIDER CHURCH

## FILM AND LUNCH CLUB

A great variety of films was watched during the past year and I thank our regular picture-goers for their continued support. We met most months other than during the summer break and in December due to the snow. Whilst we bring our own lunches, the tea and coffee are prepared by our ladies. With a 12.30pm start we usually complete the programme just before 3pm.

I take this opportunity to thank those who assist with the Lunch Club, preparing the screen and player, also those who help to clear our 'cinema' after the show.

We always welcome new members and if anyone is interested in joining us we would be pleased to see you. The Film Club meets on the second Monday of each month, but not on Bank Holidays, or during the summer months. Details of the planned film can be found in The Parish Magazine 'The Round Tower'.

*Peter Baker*

## BEETLE DRIVE

We are a small group of enthusiasts who meet on the third Thursday of the month at 2pm in the Church Hall.

We managed nine sessions through 2022 and varied from 6 participants to 12. The most complicated part of the proceedings is deciding which table to move to after each game – up or down!

Do please join us if an afternoon of light hearted game playing followed by a cup of tea, piece of cake and a chat, appeals. All for just a £1. You can't go wrong.

*Margaret Powell, Margaret Deacon*

## TUESDAY CHURCHYARD WORKING PARTY

For those who do not know of us we are a group of volunteers who meet every Tuesday morning, usually from 9am to about 12.30-1pm. We maintain the churchyard and the car park and our tasks include cutting the grass; trimming the hedges and shrubs; clearing leaves; tidying the graves and the cremated remains areas; attending to the flower beds; sweeping the paths around the church; and clearing the surface water channels and drains.

The large variety of trees is a notable feature of our churchyard and I now have a responsibility for them, working with the churchwardens. The routine maintenance of the trees features in the work of the Working Party.

Towards the end of 2022 we had all the trees within the confines of the churchyard and on the boundaries surveyed by a professional arboriculturist. Five of the trees were climbed so that the condition of the branches and trunk could be more closely observed. The detailed report subsequently received gives a base from which to plan the management of the trees and attend to the required works scheduled in the report.

Prior to the survey, all the relevant permissions were gained to carry out routine work on several of the trees. During the summer one of our cherry trees shed a large branch and contractors had to be employed to clear it.

The “Queen’s Green Canopy” initiative was for 3 million new trees to be planted by the end of the 2022 Jubilee Year. “Plant a Tree for the Jubilee” was the challenge handed-out to our church members and in 2022 we took delivery of a further 400 saplings to be planted as a continuation to the existing hedge line in the churchyard extension area. Native hedgerow species had been selected this time which were both wildlife friendly with their fruits and berries as well as providing autumn colour. Species included hazel, blackthorn, crab apple, elder, dog rose and rowan. Four planting sessions over two weekends in late March were supervised by Malcolm Taylor and Roger Cole. They were joined by members of the churchyard working party together with parishioners and scouts, leaders and parents. The Churchyard extension meadow area now has a “triple-row” hedge around its perimeter fence line and the church has contributed a grand total of over 800 trees to the Queen’s Green Canopy. In spite of the very dry summer the majority of the hedge saplings appear to have survived and we have replaced where possible those that suffered. The hedge saplings have been mulched with collected leaves this autumn and this should help them to grow and flourish next summer.

On two occasions during the year members of Goodgym have visited us on a Wednesday evening. Goodgym is a nationwide organisation which comprises folk who get fit by doing good deeds for local communities. The local group ran to us from Chelmsford and helped water the hedge saplings.

The grass of the extension area on both sides of the path is managed by contractors and therefore is not within the Working Party’s remit.

The work on the graves includes levelling and filling where they have sunk. We purchased topsoil and grass seed for this purpose. We are also removing edging and chippings. These make it difficult to mow between the graves and risk damage to the mowers. Where graves have not been visited for some time we place notices warning people that we would like to carry out this work and give family or visitors time to contact us. As is to be expected, many of the older graves have no visitors. All of the work on the graves is sensitively carried out.

The PCC has given us authority to ensure that the churchyard is maintained in accordance with the rules and we remove items from graves that are deemed in contravention of those rules. This includes grave surrounds, plastic and artificial flowers, photographs, cards, balloons, wind-chimes, soft toys, ornaments, candles and personal belongings or memorabilia etc. We also remove any dead flowers and shrubs together with empty vases, particularly glass, which may break if blown over.

Expenses are kept to a minimum as much as possible and apart from the trees our major expense is usually petrol for the mowers and strimmers, parts for the latter and weedkiller to deal with the courtyard paving and car park. During 2022 however the petrol costs were low because of the dry summer which stopped the growth of the grass.

It is estimated that over 1,000-man hours of work go into the maintenance of the Churchyard and car park every year. This is a very significant voluntary commitment by the members of the Working Party to the benefit of our church.

An important part of our role is a presence in the churchyard on Tuesday mornings when we are available to talk to visitors. We have many regulars with whom we enjoy a chat.

Our very welcome practice of a refreshment break during the morning with sausage rolls has continued and we usually partake of this outside in the churchyard or the courtyard. There is a rota and each member has the important responsibility to buy the sausage rolls and milk when it is their turn. We also enjoy group lunches from time to time at a local hostelry and had a Christmas lunch on the Tuesday before Christmas.

We continue to look after the churchyard in a manner so that there is a balance between the need to make it attractive to local people and visitors whilst also encouraging wild flowers, insects, birds and bats by leaving areas of grass uncut and log piles. Areas of our churchyard are at least as old as the church building, if not older, and have been a refuge for plants and animals for generations.

We are a very sociable group and anybody who enjoys a chat would be very welcome to call in and see us on a Tuesday morning anytime between 9am and 12.30pm. If you time your visit to coincide with our break between 10.30 and 11.00am you would even be offered a sausage roll, coffee or tea. Maybe you will enjoy our company so much you might want to join us!

*David Marcus*

## ST. MARY'S LADIES GROUP

Ladies Group has had another very successful year with a current membership of 32 ladies.

The topics in our monthly meetings have been wide-ranging with speakers from local, national, and international charities. In addition, other afternoons have been member-led and have also included social events.

We have donated over £400 this year to our chosen charities which include:

- Re-Cycle - who restore donated bikes which are then sent to Africa.
- The 3 B's - a local charity providing care and support to bereaved parents of babies and young children in Broomfield.
- CBM the Christian overseas disability charity.
- The Lighthouse Furniture Project - providing household items to those in need.
- St. Mary's Church Tower restoration fund.

At Christmas we donated 12 bags of luxury toiletries to the residents of the Women's Refuge in Chelmsford.

Our meetings are advertised in the Round Tower and on the church website. Any ladies who would like to join us will receive a very warm welcome.

*Sue Cole*

## THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

19 members of St Mary's congregation have a Children's Society box where they deposit their loose change throughout the year. These were brought to church in February 2022 to be blessed at St. Mary's Annual Christingle Service. A total of £700 was raised by our box holders.

The Children's Society estimate that there are 4.3 million children in the UK living in poverty; going to bed hungry, cold, or living in houses that are not safe. The cost-of-living crisis has additionally put huge pressure on children and their families. Those who are already struggling are being hardest hit and many families are facing devastating choices. This is where the Children's Society focuses much of its help.

I would like to thank all those who continue to support the Children's Society. The kindness and compassion shown by box holders makes it possible for those struggling with family expenses to get the right support and for children in crisis to enjoy the healthy happy childhood they deserve.

*Sue Cole*

## CHRISTIAN AID

Once again, we were unable to support Christian Aid in our usual ways throughout this year, partly due to our focus on Project Rutherford but also as we made the decision not to undertake the door-to-door collection, only a collection in church. This has undoubtedly seriously diminished the amount we have been able to send to the organisation. I was able to bank £283 from St Mary's although I am fully aware that many may have given directly on-line; unfortunately we have no way of acknowledging this.

Nevertheless, despite a reduction in resources, this important organisation has continued to demonstrate Christian care in a number of resource-poor countries. It is well worth exploring their website to catch up with all they are undertaking.

**Christian Aid week in 2023 will be 14<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> May**

As they note, for the first time in a generation, global poverty is rising. The combined effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, conflict, and drought, have robbed communities of the power to provide for their children.

For 2023, Christian Aid week collections will be used to:

- Stand with the resilient women who are determined to lift their families out of hunger
- Raise our voices to call for climate justice
- Pray that families will stay strong during times of drought

They ask us to give to help women grow crops that survive in the drought and so help turn hunger into hope.

It may be that, again, we cannot physically undertake any door-to-door collections during May, but online donations provide an enormous resource for continuation of this important work. Please do consider giving via [www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals).

*Trudy Stevens*

## FLOWER ARRANGERS

2022 has been a relatively quiet one for us as far as flower arranging goes. 100 posies were made for Mothering Sunday. The team decorated for Easter, the Queen's Jubilee weekend, Harvest and Christmas. Only 2 weddings required flowers. It was lovely to see the Church again festooned with poppies for the Remembrance service and to have the fallen commemorated on pew ends. Thanks to Sue and Roger Cole for the display. I am grateful to the team of ladies for their help especially during my absence.

*Margaret Pinkerton*

## THE ROUND TOWER MAGAZINE

We distribute around 200 copies of the Round Tower each month: 170 plus directly to the door, the remainder as sales from the bier. The price of the magazine has been kept at £5 a year since Adam retired from the editorial panel and offers amazing value for money. One of the pleasing aspects of the magazine is the number of people from the congregation who supply material on a regular basis. There have been issues with a dozen or so signed articles! And that has meant that the number of pages had to be increased during the year. Speaking to other editors and looking at other magazines when visiting churches, this is something which makes the Round Tower special. Keep up the good work.

*Alun Powell*