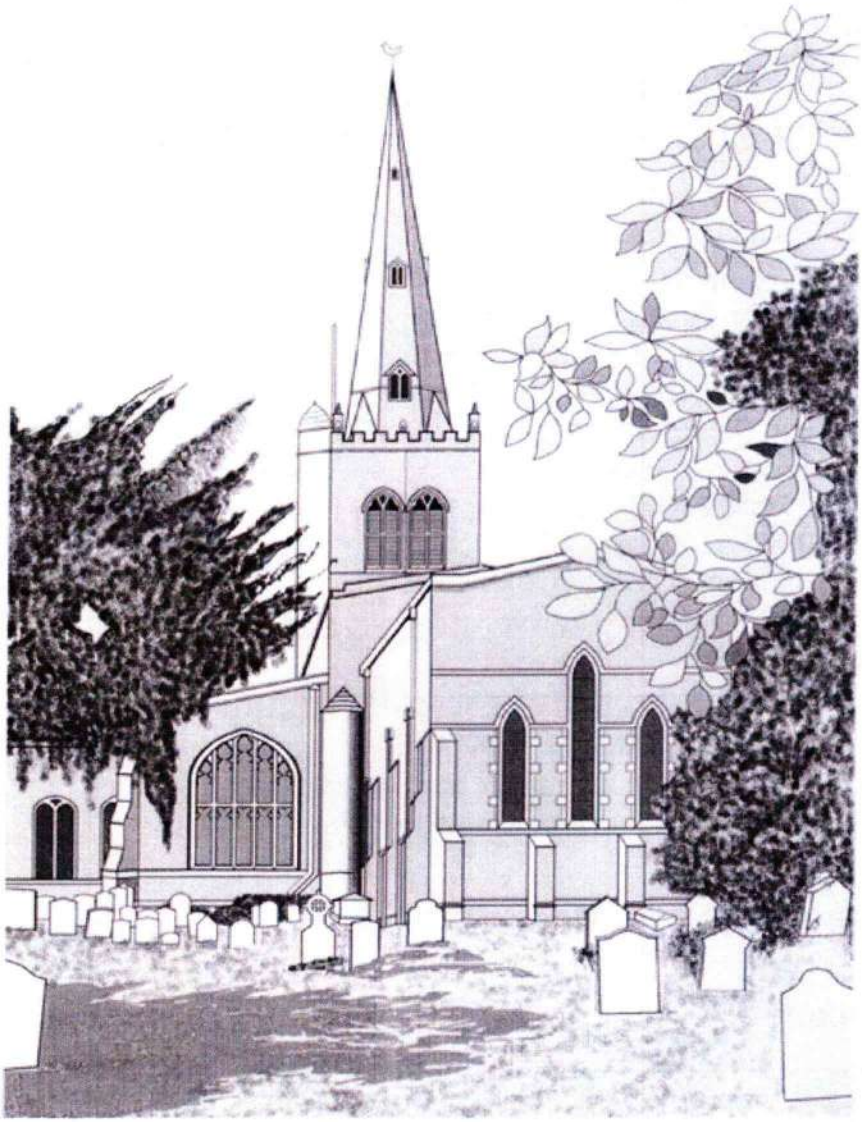
The Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin Godmanchester



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

2023 Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council of St. Mary the Virgin, Godmanchester

Aims and Purposes

St. Mary the Virgin's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend David Busk, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral - *to look after individual people;* evangelistic - *to tell the people the Good News and to invite them to accept it;* social - *to help the poorer members of society, and those suffering from racial, economic and other forms of injustice;* and ecumenical - *to encourage good relations with other Christian denominations.* The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church Hall in Chadley Lane.

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 the Virgin. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. 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; and 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 the Virgin and the adjacent Church Hall.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

The PCC is committed to providing a wide and varied range of services throughout the year to engage with as many in the community as possible. Our regular Sunday services of Holy Communion or Morning Prayer, Sung Eucharist (with healing once a month) and Evensong or Evening Prayer, are occasionally supplemented by Parish Communion or a Taizé service. There is also a Holy Communion on a Thursday morning.

The popularity of Zoom services (especially amongst those who find it difficult to attend church) meant that we continued with a Holy Communion via Zoom at 2.30pm on a

Wednesday and a regular 6.30pm Evening Prayer every day except Saturday and Sunday. We also held a Bible Study Group on Zoom each Friday throughout the year.

We welcome everyone to our services and normally enjoy a well-attended Children's Church, although our youth group is currently in abeyance. There are currently 110 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll and our Sunday attendance figures have yet to fully recover post-COVID. The church remained open each day for private prayer and visitors.

Normally our church affords the community a chance to give thanks to God for those special moments throughout life when we gather to celebrate baptism, marriage or the life of a departed loved one. This year we were able to celebrate seven weddings, one renewal of wedding vows and eight baptisms in the church. There were 17 funerals and 10 burials of ashes.

Deanery Synod

Our church is represented on the Deanery Synod by three members of the congregation who also sit on the PCC. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

The Church and Church Hall

We envision our church building becoming the focal point for a greater number of community activities in the future and have a Transformation Project in progress that will see the removal of the fixed pews to create space and the introduction of kitchen and toilet facilities as well as a mezzanine floor with room to house the local museum securely.

The south door to the church is opened every day for visitors and private prayer. Our visitors Book recorded 167 entries from individuals, families and groups over the year, including overseas visitors from Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland and the USA.

Disabled access is currently available via the north door only for services and other major events. The building is already a venue for talks, concerts, the Summer Fete (when the weather is inclement), the Christmas Bazaar and Flower and other church festivals. The church is used for music concerts, displays, film shows and historical presentations to the community. There are also regular educational visits from the local schools.

The church hall, a wooden building purchased by the PCC, in 1938 is in reasonably good structural order, adequately maintained and well equipped. The cost of running and maintaining the hall is met by the income from a contract with a day nursery which uses the facilities every weekday from 8am to 6.30pm and several external organisations that hire the building in evenings and at the weekend. The rental income provides a welcome addition to church funds.

Pastoral Care

Reaching out to those housebound, in hospital or care homes and ensuring them that their St. Mary's family cares for them, and is praying for them, has been an important part of our pastoral care.

We are blessed to have a number of people in the congregation who like carrying out visiting. At the same time, Jonathan Young works tirelessly to ensure that anyone at home

may receive the sacraments. Members of the team do shopping, give lifts to church and help the housebound as necessary. We find that people are most appreciative of visits, and it is frequently a joyous experience, as much for the visitor as for the visited. If any members of the congregation are aware of anyone in need of help, please do not be afraid to ask. Alternatively, if you would like to join us on the team that would be wonderful too. We thank Liz Irving for carrying out the task of Pastoral Care Co-ordinator for several years and would be delighted to hear of anyone who wishes to take this on.

We have a Prayer Circle, administered by Jim Heeley, which consists of a group of people who have undertaken to pray daily for anyone who asks for it. Those requesting prayer can give as much or as little information as they wish or remain anonymous to all except the first point of contact, who can pass the information on to Jim Heeley. Jim can, of course, be contacted directly on 01480 412264 or jskc@btinternet.com. For all pastoral matters, please contact David Busk on 01480 436400 or dwbusk@hotmail.com in the first instance.

Mission and Evangelism

We believe that the Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Godmanchester, exists to build up the individual and corporate spiritual life of our Church and to spread the love of Christ through word and deed, by enabling those who live and work within our town to come into contact with God's love and come to faith in Christ.

Group for Evangelism & Outreach (GEO) is responsible for reviewing and recommending the development of evangelism and outreach in the mission of the church, including changes to the Mission Action Plan to incorporate the new Diocesan Vision. Our latest outreach to the community has focused on bringing families together once a month for 'Friday @ 5.15' which is proving to be a popular event.

Ecumenical Relationships

The incumbent priest is also responsible for St. Mary's Church, Hilton and we normally join them twice a year in a shared service. Members from the Hilton congregation often join those in Godmanchester for weekly worship and special services.

The church is a member of 'Churches Together in Huntingdon and Godmanchester' and we have joined for events and services each year, such as Worship in the Park during Gala Weekend and the Act of Remembrance in November. All Godmanchester churches also join together in publicising our Christmas services.

Financial Review

Excluding Agency Funds, which are funds handled through the Church accounts for other agencies such as fees paid for weddings and funerals and specific charity events, the overall income for 2023 was £124,058 against expenditure of £139,372. The majority of the shortfall of £15,314 comprised payments from the Transformation Fund for the design work during the year.

The General Fund, which represents the running expenses and related income of the Church, ended 2023 with a small surplus of £1,616. To ensure that the fund remained in credit we transferred £15,800 from the Church Hall Fund which receives income from the hall rental. Our 'Trading Activities' income (£28,932) comprising the hall and Church rental, the churchyard grass cutting contract and the sales and advertising in our Parish News go a long way to support our activities and we are grateful to those volunteers who give their time and support.

In terms of receipts, planned giving was up slightly (£41,629 from £40,898) and we are extremely grateful to those who donate regularly, particularly those who donate through Parish Giving, allowing us to plan at least some of our income and expenditure for the year. Collections at all services were up slightly (£7,932 from £7,308) but other donations were well down on the 2022 totals ((£5,871 from £7,505). Our investment income was up slightly (£3,801 from £3,111) reflecting the slight rise in interest rates over the year. Once again, we are indebted to the Friends of St Mary's for their support in the form of a grant of £5,000 towards the £13,000 cost of the repairs to the rainwater soakaways around the Church.

The increase in expenditure from the General Fund (£123,496 up from £99,739) reflects the massive increase in utility costs (£8,276 up from £3,977), increase in general running costs (£23,140 up from £16,938) and our Parish Share which has increased from £67,447 in 2022 to £70,186. Overall, our general finances are positive but at a cost to the funds available to the Church Hall Committee to make any significant improvements to the facilities. Colin Thirlwall (Hon Treasurer)

Reserves Policy

It is PCC policy to maintain reserves which equate to at least three months general expenditure. It is held to smooth out cash flow and meet emergency payments. For St Mary's Church this is around £31,000. The reserves held in a Church of England Central Board of Finance (CBF) Contingency Deposit Account (£22,457) and a CBF Fixed Interest Deposit Account (£9,976) provide reserves of £32,433. This does not include unrestricted and designated funds held in the current account.

Optional Information

Volunteers

We are indebted to the many people and groups who support St. Mary the Virgin throughout the year in so many ways. The following reports in alphabetical order cover just some of the many activities that have been achieved during 2023. If your group supporting church life would like to have its achievements included in the 2024 edition of the Annual PCC Report, please contact Kate Robinson on klrobinson80@gmail.com by 31 December 2024.

Bell Ringers

Godmanchester bells played their part in celebrating the Coronation of Their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla this year. A group of ringers from our own and other teams rang until the start of the Coronation service. Members of the same group had been ringing the bells of both the Huntingdon churches earlier that morning. The next day, a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples was rung following the "Come and Sing" concert the following evening.

The year 2023 was the 400th anniversary of the re-building of the tower and steeple, so we celebrated this with an open day and a peal attempt on 18 November. For the Open Day, we set up some display boards and provided handbells for people to try. In the morning, we took tours up to the ringing room and the bell chamber and in the afternoon, visitors could watch a live feed showing the bells ringing during the peal attempt. We had hoped to recruit some new ringers from this exercise, but so far there has only been one who started learning but had to give up because of an injury (not incurred during bell ringing). Unfortunately, the peal attempt failed, but a quarter peal was rung instead.

In addition to Sunday morning services, we have rung for special services on Remembrance Sunday and at Christmas, for six weddings and two funerals, notably that of Jean Morgan.

There are only five Godmanchester ringers, but we co-operate very closely with the Huntingdon ringers - typically, a few Huntingdon ringers will ring at Godmanchester for the 9.30am service and then a few Godmanchester ringers will ring for Huntingdon's 10.30am service. In this way, we have had all eight bells ringing on several Sunday mornings and, especially, for the Christmas Eve Carol Service. Our two newest ringers have been the most regular attenders at Huntingdon.

There are many ringers in the district who are more skilled than any of us and we rely on some of them for peals, quarter peals, weddings and funerals.

The co-operation with Huntingdon extends to practices; we hold these at Godmanchester on the 2nd and 5th Tuesdays of the month and on all other Tuesdays at All Saints, Huntingdon. The practices at Godmanchester have been well attended with up to twenty ringers present. Godmanchester's well-tuned, heavy eight bells (the largest weighs more than a metric tonne) are popular with advanced ringers, while the light six bells at All Saints are better for training less advanced ringers.

This January, we hosted the Annual Meeting of the Huntingdon District within the Ely Diocesan Association of Bell Ringers. The programme was an hour and a half of ringing open to all members before a service conducted by David Busk, followed by a tea provided by the Godmanchester team, and then a business meeting.

The bellringers have played their part in fund-raising for the church by providing hampers for the grand draws at the Summer Fete and Christmas Bazaar. Charles Looker.

Charities

Our fundraising activities continued in 2023, and £5,500 was raised by the Church and the Charities Committee through various events and activities.

During the year we have been fundraising for Thrive, a charity established by the Diocese which provides support, counselling and mentoring of young people in the Huntingdon area. Over £1,600 was raised via a very enjoyable Quiz Evening in May, a Frugal Lunch during Lent, several Coffee & Croissants events after the 9.30 service on Sundays and a Ladies' Breakfast in November.

The Coronation "Come and Sing" in May raised £360 for the GMC Foodbank and the Huntingdonshire Society for the Blind.

Our usual BBQ in July also raised £650 for the Mashambanzou Care Trust in Zimbabwe, which supports children orphaned as the result of HIV/AIDS.

The Ride & Stride event in September raised £230 for Cambs Historic Churches Trust and £535 was raised for the Friends of North Kigesi in Uganda via different events.

Several other Coffee & Croissants and Bacon Butties events were held after the 9.30am service, raising over £300 for Service Charities, which was topped up to £400 from church funds.

To support our usual Christmas Charities, we sent the proceeds from our Christmas Service collections, with a contribution from church funds, to Jimmy's Cambridge - £450; Cruse Bereavement Care - £200; East Anglia Children's Hospice - £250, and The Children's Society - £165.

Another initiative was the Crib Festival, where over 80 cribs of various sizes from members of the congregation were displayed in the church over the Christmas period. The official opening was on Sunday 18th December when the church was full of people who enjoyed looking at the cribs over a glass of mulled wine. £300 was raised, which was donated to Hunts Community Cancer Network.

In addition to the members of the Charities Committee, many other people in the congregation helped with fundraising events during the year, and I would like to thank them, and all who supported us over the year. Robert Francis.

Children's Church

Children's Church currently consists of around 12 families who regularly attend, with other children and adults who join us on occasions. The sessions, run during the 9.30am Communion Service, are shared by a team of 10 leaders and 1 young leader.

In the last year Children's Church has continued to become more involved during the Parish Communion Service, both with leading prayers, taking part in the collection, taking the elements up to the altar and reading or sometimes dramatising the Gospel. We again were very busy on Christmas Eve running the Nativity Service at 4pm, with many of our families being able to take part - a high point of our year and one we all take great pride in.

As well as running stalls at both the Summer Fair and Christmas Bazaar to raise money for the church, in July we started our Sponsored Move 2023 with a target to move 9,909km, the distance between St Mary's and the Bucence Children's Centre in Uganda. In January we completed the distance and at the time of writing, we are hoping to raise lots of money for the Children's Centre.

A big thank you to all the parents, grandparents and family members who help out every week and make my job of organising Children's Church a pleasure. Paula Williams

Church Hall

The church hall remains an important part of our parish life as well as being a valuable social amenity for the town. At present the Clarence House Pre-School Nursery uses the hall daily and it's interesting to note that that it has provided a base for nursery care for over 30 years, i.e. a whole generation of parents and children! Other groups using the hall include the Godmanchester Garden Club, the Women's Institute (WI), the Godmanchester Camera Club and Dean Carrick's Wing Chun martial arts class. We also take bookings for children's parties and other one-off events, many of which support the Friends of St Mary's. The annual Film Night and Supper is one of these and may be the only occasion during the year when people from the wider community come into the hall. More bookings would be welcome, of course!

On Sundays the Children's Church meets in the hall, and it is a joyful place to be for parents and children to learn about the Christian faith. Miraculously the paint, drawings and glitter are all cleared away in time for coffee to be served to the congregation after the 9.30 Sung Eucharist.

This year funds have allowed us to buy a beautiful garden bench for the area outside the hall and this is much appreciated by nursery staff and Children's Church families.

The hall is managed by a small committee, and if you are interested in becoming a member please get in touch. Liz and Peter Irving (01480 382144)

Churchyard Grass Cutters

The maintenance of the churchyard is the responsibility of the Town Council, and St Mary's has a three-yearly contract from the Council to cut the grass, which provides useful income to the church.

Our intrepid team of grass cutters kept the churchyard looking tidy throughout the year. The churchyard covers about two acres, which is divided into 15 plots, and we have 11 volunteers, including four ladies, who look after this area.

The system is very flexible: volunteers cut their patch at a time to suit themselves, and mowers, kept in tip-top condition by Gordon Peacock, and fuel are provided. We are always on the lookout for more volunteers, so if you are interested in helping, please contact me. Robert Francis (Organiser).

Fabric Committee

The following is a list of work completed in 2023, in addition to routine work, to maintain the fabric of the church and its surrounds:

Item	**Cost £**
Regular weed and ivy removal from church surrounds roof and tower	628
Repair to chancel heating grille	120
Repairs to three church notice boards	465
Replacement radio mic	678
Ladder brackets	46
Soakaway repairs and replacement	13,006
Replace iron nails on South Door	138
TOTAL NON-ROUTINE EXPENDITURE	**15,081**

The above figures include VAT which is reclaimable under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

We received grants totalling £5,070 from the Friends of St Marys towards the cost of the work on the soakaways.

We had the original lock on the west door repaired and Jacowe Joinery procured two replica keys. We are grateful to Paul Wells for the splendid display case which allows us to show one of the massive keys in the Tower vestry.

We are also grateful for the voluntary work which replaced some of the pointing between the paving stones in the south cross-aisle.

The Decorating Fund that was established to re-decorate the Church at regular intervals stands at £9,000. Malcolm Harris

Flower Guild

St Mary's Flower Guild members provide floral arrangements for the church throughout the year and especially for the major festivals and other events.

At Eastertide we invite donations of lilies in memory of loved ones to enhance our white and cream theme, then at Harvest we use autumnal colours and at Christmas add some sparkle to our chosen colour. In 2023 it was red and silver.

King Charles' Coronation in May provided the opportunity to create a colourful display of red, white and blue. A fantastic floral crown by Debbie Watts was the centre piece and was much appreciated and admired. Also in May, we were delighted to arrange flowers for a wedding - our only wedding request for 2023.

We are extremely grateful to all our willing members for their continuing support and dedication and would welcome anyone interested to join us. Barbara Thirlwall (Secretary)

Lesson Readers

Most Sundays, one or two lessons from the Old and New Testaments are read by members of the congregation. A team of four people organises the readers: each member of the team does a 2-month 'tour of duty', before handing over to the next team member.

At present there are about 40 readers on the readers list, and we thank them all for their service. New readers are always welcome. If you would like to become a reader, please contact one of the organisers: Anne Francis, Bill Templeton, David Bowers (07757 804747), or Lauren Hurst, who will gladly add your name to the list. David Bowers (Lead Organiser).

Magazine

The changes to the Parish Magazine were welcomed. The format has remained and our regular contributors kindly continue to provide interesting articles. I thank Christopher Leffler for his series on the Eucharist and its history last year. I also thank Robert Francis for his sterling work with the advertising, and to Anne Francis and her wonderful team for distributing the magazine each month and for collecting subscriptions.

Despite my operation in January 2023 I was able to continue to put the magazine together and was grateful to have something I was able to do when unable to work and get out and about. As a result, the editorial committee has not met as often as we perhaps should have, but email has proved useful. We sadly lost Jean Morgan from the committee last year, but I hope that Bill Templeton will be joining us when we next meet. Anna Page (Editor)

Music

Our organists and choir continued to provide quality choral music at Sung Eucharist and Sung Evensong on the fourth Sunday of the month and at special services such as Easter and Christmas throughout the year. The Choir has 14 regular members and around 12 augmenters available for special occasions. I am particularly grateful to Ken Diffey for agreeing to share the task of accompanying services and running choir practices, significantly lightening the workload.

In addition to the regular services the choir provided choral music for two weddings and three funerals/memorial services in 2023. We were saddened by the loss of two of our altos, Jean Morgan and Daphne Meats who both died in 2023. However, we welcomed Lydia Williams as a new soprano and Katheryn Ayres who, having been a stalwart alto augmenter, joined us as a permanent member.

As ever, the Nativity Service and the festival of Nine Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve attracted two of the largest congregations of the year. The Children's Church provided a lively account of the Nativity story with enthusiastic singing of the well-known carols. The augmented choir provided a very strong lead for the Nine Lessons and Carols with many positive comments after the service.

A few of the choir members attended the 2023 Ely Area Choir Festival Evensong in the magnificent surroundings of King's College Chapel in Cambridge following a rehearsal in the equally splendid chapel of Queens' College.

Recruiting choristers is becoming more difficult and the choir always welcomes new members. If you would like to come and sing with us regularly or augment on special occasions, please speak to our organists, Colin Thirlwall and Ken Diffey or one of the choir members.

In addition to our own choral music, St Mary's hosted a concert by the Somersham Town Band (who also provided music for our Christmas Bazaar) and a choral concert by the Hunts Phil. The Thrapston Town Band provided some very enjoyable music for our Summer Fete. We also organised a musical event of organ music and hymns to support Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust Ride and Stride 2023. Colin Thirlwall

Safeguarding

There have been no incidents of a safeguarding nature to report in the last year. All new members of the PCC have been successfully DBS checked, and a large portion of the remaining members will need to have this renewed to ensure, as always, that we are a safe church for everyone - young and old. Simon Prince (Parish Safeguarding Officer).

Sidespersons

After very many years' service as a Sidesperson, Arthur West decided it was time to step down in February. As a result, our regular team for 2023 reduced to 14 people. In addition, John Thackray helped out on special occasions, including the Civic Service.

The 14 people who have been doing duty at the 9.30am Sunday Services in 2023 were Joan Adams, Cathy Barr, Lynn Batchelor, Liz Callaghan, Daphne Dobson, Malcolm & Rita Harris, Marian Makin, Karen Molloy, Peter & Jennie Morgan, John Newton, Jean Nicholls and Gordon Peacock.

Anyone interested in joining the Sidesperson Team? You would normally be on duty once every six weeks. Please contact Peter Morgan – Lead Sidesperson.

Street Prayer Mission

We continue our Street Prayer Mission through our intercessions in church at a Sunday Eucharist. A list of streets to be prayed for appears monthly in our Parish Magazine and weekly in the Newsletter. We also include a street each week from our sister parish of Hilton and additional streets from new developments in Godmanchester are included as residents move in.

Summer Fête & Christmas Bazaar

Our Summer Fête was held on 17 June among the trees in the churchyard. We were able to socialise and enjoy the music of the Thrapston Town Band while supporting the church life through the many stalls. The Christmas Bazaar on 2 December raised a significant amount of money for church funds through the usual stalls and the ever-popular Grand Draw for which church organisations provided Christmas Hampers. Christmas music was provided by a contingent from Somersham Town Band.

The Friends of St. Mary's Godmanchester

We had a number of successful events: A wonderful Valentine's Day film night, *Falling in Love* taking a record £1,287, helped I'm sure, by Jan Tilden's delicious and plentiful Cottage Pie followed by Chocolate Trifle.

Despite appalling weather necessitating a last-minute move into the Church, Jazz on the Island on 5 August raised £2,200.

On 7 October we had a wonderful film night *Dream Horse* which took £1,100.

On 18 November David Starkey delivered a lecture on *Henry VIII – the Jekyll & Hyde King* which was sold out, taking record sales of just under £6,000.

Donations – for which we are so grateful: a Goodliff grant of £850 to buy stands to display museum/local history material for our heritage project in the north aisle; a cheque for £1,200 from the Godmanchester 800 Club and £600 cash from the Thompsons, this being the proceeds from the sale of bacon sandwiches and coffee to the queue outside the butcher's on Christmas Eve.

Over the course of the year the Committee of the Friends met eight times, had revenue of nearly £16,000, donated £5,000 towards the cost of the soakaways in the churchyard and £11,000 of restricted funds earmarked for the Transformation Fund.

We had some sad news during the year: Christopher Vane Percy resigned as a Trustee of the Friends and I would like to record our thanks for everything that Christopher has done in the service of the Friends – and beyond - for so many years. His experience, wisdom and knowledge will be sorely missed. Happily, Joy Leney has agreed to join as a Trustee.

I would like to end by thanking the Trustees of the Friends: Colin Thirlwall, Joy Leney, Sue Worthington, Nick Leigh-Smith, Anja Busk, and our esteemed Treasurer and Secretary David Bowers and Kate Sington for their work in keeping the show on the road with diligence and immense enthusiasm. Adrian Sington

The Upper Room

During the financial year of 2023/2024 a total of £859.43 was raised from which £798.33 have been paid into the Church funds for the Transformation Project. This includes money raised selling items donated, the selling of greeting cards in the Church, Refreshments donations on Thursday mornings and from now on, 10% of any paid job I carry on.

As expected, due to heath issues (more mental than physical) I had a long period with no courage to do anything, which cause an accumulation of items donated. As of today, 20th February, I have some events lined up, plus waiting for the car boot markets season to carry on the work I loved to do.

I repeat the appeal from last year: If there is anyone crazy like me who wants to be my partner on the market, you would be very welcome. I promise there is nothing boring in it. We not only raise money; also, as I have a sign saying that the Upper Room is connected to our Church, people feel free to approach me and talk about faith and their relationship with the Church and the Lord. Isn't it amazing?

Thank you all for your kind donations throughout the year and remember: if you have any furniture, you don't need any more and can hold it until it is sold, I will do my best to sell it for our cause. Also, if you have greeting cards in a drawer, you think you will not use or if you are a card maker, please consider replenishing our stand in the Church. Your help in any way is very much appreciated. God bless. Lucilia Azevedo.

Transformation Project

Because of change in in Heritage Lottery Fund criteria, and the difficulty in funding the project as a single entity, the PCC agreed - in consultation with our architect - to divide it into three separate phases, although this is likely to cost more overall. We were given the option to focus the various phases on either the congregational aspects (pews, under-floor heating), the operations (office etc) or the museum.

It was decided that as we currently have a parish office, we can manage for a while longer without a meeting space/chapel or tea station - we have a good kitchen in the hall - and the main congregational aspect (the provision of toilets) was included in all options, we should bias work towards the installation of the museum in the upper tower room.

The heritage/community aspect are fundamental to our bids. We have received revised costings for the three phases and the design stage although our architect is trying to revise these downwards. The phases are:

Phase 1 – Completes the work in the tower area:

- Provision of additional utilities to meet the additional demands of the project namely water supply, drainage and possibly electricity.
- Provide a WC plus an accessible WC/baby changing unit.
- Provide a sink and storage for the flower guild.
- Update the electrical supply cupboard.
- Install the floor to then upper tower room with a temporary balustrade and provide initial access through the re-instated door from the tower staircase plus trapdoor access for the removal of the bells. This would give the Godmanchester Museum some initial storage space if required.

The provisional cost for this phase is around £600,000 ex VAT – which we can reclaim.

Phase 2 – Furnish and complete the work in the upper tower room and:

- Clear all the remaining rear pews.
- Lift paving and install services.
- Establish Services for tea point.
- Erect structure for the gallery.
- Prepare footings for partitions and lay floor finishes.
- Install lift.
- Complete work on upper gallery.
- Install stairs.

The provisional cost for this phase is £1,124,139 ex VAT.

Phase 3 – Complete the work under the gallery:

- Fit/furnish the parish office.
- Fit and furnish the tea point.
- Fit and furnish the storage area behind the tea point.
- Fit and furnish the ground floor meeting space/chapel.
- Erect and complete the choir vestry.

- Clear remaining pews from the nave.
- Lift paving and install under-floor heating in nave area.
- Provide new flexible moveable furniture.

The provisional cost for this phase is £660,000 ex VAT.

Before we can start on phase 1, we need to complete the detailed design and preparatory work – Stage 4 in the RIBA schedule. The approximate cost of this phase is £65,000 to £70,000. We already have just over £55,000 in the bank towards this cost, so we are very close to the amount required. With the agreement of the PCC, we are starting the Stage 4 design work in February, but the extent of the work will be limited by the cash-in-hand. This is expected to take up to four months.

To raise the funds for the project we propose a three-pronged assault:

- Our professional fundraisers, Chell Perkins, have 24 applications ready for the larger funding organisations.
- The Chair of the Friends of St Mary's is managing donations from local organisations and individuals who may be willing to support the scheme.
- We are planning to run a local fundraising group to manage the traditional church fundraising such as coffee mornings, quiz evenings, parish lunches, etc and we have a volunteer to manage this.

Our priorities are to raise the balance of funds for the Stage 4 design work as soon as possible and to start generating funds for the construction work for, initially, Phase 1.

Colin Thirlwall

Website

2023 VIEWS												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
519	676	732	947	957	584	557	719	706	1,020	1,229	1,590	10,236

	VIEWS	VISITORS
2019	10,633	3,055
2020	6,445	2,162
2021	7,573	2,760
2022	8,715	2,953
2023	10,236	3,032

TOP POSTS	2023	2022
In-person services	3,379	3,146
Calendar	1,666	1,338
Contact	430	391
Newsletter	631	602
Buildings + Facilities	300	276
Transformation Project	248	n/a
Church Matters	251	247
Vicar's Mailings	699	463

The most dynamic parts of the website are the Calendar, the Vicar's Mailings and the Newsletter/Diary, all of which change every week. The Calendar has details of all the services as well as other meetings about Church life. Any suggestions as to how the website can be improved are gratefully received and it would be appreciated if all heads of

department keep me informed as to any changes to their regular meetings, etc. Thank you. Adrian Sington

Weekly Newsletter

The Weekly Newsletter continued to be produced throughout 2023 by a small team of volunteers; namely Jim Heeley, Adrian Sington and Lucilia Azevedo. The Newsletter provides details for Sunday services on the front cover, a weekly diary on the rear page and notices relevant to the church and local events inside.

We are actively seeking willing volunteers to help and each member does a two-month stint before handing on to the next person. The more team members we have, the longer the rest periods between stints.

If you would like to help, please get in touch with any member of the team or David Busk.

Wives' Group

The Wives' Group have been meeting in members' homes. Our first speaker since Covid was Alison Woolard, a podiatrist who works locally and helps several of our members with foot problems. She gave us lots of tips and advice to keep our feet in working order!

We had two Christmas meetings, and started the new year at a member's home.

We provided the teas at the Fete in June and the Bazaar in December. This was our swan song as the Wives Group have decided to hang up their pinnies and pass them on to unknown ladies (and gentlemen).

We made the difficult decision to close our bank account, as our meetings no longer produce revenue. Two charities have been chosen to benefit, East Anglian Childrens Hospice at Milton and Riding for the Disabled, which runs out of a stable in Offord. This process is, at the time of writing, being actioned.

This does not mean the Wives Group are closing, we will continue our friendship, fun and a little (!) natter each month. As Chairman, may I thank all members for offering hospitality. Olwyn Hurd (Chairman)

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules 2020 (Revised Reprint 2021). The membership of the PCC for St. Mary the Virgin comprises the incumbent, churchwardens, the reader and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services / members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC.

The full PCC met in person nine times during the year, with an average level of attendance of 74%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has 10 sub-committees, each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life.

These sub-committees, comprising worship, evangelism and outreach, pastoral care, finance, charities, fabric, church hall, transformation, magazine and Fete & Bazaar, are all responsible to the PCC and report back to it regularly with minutes of their decisions being received by the full PCC and discussed as necessary.

Administrative Information

St. Mary the Virgin is situated at the end of Chadley Lane, Godmanchester. It is part of the Diocese of Ely within the Church of England. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, 59 Post Street, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 2AQ. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission (Charity no 1194684).

Members of the PCC are Trustees of the Charity. The PCC is required by law to prepare an annual report identifying the activities of the Church to further its charitable purposes for the public benefit, including a statement of accounts verified by an Independent Examiner.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1 January 2023 until the date of this report was approved are:

Ex Officio members:

- Incumbent: The Reverend David Busk (Chairman)
- Honorary Curate: The Reverend Canon Jonathan Young
- Authorised Lay Minister and Church Warden: Jean Morgan (deceased Aug 2023)
- Church Warden (to October): Robert Hurd
- Church Warden (from October): Bill Templeton
- Church Warden (from October): Ruth Ekblom
- Representatives of the Laity on the Deanery Synod: Peter Morgan, Margaret Quaife

Elected members:

- Kate Robinson – PCC Secretary
- Lucilia Azevedo
- Robert Francis
- Nicholas Leigh Smith
- Kevin Parks
- Simon Prince
- Adrian Sington
- Colin Thirlwall
- Mike Westcott-Rudd

Approved by the PCC on 18 March 2024 and signed on their behalf by the Reverend David Busk (PCC chairman).

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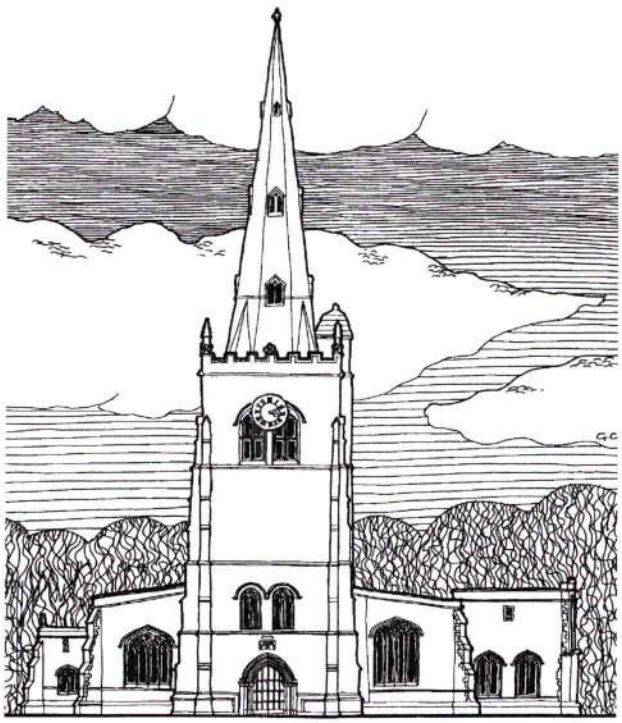
Church of St Mary the Virgin Godmanchester PCC



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ending

31ST December 2023

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CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN GODMANCHESTER		
On accounts for the year ended	31 DECEMBER 2023	**Charity no (if any)**	1194684
Set out on pages	1 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* *Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:		**Date:**	15/07/2024
Name:	GARY JOHN FORDHAM		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	INSTITUTE OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTANTS/FEDERATION OF TAX ADVISERS MEMBERSHIP NUMBER 11621		
Address:	7 TITHE CLOSE HILTON HUNTINGDON, PE28 9NR		

Section B	Disclosure
	Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).
Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	

ST MARY THE VIRGIN GODMANCHESTER PCC

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31 DEC 2023

RECEIPTS	Notes	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	2023 Total	2022 Total
Voluntary receipts							
Planned Giving	a	41,629				41,629	40,898
Collections at services	b	7,923				7,923	7,308
All other giving/voluntary receipts	c	5,871		359	1,847	8,077	20,619
Gift Aid recovered		12,049				12,049	14,559
Legacies		0				0	0
Grants (recurring and one-off inc VAT)	d	8,662				8,662	4,254
Activities for generating fund							
Church fundraising activities	e	4,939				4,939	4,412
Investment income							
Investment income	f	2,461		1,340		3,801	3,111
Church activities							
Fees retained		5,033				5,033	3,482
Trading activities	g	4,358	24,574			28,932	25,990
Other receipts/income	h						
Rebates		1,173				1,173	
Receips for church organisations				1,839		1,839	1,759
TOTAL RECEIPTS		**94,099**	**24,574**	**3,538**	**1,847**	**124,058**	**126,392**
PAYMENTS							
Cost of generating funds							
Cost of fundraising activities	i	491	-	-	-	491	568
Church activities							
Mission & Charity Giving	j	1,337			-	1,337	2,778
Parish Share		70,186		-	-	70,186	67,447
Staff Expenses		370		-	-	370	289
Church expenses							
Mission and Evangelism	k	662			-	662	112
Church Running Expenses	l	23,140		-	-	23,140	16,938
Church insurance		8,446		-	-	8,446	7,679
Church utility bills		8,276		-	-	8,276	3,977
Church hall expenses		10,587		-	-	10,587	6,522
Cost of trading	m		765	-	-	765	205
Major capital expenditure		-					
Major Repairs to the church building	n	-	-	-	-	0	0
Major repairs to the church hall	o	-	-	-	-	0	0
New building work to church property	p	-	-	13,234		13,234	2,766
Other payments/expenditure	q						
Payments for church organisations		-	-	1,877	-	1,877	1,546
TOTAL PAYMENTS		**123,496**	**765**	**15,110**	**0**	**139,372**	**110,828**
NET RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS		**(29,398)**	**23,809**	**(11,572)**	**1,847**	**(15,314)**	**15,564**
REVALUATIONS							
Unrealised gain / (loss)							
CBF Fixed Interest Acc		527				527	(1,465)
Dorothy Allen Trust					7,567	7,567	(11,499)
CBF Sunday School Account				0		0	10
TOTALREVALUATIONS		**527**	**0**	**0**	**7,567**	**8,094**	**(12,954)**
NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS/REVALUATIONS		**(28,870)**	**23,809**	**(11,572)**	**9,414**	**(7,220)**	**2,610**

ST MARY THE VIRGIN GODMANCHESTER PCC
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	31 DEC 2023		31 DEC 2022		± in 2023
ASSETS					
Cash Funds					
Petty Cash		**213**		**72**	*141*
Santander Bank *(Current Account)*	26,168		43,617		*(17,449)*
Plus cheques deposited but not cleared	0		526		
Less cheques issued but not presented	(1,930)		(3,303)		
		24,238		**40,841**	
Charity Aid Foundation Bank *(Transformation Fund)*		22,514		33,026	*(10,512)*
C of E Central Board of Finance Deposit Accounts					
CBF Contingency a/c CB3025094-001	22,475		11,641		*10,834*
CBF Development a/c CB3025096-001	10,985		10,644		*341*
		33,461		**22,286**	*11,175*
Total Bank accounts/cash		**80,426**		**96,225**	*(15,799)*
Trust Funds					
Dorothy Allen Trust Fund	92,114		84,547		*7,567*
Sunday Schoool Trust Funds					
CBF114001/702D	940		940		*0*
CBF Fixed Interest Securities a/c CB3025095-001	9,976		9,449		*527*
CBF114001/103D	2,000		2,000		*0*
		105,030		**96,936**	*8,094*
TOTAL ASSETS		**185,456**		**193,161**	*(7,705)*
LIABILITIES					
Fees owing to Ely DBF	119.00		583.00		
Cheques issued but not presented	1,930		3,303		
Less cheques deposited but not cleared	0		(526)		
		2,049		**3,360**	*(1,311)*
NET ASSETS/LIABILITIES		**183,407**		**189,801**	*(6,394)*
FIXED ASSETS RETAINED FOR CHURCH USE					
Church hall and fittings	93,000		93,000		*0*
Storage shed & Church Hall shed	2,306		3,075		*(769)*
Piano	5,000		5,000		*0*
Set of handbells	3,000		3,000		*0*
Four lawnmowers, three strimmers one leaf blower	768		492		*276*
Video projection equipment	1,898		2,531		*(633)*
		105,972		**107,098**	*(1,126)*

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Revd DW Busk
Vicar and PCC Chairman

Signature _____

Date 18/3/24

The notes on page 3 to 6 form part of this statement

ST MARY THE VIRGIN GODMANCHESTER PCC
OPERATING FUNDS 2023

	b/f from 2022	Receipts	Payments	Reval'n	c/f to 2024	± in 2023
Assets availble (From Assets & Liabilites)						
Petty cash	72	2,994	2,854		213	141
Santander (net)	40,841	131,689	148,292		24,238	(16,603)
CBF Development Acc	10,644	341	0		10,985	341
CAF Transformation Acc	33,026	2,722	13,234		22,514	(10,512)
CBF Contingency Acc	11,641	10,834	0		22,475	10,834
TOTAL	**96,225**	**148,580**	**164,379**		**80,426**	**(15,799)**
Operating funds						
General Fund	23,640	91,535	89,919		25,256	1,616
Bellringers	1,979	1,480	1,260		2,199	220
Children's Church	98	212	272		38	(60)
Church Fabric	8,032	12,704	13,356		7,379	(653)
Church Hall	8,703	19,930	27,387		1,245	(7,457)
Churchyard & Mowers	1,050	4,644	4,765		929	(121)
Decorating Fund	8,011	1,000	0		9,011	1,000
Flower Guild	879	359	617		622	(257)
Friday at 5.15	32	359	389		1	(31)
Transformation Project	44,207	4,910	14,480		34,637	(9,570)
Agency Funds [1]	(407)	11,448	11,932		(892)	(485)
TOTAL	**96,225**	**148,580**	**164,379**	**0**	**80,426**	**(15,799)**

Operating Funds have both income and expenditure during the year and individual balances are carried forward to the start of the next year. When necessary, transfers are made between operating funds during the year.

Note (1) Agency Funds are funds that are handled by the church but are not part of the church income and expenditure and are not included in the church annual accounts. Examples are diocesan fees, fees for organists, verger or choir at wedidngs and funerals and collections at funerals for a nominated charity.

ST MARY THE VIRGIN GODMANCHESTER PCC
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDED 31 DEC 2023

1 **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with both the Charities Act 2011, on the Receipts and Payments Basis, and the Church of England accounting regulations

2 **ANALYSIS OF FUND MOVEMENT FOR THE YEAR**

(i) UNRESTRICTED FUNDS may be used by the PCC for any of its ordinary purposes. The movements in the fund are shown in the Receipts and Payments Account

FUND NAME	FUND PURPOSE	Bal 1 Jan	Receipts	Payments	Bal 31 Dec
General funds	Gereal use by PCC	23,640	91,709	99,508	25,256
		23,640	91,535	89,919	25,256

(ii) DESIGNATED FUNDS represent funds set aside, out of ordinary unrestricted funds, for specific designated purposes, but they can be transferred backinto general funds at any time

FUND NAME	FUND PURPOSE	Bal 1 Jan	Receipts	Payments	Bal 31 Dec
Church Hall	Maintain hall	8,703	19,930	27,387	1,245
Decorating fund	Church redecoration	8,011	1,000	0	9,011
Churchyard & Mowers	Maintain church surrounds	1,050	4,644	4,765	929
Friday at 5.15	Mission and Evangelism	32	359	389	1
		17,796	25,933	32,542	11,186

(iii) RESTRICTED FUNDS represent either income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those retricted objectives provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, or donations or grants received or invited for a specific purpose. The funds may only be spent on the specific purpose for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent must be carried forward as a balance on that fund and cannot be absorbed into general funds.

FUND NAME	FUND PURPOSE	Bal 1 Jan	Receipts	Payments	Bal 31 Dec
Transformation Fund	Church Transformation Project	44,207	4,910	14,480	34,637
Sunday School	Fund Children's Church	98	212	272	38
		44,306	5,122	14,752	34,675

(iv) ENDOWMENT FUNDS are funds whose capital must be maintained: only income arising from the investment may be used either as restricted or unrestricted funds depending on the purpose for which the endowment was established

FUND NAME	FUND PURPOSE	Bal 1 Jan	Receipts	Payments	Bal 31 Dec
Dorothy Allen Trust	50% fabric, remainder unrestricted	0	2,469	2,469	0
Sunday School Invest	Religious education	0	20	20	0
		0	2,489	2,489	0

(v) FUNDS LODGED IN THE CHURCH ACCOUNTS are funds belonging to church organisations that are lodged in the church accounts.

FUND NAME	FUND PURPOSE	Bal 1 Jan	Receipts	Payments	Bal 31 Dec
Bell Ringers Fund	Tower maintenance	1,979	1,480	1,260	2,199
Flower Guild Fund	Church flowers	879	359	617	622
		2,858	1,839	1,877	2,821

3 **TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS**

From	To	Amount
Church Hall	Gen Funds	15,800
Church hall	Decorating Fund	1,000
Churchyard & Mowers	Fabric Fund	4,000

ST MARY THE VIRGIN GODMANCHESTER PCC

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDED 31 DEC 2023

4. ANALYSIS OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ITEMS

Notes	RECEIPTS	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	2023 Total	2022 Total
a)	**Planned giving**						
	BACS donations (regular)	1,620	-	-	-	1,620.00	1,823
	Free-will envelopes	2,894	-	-	-	2,894.16	3,008
	Parish giving	26,955	-	-	-	26,954.77	24,498
	Standing orders/DDs	10,160	-	-	-	10,160.00	11,570
		41,629	-	-	-	41,628.93	40,898
b)	**Collections at services**						
	Baptisms	352	-	-	-	352.10	298
	Funerals	334	-	-	-	334.00	324
	House communion	147	-	-	-	147.30	172
	Regular Sunday services	4,968	-	-	-	4,968.22	4,581
	Special Services	1,878	-	-	-	1,877.58	1,790
	Weddings	244	-	-	-	244.03	142
		7,923	-	-	-	7,923.23	7,308
c)	**All other giving/voluntary receipts**						
	Donations	3,484	-	2,206	-	5,690.00	16,864
	Gift day	2,387	-	-	-	2,387.00	3,755
		5,871	-	2,206	-	8,077.00	20,619
d)	**Grants (recurring and one-off)**						
	VAT Recovered	3,662				3,661.59	1,306
	External Grants		-	-	-	0.00	600
	Friends of St Mary's		5,000	-	-	5,000.00	2,348
		3,662	5,000	0	-	8,661.59	4,254
e)	**Fundraising activities**						
	Summer fete	2,117	-	-	-	2,116.65	2,324
	Come and Sing	360				359.50	0
	Christmas bazaar	2,463	-	-	-	2,463.00	2,088
		4,939	-	-	-	4,939.15	4,412
f)	**Investment income**						
	CBF Contingency acc	619	-	-	-	619.03	150
	CBF Fixed interest acc	215				215.02	272
	CBF Development acc	-	-	341	-	341.15	138
	CAF Bank Interest			58		58.08	27
	Dorothy Allen Trust	1,228	-	1,228		2,456.09	2,504
	Sunday School Investments	-	-	112	-	112.09	20
		2,062	0	1,739	-	3,801.46	3,111
g)	**Trading activities**						
	Church hire	640	-	-	-	640.00	1,525
	Hall letting		19,930	-	-	19,930.00	17,120
	Literature sales	20		0	0	20.00	0
	Magazine sales & advertising	2,778	-	-	-	2,778.00	1,829
	Sunday Coffee	729	-	-	-	729.33	533
	Book sales	191				190.85	526
	Grasscutting contract	-	4,644	-		4,644.00	4,457
		4,358	24,574	-	-	28,932.18	25,990
h)	**Other receipts/income**						
	Utility rebate	1,143				1,142.81	
	Data Dev Online accounts rebate	30				30.00	
	Bellringers	-	-	1,480	-	1,480.00	1,168
	Flower Guild	-	-	359	-	359.30	591
		1,173	-	1,839	-	3,012.11	1,759

ST MARY THE VIRGIN GODMANCHESTER PCC

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDED 31 DEC 2023

4. ANALYSIS OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ITEMS

PAYMENTS	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	2023 Total	2022 Total
i) **Cost of fundraising activities**						
Fete & bazaar	420	-	-	-	420.00	444
Donation envelopes	71	-	-	-	71.20	124
	491	-	-	-	491.20	568
j) **Mission & charity giving**						
Christmas charities	900	-	-	-	900.00	1,344
Service charities	77	-	-	-	76.55	177
Mayor of Godma					-	169
Other charities	360	-	-	-	360.00	1,088
	1,337	-	0	-	1,336.55	2,778
k) **Mission & evangelism**						
Children's church	272	-	-	-	272.47	143
Grub, Games and God			389		389.38	(32)
Othe donations		-	-	-	-	169
	272	-	389	-	661.85	281
l) **Church running expenses**						
Admin	4,649	-	-	-	4,648.89	5,052
Altar requirements	380	-	-	-	380.32	240
Auditor fee	255	-	-	-	255.00	240
Maintenance	16,903	-	-	-	16,903.20	8,506
Organ & choir	559	-	-	-	559.00	2,504
Misc	394	-	-	-	394.03	396
	23,140	-	-	-	23,140.44	16,938
m) **Cost of trading**						
Mower expenses		765	-		765.25	117
Cost of goods (Coffee)	0	-	-	-	-	88
	0	765	-	-	765.25	205
n) **Major repairs to church building**						
Church fabric					-	0
o) **Major repairs to church hall**	-	-	-	-	-	
p) **New building work to church property**						
Transformation project	-	-	13,234	-	13,233.62	2,766
q) **Other payments and expenditure**						
Bellringers	-	-	1,260	-	1,260.00	855
Flower Guild	-	-	617	-	616.74	691
	-	-	1,877	-	1,876.74	1,546