THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND









St Mary's Peterborough



# St Mary's Church Peterborough

# ANNUAL REPORT & STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2024



















The Diocese of Peterborough

*St Mary's Church is part of the Diocese of Peterborough within the Church of England.*
*The correspondence address is St Mary's Church, New Road, Peterborough PE1 1TT.*
*The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Peterborough St Mary is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and registered with the Charity Commission in September 2018. Its Registered Charity Number is 1180032.*

**PCC members who served at any time during 2024 are:**

*Ex-officio members:*

- Incumbent: The Reverend Canon Michael Moore (Chair of PCC as Trustees of St Mary's)
- Associate Priest: The Reverend Carol Rowles
- Churchwardens: Mr Andrew Christie, Mr Michael Holborn
- Readers: Mrs Elizabeth Pedley, Mr Robert Robinson
- Licensed Lay Minister (Reader in training): Mr Stuart Pedley (from November)
- Lay Pastoral Ministers: Mrs Jayne Ellis, Mrs Sue Moore, Parish Evangelist: Mr Andrew Christie, elected on Deanery Synod (until May)
- Mrs Vicky Brett, PCC Secretary, elected General Synod member
- Mr David Dawson elected representative on Deanery Synod
- Mrs Hilary Dawson elected representative on Diocesan and Deanery Synods
- Mrs Fiona Elliot elected representative on Deanery Synod (from May)
- Mr George Kirk elected representative on Deanery Synod

*Elected members:*

- Mr Keith Brett
- Mrs Helen Brown
- Mr David Christie
- Mrs Gillian Christie
- Mr Victor Jones (until Sept)
- Mrs Mairwen Peasnell (Lay Chair for PCC meetings)
- Mr Richard Smith, Treasurer (until May 2024)
- Mr William Treweek, Treasurer (from May 2024)
- Mrs Angela Turner
- Mrs Elena Turner (until May 2024)

| | |
|---|---|
| Authorised Lay Pioneers: | Mr Keith Brett, Mrs Vicky Brett |
| Electoral Roll Officer: | Mrs Janette Jones-Pipe |
| Safeguarding Officer: | Mrs Jayne Ellis |
| Health & Safety Officer: | Mrs Cassandra Charles |
| Independent Examiner: | Mr N J Burroughs FCA,<br>45 Farleigh Fields, Orton Wistow, Peterborough |
| Banking details: | St Mary's Peterborough PCC General Account is at Barclays Bank,<br>1 Church Street, Peterborough PE1 1XB<br>St Mary's Peterborough Restricted Accounts are held by the<br>Peterborough Diocesan Board of Finance (Registered Charity no. 250569) |

## Our Vicar, Revd. Canon Michael Moore, summarises 2024 at St Mary's

### GROWTH

2024 has been a good year for St Mary's for growth. At Eastertime, two people were confirmed by the Bishop at a service in Peterborough Cathedral. We ran an Alpha course with 15 participants and had our Away Day at Castor Cedar Centre. Many new people have joined us in 2024. We have seen more children attending church, some weeks over 30. Our weekly attendance has grown, and we still have a good online presence. Spiritual growth is very important, and we now have two house groups, one in the daytime and the other in the evening. We also ran a Lent group and an Advent group where we all came together to learn and deepen our faith.

### PRAYER

In addition to focusing on God's Word at St Mary's, we continue to be an actively praying church. I am grateful to those who lead our 'Thursday Prayers online'; we have seen an increase of people using these prayers this year. Our 'Prayer Link' continues to be a great support to those in need of urgent prayer throughout the local community and across the country and the world. Our Prayer Board in church continues to be well used. We pray the prayers on the board each month during our Wednesday Communion service. The monthly Tuesday Prayer Evenings have been positive, with people dropping in and out as much as they can.

### EXPANDING THE TEAM

In 2024, many people asked if they could help the church, and more people are involved than ever before, taking on new roles and helping in new ways. This was partly due to the Time and Talents initiative in November, but there was also a general willingness to help.
The Social Team planned many new events. We had over sixty people on the list to read on a Sunday and lead the prayers – young people, older people, and in-between. Stuart Pedley finished his training as a Reader and was licenced by Bishop Debbie at a Friday Night Worship service. The Youth Club and the Children's Church grew, too, so we are looking for new people to help run these.

### REACHING OUT TO OUR COMMUNITY

St Mary's continues to be an outward-looking church. We raised a huge amount for our Summer Fundraising campaign in 2024 (£5,640). £2,820 of this went to the local charity CAP (Christians against Poverty) and the other half to St Mary's to put towards buying new chairs for the church halls. This amazing amount is a testament to the huge generosity of our church members and their families and friends. With our other giving, it totalled over £17,000. Our house-to-house collections and other events during Christian Aid Week raised £3,220.89. With the addition of almost £2,335 from the Red Bucket appeals, we raised £5,555.89 for Christian Aid this year. We also kept collecting for the Peterborough Food Bank each week.
We had a hugely successful Fun Day in August for the community and fed and watered about 200 people. The streaming of our church services also helped people to feel connected, and many who did not come to church before now regularly tune in. When meeting new people, it is helpful to point them to our online services so they can see what we are like as a church before they try it. The services are proving to be a lifeline for those who cannot get to church because of illness, as they enable them to feel part of our worshipping community still.

### FINANCES

We knew finances would be tough for us at St Mary's in 2024 with the lettings income being down. However, we made some economies, which will help us moving forward. We had a small response from our Time and Talents in November and are talking to people to encourage them to increase their giving. I know that together, we can sort this. We have reached out into the community with God's love through our online services, and through those, we have ourselves been blessed as a church. We have reached out to the community with our church magazine, telling people what is happening in the church. Spare copies were also delivered to the new estates in our parish. We are busy planning a big push with this in 2025.

There is a great need in our community, not just financially but also spiritually, and I know that, as a church, we are helping in those areas. Together at St Mary's, we are making a difference in people's lives in this city. I pray that this will continue and that, as a church, we all will make a difference.

## Our Parish of Peterborough St Mary's

The church of Peterborough St Mary was constituted on 27th August 1857 (as St Mary Boongate) to serve those living on the eastern side of Peterborough, principally the poor of the Boongate slums. Much of the parish was rural then, but the 20th century brought considerable residential, industrial and commercial development, particularly between 1970 and 1990 when Peterborough Development Corporation transformed the area. As part of that change, the mid-Victorian church building was demolished, and replaced with a modern building incorporating a church and chapel, with halls, meeting rooms, kitchens and toilets on two floors.

Our parish broadly equates to the civil Peterborough East Ward together with small parts of the neighbouring Central, Park and Dogsthorpe Wards. Covering an area of 3.6 square miles it forms a wedge, stretching out almost three miles north-eastwards from the city centre, from the Eastgate estates (which replaced the old Boongate slums in the 1970s), through the post-war suburb of Eastfield to the newer township of Parnwell. It also includes the extensive Eastern Industrial estates and part of the city's retail and commercial centre. The church building is situated in the south-western corner of the parish, close to the city centre.

The population is around 16,500, 65% white and 20% Asian. It is relatively young - 22% of those living in the parish in 2021 were under 15 years of age, slightly above the figure of 18% for England as a whole *(Church of England Research & Statistics Unit Parish data Jan. 2024).* It is one of the 10% most deprived parishes in the country (*based on the indicators of poverty used by the Church of England Research & Statistics Unit and the Church Urban Fund)*, for each of child, working-age and pensioner poverty.

The number of people living in the parish is expected to grow, and several housing developments are either planned or underway, including the large Indigo Building scheme on the former site of the City Market, close to the church.

Within our parish we have five primary schools *(Bishop Creighton Academy; Lime Academy Abbotsmede; Lime Academy Parnwell; Newark Hill Academy; St Thomas More RC Primary),* two Secondary Schools *(City of Peterborough Academy, St John Fisher RC High School)* and two Special Schools (*Medeshamstede Academy, NeneGate School)* and a Further Education College *(City College).* The new Peterborough campus of Anglia Ruskin University, which welcomed its first students in September 2022, is also in our parish.

## The Primary Purpose of St Mary's Church

Our principal objective at St Mary's is to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. Like all churches, St Mary's attempts to look three ways at once in its mission, because at all times we strive to be open to and engage with our Living God, with our community neighbours and with our own 'church family'. These three fundamental functions underpin our mission as a church.

St Mary's Parochial Church Council is committed to growing our church – not just numerically, but to grow nearer to God through worship, to grow in faith and spiritual understanding, to grow out into our local community and to grow in fellowship with each other. To facilitate this growth we consider it important to maintain the fabric and contents of our church and centre building, and also to ensure that we have sufficient resources, human, technological and monetary.

As a church, our first priority at St Mary's is worship and prayer, and we are committed to holding regular public worship that is open to all, and to provide a sacred space for personal prayer and contemplation. We teach the Christian faith through sermons, courses and small groups, and offer a pastoral ministry to the sick and bereaved. We want to promote the whole mission of the church through the provision of activities of benefit to people in our local community, and want in particular to work with the schools within our parish.

St Mary's PCC is focused on the advancement of religion for the public benefit. When compiling our action plans for each year, we consider the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, particularly the specific guidance given to charities concerned with the advancement of religion. We also consider the wider needs of the local community which we serve.

## Structure, governance and management

St Mary's Peterborough PCC is a body corporate operating under the *Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956* and the *Church Representation Rules*. In essence its role is to work with Canon Michael, as our Vicar, in all church activities, including the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social & ecumenical; participating in local Deanery and Diocesan events; looking after our building and contents; managing our finances and ensuring that things successfully happen.

St Mary's PCC is specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church Centre complex, which is spread over two floors and comprises the church, the chapel, two halls, two kitchens, three small meeting rooms, three vestries and an office. This modern, purpose-built building was opened in 1991, replacing the original Victorian church which was in a very poor state of repair and had no community facilities.

Given its wide responsibilities, the PCC has a number of committees and teams and authorises individuals to be responsible for particular areas of church activity, such as safeguarding, health and safety, stewardship, pastoral visiting and Churches Together liaison. It also employs two people: a part-time administrative assistant and a part-time cleaner/caretaker.

The day-to-day management of St Mary's Church is exercised by the Standing Committee: Revd. Canon Michael Moore (*Vicar)*, Andrew Christie, Michael Holborn (*Churchwardens)*, Vicky Brett *(PCC Secretary)*, Richard Smith/William Treweek *(Treasurer)* and Elizabeth Pedley. This is the only committee required by law, and it has the power to transact business between PCC meetings and consider issues that may affect the church.

PCC members are appointed in accordance with the Church of England Representation Rules and are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), held each Spring. By decision of a previous APCM, elected members serve for one year only (except for those elected to Deanery Synod who serve for three years). Everyone who regularly attends St Mary's is encouraged to join our Electoral Roll and to stand for election to the PCC. All members of the PCC are required to be DBS checked and to complete safeguarding training at a level appropriate to their role. They may also receive other external training as and when deemed appropriate.

Our APCM was held in May 2024. This meeting re-elected two churchwardens and eight lay PCC members for one year. It also elected four people to represent St Mary's at Deanery Synod for three years. St Mary's PCC met seven times during 2024. The average level of attendance during 2024 was 78.9%.

Meetings are chaired by an elected Lay Chair at the request of the Vicar, who otherwise retains chairmanship of the PCC as Trustees of St Mary's.



## Our Plans for the future - the next five years

During 2024 St Mary's PCC set a new five year growth agenda for the years 2025 — 2030, which we felt would help strengthen our commitment to the core functions forming the basis of our on-going purpose, namely:

- to worship God,
- to help each other grow in faith and fellowship, and
- to spread the love of Jesus Christ and the Gospel message throughout our local community.

**Our 5 Year Plan (2025 to 2030) identifies specific ways in which we hope to grow, and things we wish to achieve:**

**To grow nearer to God through worship:**

By offering worship opportunities in a range of different styles and on different days

By encouraging those who come to attend more regularly

**To grow in faith and spiritual understanding:**

By encouraging more of the congregation to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith through attendance at the activities we offer (e.g. House Groups, Lent Course, Alpha)

By ensuring that our children and young people have firm foundations on which to grow their Christian faith

**To grow in fellowship with one another:**

By ensuring that everyone who walks through our doors is greeted with the same high standards of warmth and hospitality, and made to feel a valued member of our community

By offering a range of social and fund-raising activities appropriate to the age and interests of both our diverse congregation and our wider church community

By living out the principles of Inclusive Church

By developing a close partnership with our local Christian churches

By actively supporting specific charities through fundraising events

**To grow out into our local community through mission and outreach:**

By making contact with residents throughout the parish

By strengthening our links with local schools

By offering activities for local children and young people

By making contact with local offices and businesses

**To grow in numbers:**

By working to increase the numbers of those who attend our Sunday and weekday services on a regular basis

**And in order to achieve these aims, we want to ensure that we:**

Have sufficient numbers of people from various age-groups with the necessary skills and training to get things done

Have appropriate, well-maintained facilities, with improvements made where necessary

Have enough money, whilst giving a tenth of our income away to charity each year

Keep our church members and visitors safe and secure through robust policy and practice in safeguarding, health and safety and data protection

Limit the damage we may be causing to our planet

## What PCC wanted to achieve in 2024

The implementation of our plans for the five years 2019-2024 was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted the original timetable and reset our priorities. By putting our focus on our core purpose as a church, we were able to move forward once the pandemic was over.

## and this is what we managed to do in 2024. We:

Continued to make public worship a priority:

- Developed and expanded our online presence

Took steps to grow in faith and spiritual understanding:

- Explored ways to offer online fellowship groups, including a remote prayer group.
- Ran an Advent course.
- Ran an Alpha course, meeting weekly from January to March.
- Ran a confirmations class and held a confirmation service.
- Thy Kingdome Come Prayer Walk in Church in May

Took steps to grow in fellowship with one another:

- Improved the accuracy, consistency and accessibility of our communications, so that all were aware of forthcoming activities and feel invited
- Rebuilt our Welcoming Team, and involved children & young people wherever possible
- Supported and promoted activities offered by the Diocese and Churches Together in Central Peterborough, e.g. Advent Reflection Day in November
- Set up a monthly Book Club

Took steps to grow out into our local community through mission and outreach:

- Re-launched regular Street Prayer visits in residential areas of our parish
- Considered possible ways of rebuilding our Open the Book contact with local primary schools
- Offered a Family Fun Day in the summer for local families
- Distributed copies of '*News Around St Mary's*' to new houses in the parish.
- Continued forging links with the ARU Peterborough university.
- Supported CAP, a local charity through our Summer Fundraiser.
- Held our social events - see page 11 for details.

Took steps to ensure that we had appropriate resources and facilities to achieve our plans:

- Repainted the edges of the front steps to improve their visibility
- Investigated cost-saving measures for the regular services and maintenance.
- Continued efforts to increase the amount of money our members give to the church, and held a Stewardship Campaign

We also want to limit the damage we might cause to our planet:

- Continued our programme to replace all light fittings with LED lights
- Put up our Silver Eco Award plaque made of recycled wood.

## Our Priorities for 2025

2025 is the first year of the Five Year plan adopted in Nov 2024. Our context has changed significantly over the past five years. The Market and many of the local offices have closed and are being turned into flats, leading to an influx of new residents to our immediate neighbourhood.

### During 2025, we hope to achieve the following:

To grow nearer to God through worship:

- By offering a range of different services on Sundays and Weekdays, including online.

To grow in faith and spiritual understanding:

- By offering Alpha, Advent and Lent Courses
- By offering Prayer Events in line with Bishop Debbie's desire to focus on prayer in 2025.
- Grow our new monthly discussion groups – Church-based 'House' Group, Book Club.

To grow in fellowship with one another:

- Have an effective Welcoming Team involving children & young people wherever possible
- Launch free family-friendly film sessions for the local community when funds allow
- Support and promote activities offered by the Diocese and Churches Together in Central Peterborough, e.g. Bishop's Prayer Day and Advent Reflection Day in November

To grow out into our local community through mission and outreach:

- Hold regular Street Prayer visits in residential areas of our parish
- Rebuild our Open the Book contact with local primary schools
- Offer a Family Fun Day in the summer for local families
- Offer 'Come & Sing' sessions for elderly people and their carers.
- Continue the work with the local Food Bank.

And to achieve these aims, we want to improve our facilities whilst limiting damage to our planet:

- Grow our volunteer base in areas where we are short, especially the pastoral team
- Reconsider the feasibility of installing handrails up the Sanctuary steps
- Continue efforts to increase the amount of money our members give to the church and hold a Stewardship Campaign if deemed necessary.
- Work to increase our Eco Award level from Silver to Gold across all areas
- Continue our programme to replace all light fittings with LED lights
- Research the possibility of installing solar panels on our south-facing roof

**You are beautiful beyond description,**
**too marvellous for words,**
**too wonderful for comprehension,**
**like nothing ever seen or heard.**
**Who can grasp your infinite wisdom?**
**Who can fathom**
**the depth of your love?**
**You are beautiful beyond description,**
**majesty, enthroned above.**

**And I stand, I stand in awe of you.**
**I stand, I stand in awe of you.**
**Holy God, to whom all praise is due,**
**I stand in awe of you.**

Mark Altrogge 1987

## Achievements & Performance

### Numbers on the Electoral Roll

At the start of 2024 there were 124 names on our Electoral Roll, 60% of whom were women and 40% men. 50 (40%) lived within the parish, and 74 (60%) outside.

By May 2024, and following the revision of the Electoral Roll prior to the Annual Church Meeting in accordance with Church Regulations, numbers had increased to 130, 61% women and 39% men. 43% lived in the parish and 57% outside. Numbers remained stable at 130 up to December 2024.

### Worship

All are welcome to attend our regular services. We recognise that not everyone finds it helpful to worship God in the same way, and we encourage everyone to explore new ways of worship as they try to come closer to God. Our main Sunday morning service is Family Communion, but our regular pattern of services covers a wide range to suit different tastes and offer different worship experiences. Our popular monthly café style 'Friday Night Worship' appeals to those who enjoy informal worship with a live band, whilst those who value time for silent prayer and reflection are also catered for with our monthly prayer evenings. Our Compline and Evensong Sunday evening services complete our worship. Our Lay Pioneer Ministers lead 'Inclusive Church Peterborough' at St Mary's on Sunday evenings.

The online services have been offered each week since March 2020, thanks to the technical expertise of church members, and viewing figures of 4,208 views for the year, have been encouraging. Our most popular services this year were our Candelit Carol Service (17th Dec), Easter Sunday (31st Mar), the Second Sunday after Epiphany (14th Jan), and Bishop Debbie's visit to Friday Night Worship (6th Sep) - all receiving over 85 views. We know from feedback that people living miles away from St Mary's, including some from different continents, watch our services regularly. Some have an existing contact with St Mary's, and others seem to have found us by chance and stayed.




As well as our regular services, we enable people in our community to commemorate and thank God for life's milestones of birth, marriage, and death. We held one wedding and 16 baptisms in church. Sadly, there were a total of seven funerals, with three in church and four at the crematorium. We were also able to live-stream funerals to enable far-flung family members to say their goodbyes. One such funera had 510 viewers!

### Children, young people and families in our church and local community

Children's work in church is very important. The first Sunday of the month the children stay in the service and are encouraged to take an active role throughout the service. For other services the children leave during the first hymn for their own 'Children's Church' activities, returning for communion. They are then given the opportunity to share some of the learning they have done towards the end of the service. The number of children have slightly increased again this year to 30 and we are thankful to have an amazing team of helpers, which we also hope to grow.

Our Youth Group: for school-aged young people in Year 6 and above, had a successful year. They meet once a month on Saturday mornings and enjoy discussion and fun activities.

Children and families in our local community: On a Tuesday morning, during term times, St Mary's church members run a flourishing Baby and Toddler group. There are structured activities throughout the morning, which run alongside playtime for the children and for parents and carers to support each other. This group has fostered strong links with local families and is a successful social outreach into our community, providing a safe and warm environment for all those that come

Local primary schools: Our 'Open the book' team managed two Assemblies at Bishop Creighton Academy during 2024.

A donation was made to Newark Hill school towards some toys and equipment for a new project, a safe space for nurturing troubled children. We supported Ministry Interns to work with local young people in the Deanery.

## Pastoral Care to our local community & our church

Pastoral care and service to our community are extremely important to St Mary's, both within our church and within our parish and local community. Our Pastoral Team, which has nine members, is co-ordinated by Sue Moore, one of our Licensed Lay Ministers (Lay Pastoral Minister).

The Team coordinates visiting and supports people via personal visits, phone, email, and prayer. It regularly takes House Communion to church members who are unable to attend services due to illness or mobility reasons. It also regularly takes Holy Communion to residential homes in our parish (Broadleigh and Lavender House). We have built strong links between St Mary's and the staff and residents over the years.
The Team delivers free copies of our church magazine, 'News Around St Mary's,' to local organisations, such as schools, medical centres, sheltered housing schemes, residential homes, dentists, and hairdressers, and to members who are no longer able to attend church.
The team does baptism preparation, visiting and support, including the regular sending out of baptism anniversary cards. It supports those who are bereaved through an annual Remembering Service and provides support as and when needed.

The team runs the St Mary's 'Prayer Link' for urgent prayer requests, looks after our church Prayer Board, and produces and updates our 'Prayer Shepherd' card for every church member, which ensures every person in our church is regularly prayed for.

Our weekly 'Chill and Chat' on Friday mornings continues to welcome old and new friends who enjoy company and conversation over tea and coffee and an array of delicious homemade cakes. Church members continue to support the Peterborough Food Bank with regular donations of food that are collected in church.
At our Pastoral Team meeting in December 2024, we updated our visiting lists and thanked Jayne Ellis, who has been taking Holy Communion into the Broadleigh and Lavender care homes for twenty-five years.



## Social events for church and community

At St Mary's we like to have fun and socialise. Our events are open to all and give everyone a chance to chat, meet new people and spread the camaraderie that oozes out of our church. Of course, along the way we try to raise as much money as possible for charities whilst keeping ticket prices affordable for all. Each event raises money for a different charity. The following list shows the beneficiaries from 2024.

| Month | Event | Charity |
|---|---|---|
| Dec 2023 | Church Christmas Card | Sue Ryder |
| January | Men's Breakfast | Operation Smile |
| February | Pancake Party | Light Project |
| March | Chinese Meal | |
| April | Beetle Drive with Fish & Chips | HELP |
| May | Flavours of the World Lunch | Christian Aid |
| June | Picnic in the Park | |
| July | Men's Breakfast | St John Fisher & Dogsthorpe Infants Breakfast Clubs |
| July | Fun Day for the Parish | |

July/August/September - Summer Fundraiser
Monies shared this year between St Mary's and 'Christians Against Poverty'

**Summer Fundraiser events:**
Ceilidh**,** Men's breakfast, Afternoon Tea, Patronal Lunch, Garden Party, 'Rat Pack' Concert, Murder Mystery Party, plus jam sales, marmalade sales, sponsored walks, lunches, bell ringing, plant sales, flower arrangement raffle, table top sales, Isla's bracelets etc.

| Month | Event | Charity |
|---|---|---|
| October | Harvest lunch | Mary's Child |
| November | Quiz and Ploughman's supper | Dhiverse ABC |
| December | Christmas Singalong | Little Miracles |
| | Christmas Table top sales | St Mary's |
| | Afternoon Tea | Samaritans |

These events raised £9,010 for 12 charities plus St Mary's.

## Our Church Centre

St Mary's is fortunate in having a well-designed modern building incorporating a church, a chapel, two halls, meeting rooms, kitchens, and toilets, all offering good access for the disabled, including a ramp entrance, wide doors, and a lift.  Until it was closed

Extended Hands (a small local charity supporting women at risk of feeling lonely, isolated, or marginalised) rent one of our rooms as their office base and regularly use rooms in our Centre for their sewing and craft sessions, Group Therapy Sessions, one-to-one Counselling sessions, fitness sessions, and coffee mornings.

Inclusive Church Peterborough, led by our Lay Pioneer Ministers, meets each Sunday evening in our Centre.  We also hosted a week-long interdenominational Icon painting course in October. As extension to our outreach we have a growing band of bellringers and the 8 bells are rung very regularly and attracts a wide catchment of around 25 bellringers each week, many of whom support our Sunday service ringing.

Our policy has been to offer free or reduced rate meeting space in our Centre to several local charities, including Samaritans, Peterborough Christian Aid Committee.  We are very grateful for our Church Administrator, Denise Thomas, for continuing to manage our Centre bookings so efficiently.

## Maintaining our church building

Like all buildings, St Mary's needs regular maintenance and repair to prevent deterioration. This responsibility falls upon the Churchwardens, who report to the Standing Committee, who advise the PCC on maintenance issues and work needed so that the PCC can assent to work being undertaken subject to the availability of funds. Less significant work is covered by a team of church volunteers with more involved tasks or projects being covered by skilled trades, some of whom are locally based, like Nick Elks for electrical work. We are grateful to Nick and others, like Gareth Williams, Gavin Mills, Charlie Lee, and Nicholos Holborn, for using their respective professional skills to provide essential services to our church.

Minor repairs have been carried out by the Churchwardens, Andrew Christie and Michael Holborn, as necessary. The more substantial activities are detailed as follows:

- Gutters cleaned.
- Lightning conductors were tested, and a new receiver point was attached to the top of the tower.
- Following damage caused by a car collision in late 2023, the bay window in the Fellowship Hall was replaced, along with remediation to the surrounding brickwork under the insurance policy with Ecclesiastical Insurance. This work was completed in May 2024.
- The upstairs toilets are now gender-neutral, completing the work for all the toilets in the building.
- A cost-saving review resulting in a new twice yearly garden maintenance contract with Josh Barnes Landscapers, predominantly on our border hedges.
- WAHR (the Work at Height Regulations) 2005 inspections and record keeping with support from Ability Ltd, who have provided scaffolding towers to assist safely with maintenance at height levels with lighting, etc.

## Keeping us safe

**Health and Safety:**

We take our Health and Safety responsibilities seriously so we can provide a safe environment for everyone to enjoy the facilities that St Mary's Church has to offer. A Health and Safety Inspection of the building is conducted annually by an independent inspector, with our church wardens doing a monthly check to look out for anything that needs fixing or removing.

Annual and periodical safety inspections and services are carried out by registered contractors who comply with professional and regulatory standards, thereby ensuring all our safety certificates are up to date. Including:-

- The lift is regularly serviced by Morris Vermaport, including the statutory LOLER (safety) tests.
- The fire safety equipment is maintained and checked by Churches Fire, which tests the fire alarm, fire extinguishers, and emergency lighting. A Fire Safety Floor Plan is on display.
- Blounts inspects and certifies the gas-fired boiler and heating system annually.
- The portable electrical appliances are PAT tested annually.
- The Organ and Piano tuners attend twice a year.
- Our large "Red Bin" contract is with Biffa, who empty the bin on a 4-week cycle.
- Our windows were cleaned by Beebys Limited every 6 months.
- Our contract with Cathedral Hygiene for sanitary bins in the toilets concluded at the end of 2024 and was brought in-house for additional cost-saving measures.

Finally, a thank you to the Sides Persons and all the volunteers in so many numerous roles that step forward willingly and make being a Churchwarden less of a chore and more of a pleasure to serve at St Mary's.

**Safeguarding:**
At St Mary's we take safeguarding very seriously. Our parish safeguarding officer is Mrs Jayne Ellis has responsibility for safeguarding in her professional role and uses this experience to keep us safe at St Mary's. During 2024 she kept the PCC fully informed on updates to policy and practice as advised by Peterborough Diocese.

Copies of our safeguarding policy are prominently displayed on lobby noticeboards and on the church website with links to the Diocesan Safeguarding website.

Safeguarding concerns are followed up promptly and in accordance with Diocesan guidelines.

St Mary's Church is registered with the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) through which renewals and new clearances for the Statutory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are made.

The Vicar, licensed ministers, PCC members and staff working with children and vulnerable adults have been DBS registered and are completing the appropriate level of safeguarding training as set out by the Diocese. Everyone is aware that they cannot continue in their role without this training.

**Data Protection:**
The way in which St Mary's collects, stores and processes data on our church members was reviewed in 2018 in order to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). PCC agreed a new Data Privacy notice, which is on display on our noticeboard together with our Health & Safety and Safeguarding policy statements.

## Our links with the wider church

Our links with the wider church are strong.

Our Vicar, Canon Michael was Rural Dean of Peterborough Deanery until, and we have four lelected ay representatives on Peterborough Deanery Synod.

One lay member of St Mary's currently represents Peterborough Deanery on Peterborough Diocesan Synod.

One of our church members was elected in October 2021 to General Synod as one of the three lay representatives for Peterborough Diocese.

St Mary's is part of the Inclusive Church network and Inclusive Church Peterborough meets in our building each week, led by our Lay Pioneer Ministers. They met throughout 2024.

St Mary's is also an active member of Churches Together in Central Peterborough (CTiCP), an ecumenical group of seven city centre churches of various different denominations. Its main aims are to pray and worship together, putting on the Good Friday Walk of Witness and monthly prayer and breakfast meetings and an Advent Reflection Day, which in 2024 was held at St Mary's.

*St Mary's PCC is delighted with what we managed to achieve in 2024 in another challenging year. Very little of this would have been possible without ...*

**...our Volunteers**

Almost all the work at St Mary's is done by volunteers. Canon Michael, the Churchwardens and PCC would like to thank them all for giving their time and talents free to enable St Mary's Church—whether the 'physical' church in the building, or our online presence, to function, week in and week out. We are very grateful to Denise and Ray Howard for the professional expertise they bring to their work cleaning our building during 2024. As a church community we extend our thanks to David Divers who retired as our voluntary Estate Manager at the end of 2024 and we feel blessed to have Rob Peasnell take on this key role, following a successful handover period.

Also, we thank Paul Thomas, our "Barrow Boy," for regularly taking generous donations from our congregation to the Food Bank.

**Thank you!**

## Financial Review for 2024 *[Detailed accounts on pages 15-19]*

### Report from our Treasurer, William Treweek

St Mary's ended the year with a small deficit (of £3,162), which was slightly better than budgeted expectations. Regular giving from members rose during 2024. All of the increase came from the Gift Aid Reclaim line, where claims were made for two years as no submission was made in 2023. Income via contactless, text, and online giving is slightly down on 2023, while Stewardship and Loose Cash is slightly up.

Our second main income source – hiring out our halls and meeting rooms – fell back by 21% year on year but is still higher than the 2022 total. Bookings for the first quarter of 2025 have been strong, putting St Mary's in a good position to achieve the £13,986 total achieved in 2023. A regular program of fundraising activities helped to increase the amount raised for the church and local charities in 2024.

During the year, a donation of £50,000 was received. This donation is restricted solely to be used for capital expenditure on the church building, which the PCC will administer. Running costs were 3% up year on year, largely due to catching up with the Parish Share Allocation payments. Parish Share costs in the 2024 accounts include Dec 2023 as well as the settlement of the total 2024 amount.

### Reserves

St Mary's operational reserve policy for 2025 remains the same which is to keep sufficient money in our reserves to cover three months' running costs in total, plus £20,000. The policy has been formally agreed by the PCC.

### External Charitable Giving

St Mary's PCC aims to give 10% of our income to charity each year in obedience to the tithing principle. Part of this giving is in reduced or no-cost rentals to local charities who use our rooms, and this giving does not show in these formal accounts. In 2024 we gave £6,667 in direct donations to national & local charities & schools, including:

| | |
|---|---|
| Christian Aid | Community Heartbeat Trust |
| Dhiverse ABC | Hampton Academies Trust |
| HELP | Light Project |
| Mary's Child | Peterborough Deanery Ministry Interns |
| Peterborough & District Samaritans | St John Fisher School |

In addition, in 2024, St Marys made out checks to CAP, Little Miracles, and the Children's Society. These cheques have been banked by the charities in 2025. If these cheques were banked in 2024, the direct donations would have increased to £9,945.77.

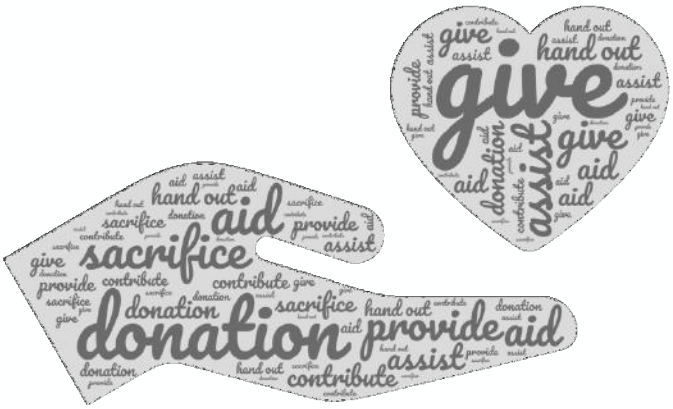
We raised a total of £6,821 for Christian Aid (CA) and the Children's Society during the year: £2,848 during the CA Week in May which went directly to the charity and £2,708 from CA Appeals raised and banked with St Mary before being donated to CA. We also raised £1,266 for the Children's Society.

Our Summer Fundraising Campaign this year was for CAP and raised a total of £2,820.

## Statement of Accounts for the calendar year 2024

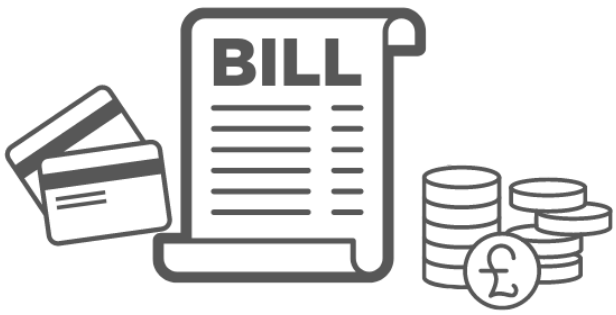
### St Mary's PCC: General Fund Receipts and Payments Account

| | 2024 | | 2023 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| RECEIPTS | | | | |
| Incoming resources from donors | | | | |
| Collections - Stewardship | 75,309 | | 75,561 | |
| - Loose cash | 3,413 | | 3,333 | |
| Gift Aid reclaim | 10,961 | | - | |
| Online Giving | 4,446 | | 5,389 | |
| | | 94,129 | | 84,284 |
| Other voluntary incoming resources | | | | |
| Donations and bequests | 475 | | 14,502 | |
| Fundraising | 10,805 | | 9,546 | |
| Grants and similar income | 2000 | | - | |
| Miscellaneous income | 251 | | 243 | |
| | | 13,531 | | 24,291 |
| Income from investments | | | | |
| Bank interest | 556 | | 191 | |
| Investment interest - CBF deposit fund | 1,763 | | 501 | |
| | | 2,319 | | 692 |
| Income from charitable and ancillary trading | | | | |
| Wedding and funeral fees | 848 | | 560 | |
| Centre income | 10,990 | | 13,986 | |
| Traidcraft income | - | | 1,000 | |
| | | 11,838 | | 15,546 |
| Total Receipts | | 121,817 | | 124,813 |
| Total Payments (see page 16 for detail) | | -124,979 | | -121,420 |
| Excess/(deficit) of receipts over payments | | -3,162 | | 3,392 |
| Bank current and deposit accounts at 1 January 2024 | | 74,058 | | 70,666 |
| Bank current and deposit accounts at 31 December 2024 | | £70,896 | | £74,058 |



**General Fund Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 December 2024**

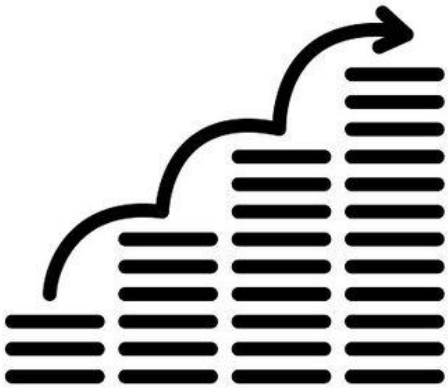
| | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ |
| PAYMENTS | | |
| Activities relating directly to the work of the Church | | |
| Vicar's expenses | 622 | 233 |
| Locum | 525 | 1,766 |
| Salaries paid by Diocese | 14,103 | 11,832 |
| Upkeep of services | 1,498 | 1,370 |
| Organists | 3,390 | 4,133 |
| Water | 328 | 189 |
| Light and heat | 10,811 | 6,212 |
| Repairs and maintenance | 7,738 | 16,951 |
| Insurance | 1,920 | 1,888 |
| Telephones | 836 | 684 |
| Parish share | 71,725 | 61,869 |
| Donations (Overseas and sundry): | 6,667 | 8,206 |
| Sunday Club/Youth expenses | 320 | 585 |
| Office administration | 1,225 | 101 |
| Cleaning and sundry materials | 344 | 225 |
| Auditor (CROPS) | 200 | 200 |
| Training | 511 | 1,116 |
| Miscellaneous expenditure | 2,216 | 3,861 |
| Total payments (to page 15) | £124,979 | £121,420 |



**Receipts and payments accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024**

| **BUILDING FUND - RESTRICTED** | 2024 | 2023 |
|---|---|---|
| Restricted to spending on the building | £ | £ |
| **Receipts** | | |
| Donation | 50,000 | - |
| Bank deposit accounts at 31 December 2024 | £50,000 | £0 |

| **ST. MARY'S EASTGATE MISSION - ENDOWMENT** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Receipts** | | |
| Interest | 111 | 64 |
| Bank deposit accounts at 1 January 2024 | 2,082 | 2,018 |
| Bank deposit accounts at 31 December 2024 | £2,193 | £2,082 |



## St Mary's PCC: Receipts and Payments Accounts

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2024**

| | General Fund: | | Restricted Funds : | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | General | Building Fund | St. Mary's Eastgate Mission Fund | Total 2024 | Total 2023 |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| **Monetary assets** | | | | | |
| Cash in hand | 100 | | | 100 | 100 |
| Bank - current | 13,768 | 0 | | 13,768 | 23,049 |
| - reserve | 39,146 | | | 39,146 | 34,790 |
| CBF deposit fund | 17,882 | 50,000 | | 67,882 | 16,119 |
| Peterborough Diocesan Board of Finance | | | 2,193 | 2,193 | 2,082 |
| **Total Cash & Assets** | 70,896 | 50,000 | 2,193 | 123,089 | 76.140 |

## St Mary's Parochial Church Council Accounting Policies

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

**Funds**

General Funds represent funds of the PCC that are not subject to any special restrictions regarding their use and are available for application to the general purposes of the PCC. These include funds designated for a particular purpose by the PCC.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC can be held responsible. They do not include the accounts of other Church groups that owe an affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Subject to the above, receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities**

The following assets are recognised but not valued in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities:

- Movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal.
- Other fixtures, fittings and office equipment where the PCC is free to dispose of such assets without faculty.
- Amounts owing from the Inland Revenue where a formal claim has been made.

## Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of St Mary's

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 14 to 18, is in respect of an examination carried out under Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and s.145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('2011 Act').

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 3(3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 and section 144(2) of the 2011 Act do not apply. 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 Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act;
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act and to be found in the Church guidance issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**Independent examiner's statement**

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

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with section 131 of the 2011 Act; and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the requirements of the 2011 Act and the Regulations have not been met ; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



N J Burroughs FCA
45 Farleigh Fields, Orton Wistow
Peterborough

19 February 2025

**This Annual Report was approved by St Mary's PCC on 25th February 2025, and signed on their behalf by:**



Revd Canon Michael Moore

Vicar

Chair of Trustees of the ecclesiastical parish of Peterborough St Mary







Inclusive Church







CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CENTRAL PETERBOROUGH

...serving our communities and our city

**St Mary's Church and Centre**
**New Road**
**Peterborough**
**PE1 1TT**
**www.peterborough-stmarys.org.uk**
**Registered Charity no. 1180032**