

St Mary the Virgin Linton



Annual Parish Vestry Meeting
followed by
Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 24th April 2016 at 11.15pm
in the Church

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

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1. AGENDA

Part A-Vestry Meeting

1. Prayers
2. Minutes of the Annual Parishioners' Vestry Meeting held on 16th April 2015
3. Election of Churchwardens

Part B- Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 16th April 2015
3. Matters Arising
4. Parochial Church Council Report 2015 - 2016
5. Financial report, followed by appointment of Independent Examiner
6. Electoral Roll Report
7. Fabric Report
8. Deanery Synod Report
9. Election of PCC Members
10. Appointment of Sideswomen and Sidesmen
11. Appointment of Deanery Synod Representative
12. Reports from Committees and Organisations
13. Rector's Report
14. Questions from the floor
15. Closing Prayers

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2. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISHIONERS' VESTRY MEETING, THURSDAY 16TH APRIL 2015

The meeting, held in the Church, began at 7.30pm with prayers. Forty parishioners were present.

Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parishioners' Vestry Meeting of 3rd April 2014 were accepted as a correct record.

Election of Churchwardens

There were two nominations for Churchwarden - John Thorne and Molly Warrington. Both are willing to continue serving as Churchwardens and they were unanimously re-elected. Judy Nightingale, Lay-Chair, thanked them both for their efforts in keeping the church community and services flourishing during the interregnum. In particular, Molly Warrington drew the five parishes together to create the Team Profile and subsequently organised the interview day for applicants for the position of Rector. Judy said that the church community had been deeply blessed with leadership during the year.

3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, THURSDAY 16TH APRIL 2015

Apologies

N Collard, A Foote, G Foote, L Hunt, D Leighton, G Mordue, G Younger.

Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 3rd April 2014 were accepted and signed with no amendments. Judy Nightingale, Lay-Chair, thanked Denise Thurston, the previous PCC Secretary, for the detailed report of events.

There were no matters arising.

Parochial Church Council Report 2014 - 2015

The Revd Dr. Steve Griffiths resigned in March 2014 and presided at his last service on 18th May 2014. The process to appoint a new rector and operational matters during the interregnum, or vacancy, inevitably featured in all six of the PCC meetings during the year. Meetings were held with the Archdeacon of Cambridge, the team churchwardens and a team profile was written and agreed by the PCCs of the five churches. The PCC was immensely grateful to Molly Warrington for co-ordinating the input from the team and writing and revising the profile which formed the information given to prospective applicants when the post of rector was advertised. The Revd Graham Ridgewell from Castle Camps announced his retirement before the profile was completed. It was noted that the incoming Team Rector would subsequently be involved in appointing a Team Vicar.

The financial situation continued to be closely monitored. The year had started with a deficit budget. Planned giving was decreasing and it appeared difficult to cut expenditure further without limiting the regular activities and services. The PCC was very aware that a poor financial position could make the post of rector unattractive and hence impact on a potential appointment. A stewardship group was formed to develop ideas for improvement and

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fundraising. Subsequent discussions acknowledged that ‘giving’ includes people’s time and talents which helps to fulfil the church’s ministry to the people of Linton but it can be difficult to separate that aspect from financial giving which is necessary to maintain the church as a warm and welcoming building. When the final accounts were approved in March, the PCC agreed that a continuing loss was not sustainable and that a stewardship officer should be appointed. The right person would be able to engage with the wider village community as well as the various church congregations.

Joan Smith and Pam Richardson were nominated to fill governor vacancies at the Infant School. Nicola Collard agreed to be a lay governor in place of the Rector for the duration of the vacancy.

Sue Filby advised the PCC on appropriate safeguarding policies and practice which led to improved procedures being implemented.

The Mark 5 mission group submitted updated plans for the Peace garden at the side of the pavilion. Andrew Gore and John Thorne organised and led a number of working parties to clear the vegetation and rubble from both the Peace garden and the pavilion garden area so that fencing and paving could be laid. The work is being done by volunteers at no cost, wherever possible.

Nanette Blackmore organised a smaller-scale flower festival in October 2014 which was successful in terms of mission and outreach as well as raising some funds. It was later agreed that the tradition should be continued the following summer.

The PCC recorded thanks to The Friends of St Mary’s for providing £25,000 towards the works identified in the last Quinquennial inspection. The project to improve access through the north porch was partially funded from a legacy. Andrew Gore and the fabric committee were thanked for their continued monitoring and stewardship of the church building, pavilion and surrounding area.

The Ely Diocese published the draft strategy for the next ten years, entitled ‘People Fully Alive’. Members of the PCC attended an open deanery meeting, led by the Archdeacon of Cambridge, to receive the report. An additional PCC meeting was held solely to discuss the strategy from the Linton team perspective and to form a response to the consultation. The report is intended to feed into and shape the mission action plans within each parish.

Throughout the year, Molly Warrington undertook the often challenging task of finding priests so that the usual range of Sunday and midweek services could continue to be offered. The parish was blessed with a variety of visiting ministers and the PCC was very grateful to the local retired clergy who also played a regular part in leading worship.

Interviews for a Rector were held in early March. The PCC ended the year on a positive note with the announcement that The Revd Canon Dr Maggie Guite had accepted the position of Team Rector and she would be welcomed to Linton in July.

Judy Nightingale thanked the secretary, Sue Mudge, for the detailed report in the APCM papers. There were no questions raised.

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Financial Review to 31st December 2014

Sue Ellis, treasurer, highlighted the fact that the total income for 2014 was £80,260 – a fall of 9% from the previous year. There was a disappointing decrease in gift aided income of 15% which also reduced the gift aid recovered, although there was an increase in loose plate collections. Gift aid can be claimed on a maximum of £5,000 of cash collections.

Expenditure was £95,592. The parish share accounted for 59% of the total and it was becoming more difficult to pay as the figure increased each year.

In budgeting beyond the parish share, the PCC prioritised expenditure on:

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

The income and expenditure was presented in the form of pie charts and also in detailed accounts.

Michael Holden, chair of the finance committee, informed the meeting about the PCC decision to appoint a parish giving officer or stewardship officer. Michael Younger had been approached and he accepted the role. Michael Holden also pointed out that £950 had been donated to support the work in the north porch following an appeal in The Linton News.

Judy Nightingale invited questions and comments from those present.

A number of people spoke about potential reasons for the decrease in giving and cited previous decisions and events. However, it was noted that those decisions were taken by the PCC at the time, consisting of people elected by the church community. Michael Younger said that he had great concern about running a deficit budget. He would like to see efforts made to reverse that trend and to aim for longer term financial security. Molly Warrington said that it had been a challenging year but that improved links had been formed within the team which indicated a desire to move forward co-operatively. It was also suggested that more could be done to ask the village for support for their church.

Judy Nightingale thanked people for their thoughtful comments and urged everyone to support Michael Younger in his role.

The meeting unanimously accepted the reappointment of Mr Andrew Cohen as the Independent Examiner of the accounts for 2015.

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Electoral Roll Report

Lucie Mordue had taken responsibility for the electoral roll after Beth Kirkman resigned in November 2014. There were currently 142 on the roll. Seven names had been taken off since April and six new people had been added.

The next full review is due in 2019 - these are carried out every six years.

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

Judy Nightingale thanked Lucie Mordue for becoming the Electoral Roll Officer.

Fabric Report

The written report focussed on the Church fabric, the pavilion and the churchyard.

The QI repair work took several months. Additional work was identified to repair the coping stones on the east wall of the chancel. The opportunity was taken to clean the exterior of the stained glass windows of the chancel and Resurrection Chapel. The extra project to create step free access to the church from the north porch was almost completed. It was delayed after a leaking drain was discovered under the floor. The north porch work was partially funded by a legacy from the estate of the late Mary Fuller.

Responsibility for the churchyard was transferred to the Parish Council some years ago and it was noted that they have already spent in excess of £40,000 on maintenance.

Andrew Gore, Chair of the Fabric Committee, thanked The Friends of St Mary's for their invaluable support and significant financial contribution to the QI works.

Judy Nightingale thanked Andrew Gore and members of the Fabric Committee for their continued work over the year to preserve the building and grounds for the benefit of the whole village.

Deanery Synod Report

Andrew Gore and Derek Lockstone represent Linton on the Deanery Synod. The term of office runs from 1 June 2014 to 31 May 2017. Meetings covered the rationale behind the draft Diocesan strategy 'People Fully Alive' and a presentation on the Pilling report.

Andrew Gore drew attention to the request for someone to become secretary for the Deanery Synod.

Election of Parochial Church Council members

There had been a change to the Church Representation rules to say that Lay Readers are automatically members of a PCC. Judy Nightingale proposed the following motion: 'This meeting accepts Lay Readers as automatic members of the PCC, if they choose'. The motion was seconded by Molly Warrington and passed by those present.

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Continuing members on the PCC were confirmed as:

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

Elected in 2014: Mrs N Blackmore, Mrs N Collard, Mr M Holden, Mrs J Nightingale, Mrs G Powell, Mrs R Read.

Treasurer (co-opted): Mrs S Ellis

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

Mr J Organ, Mrs L Read and Mrs P Richardson stood down, having completed their three year term of office. Mrs S King and Mrs B Kirkman had resigned during the year.

Judy Nightingale extended thanks to those people for their service.

Mrs N Collard and Mr D Keys are Lay Readers and therefore automatic members, due to the earlier motion. The electoral roll number allows for up to 12 elected members.

There were three nominations: Mrs L Mordue, Dr D Parry-Smith and Mr M Younger for a potential four places. Those three people were elected unanimously.

Appointment of Sideswomen/Sidesmen

Judy Nightingale read out the list of names and said that one more person was required to help at the 10.00 service. Rebecca Richardson volunteered. She and the others on the list were appointed unanimously by those present.

Appointment of Deanery Synod Representative

No appointments were needed as Andrew Gore and Derek Lockstone were appointed in 2014 for a three year term.

Reports from Committees and Organisations

Reports were posted on the website as well as included in the 2015 APCM booklet and were received from the following groups.

Bellringers

Beacon Trust Youth work – Gill Powell added to the written report and said that sadly Barry Easton had tendered his resignation from the end of July 2015. Barry spent half his time with faith related youth work and half with non-faith work, which was funded by the Parish Council. The Beacon Trust supported the faith based work by donations from the Linton churches and individuals. Barry has been in Linton for three years as a student and a further three years as the youth worker. It is expected that his departure will provide challenges for The Beacon Trust. Judy Nightingale proposed that a letter should be sent to Barry from St Mary's PCC to congratulate him on his appointment and to extend good wishes for the future to him and his family.

Junior Church and crèche – Nicola Collard was not present but Gill Powell spoke on her behalf and said that Junior Church desperately needed more helpers. It does not have to be run by young mums and sometimes they need their own space and time to worship. Older people have lots to offer and there is a cupboard full of resources to support the sessions.

Linton C E Infant School – Lawrence Powell highlighted the contribution made by Margaret Cox and Judy Nightingale who had been regular classroom helpers and 'church links'. There are governors from the church community but no other regular volunteers. The Friday

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services have been maintained during the interregnum, thanks to Nicola Collard, Barry Easton and Chris Kemshell, URC Minister.

Mark 5 Group

Messy Church – Sarah Thorne said this initiative was thriving with about 25% of those attending being non-church families. More help is needed on a third Sunday for the activities and refreshments. Support with preparation in advance would also be welcomed.

Mothers Union – Ann King pointed out that everyone is welcome to any meeting. One of the benefits is the support extended to each other, as well as upholding the worldwide MU purpose and values of Christian family life.

Mums' Link

Music Ministry – more people would be welcomed to sing or play at various services and contribute to the music for worship.

The Friends of St. Mary's

The Monday Gang – again more help would be very welcome.

Tots in Tow – Sarah Thorne said that practical support was required to serve refreshments.

Judy Nightingale thanked everyone who helps in so many ways by using their time, skills and talents for the benefit of the church activities and groups.

Churchwardens' Report

The Churchwardens report summarised the challenging but rewarding year in the absence of a rector. It highlighted the support given by a large number of clergy, lay ministers and others in preparing the variety of services offered by St Mary's. Sue Filby as Rector's Administrator had liaised with families requesting baptism and an unexpectedly large number of wedding couples as well as twelve different visiting priests during the year. Nanette Blackmore as vergers had also undertaken extra tasks to help everything run smoothly.

Andrew Gore proposed a formal vote of thanks to Molly Warrington and John Thorne for their unstinting time and effort for St Mary's life and work. They were warmly applauded by everyone.

Questions from the floor:

John Thorne said that the Quinquennial inspection was due later in the year to identify works needed in the next five years but he hoped that nothing major would be found.

Gill Powell reported that someone had commented that it would be beneficial to reinstate the 'meeting and greeting' role to complement those giving out books at the door, especially on busy Sundays or when there are visitors. Judy Nightingale said that would be referred back to the PCC.

Ann King commented that the reports describe many activities for children and young people but is there enough for older people? Molly Warrington responded that there are the regular

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services at Symonds House and Nichols Court, to which visitors are always welcome. Chris Morse said that he knew of a church which ran a group called Prime Time for people of 50+. Sarah King said that something social for people under 50 would be good i.e. those of age 20 upwards. Margaret Cox suggested that the church community should have a social committee again. Pam Richardson thought that a social committee to offer events for everyone could be really important in developing the friendship within the church and the wider community. Pam said that organising the bring and share meal before the APCM had been very worthwhile.

Judy Nightingale said that there was obviously a need for social activities and this would be investigated.

The meeting closed in prayer.

4. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL 2015 - 2016

Administrative Information

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

PCC members who have served from the APCM 2015 until this report was approved are:

<i>Incumbent</i>	The Revd. Canon Dr. Maggie Guite, from 2/07/15	
<i>Churchwardens</i>	Mr John Thorne Dr M Warrington	
<i>Representatives to the Deanery Synod</i>	Mr A Gore Mr D Lockstone	
<i>Elected members</i>	Mrs N Blackmore	from APCM 2014
	Mrs N Collard	Lay Reader, resigned from PCC March 2015
	Mrs H Foote	from APCM 2013
	Mr M Holden	from APCM 2014
	Mr D Keys	Lay Reader, resigned from PCC January 2015
	Mrs L Mordue	from APCM 2015
	Mrs S Mudge	from APCM 2013, Secretary from May 2014
	Mrs J Nightingale	from APCM 2014, Lay Chair from May 2014
	Dr D Parry-Smith	from APCM 2015
	Mrs G Powell	from APCM 2014
	Mrs R Read	from APCM 2014
	Mrs J Smith	from APCM 2013
	Mr M Younger	from APCM 2015
<i>Co-opted members</i>	Mrs S Ellis	Treasurer

Structure, governance and management

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

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Objectives and activities

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

Numerical performance in 2015

There were 146 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll at the end of 2015. This was an increase of 3 people over the previous year.

Attendances at each service are recorded and annual returns made to the Diocese of Ely. The average Sunday attendance, counted during October 2015, was 89 adults and 13 children, while average weekday service attendances in the same month comprised 78 adults and 195 children. On Easter Day 2015 256 people attended a service, while 384 people attended a service on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

In comparison with the previous year, there was a small increase in the number of adults attending a Sunday service, though the numbers of children had fallen. Considerably more people attended an Easter Day service than in 2014, with additional attendees drawn in by the return of the Revd Julian Thomson, who took the service on Easter Day. Following a fall in numbers attending a Christmas service the previous year, numbers were significantly higher in 2015, increasing from 228 to 384.

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

Review of the year

The PCC met six times during the year. The May meeting is the first one following the APCM and included some annual items of business such as electing members to various committees. It was agreed to form a new events committee, in response to comments made at the 2015 APCM. Pam Richardson was asked to chair the committee and each subsequent PCC meeting included a report on proposed events and social entertainment. Organising a coach trip to Hunstanton, Harvest lunch, a curry evening, New Year's Eve bring and share party, pudding evening, renewal of wedding vows gives some idea of the wide ranging remit taken on by this group as well as providing refreshments at special church services. The PCC is grateful to this valuable addition to the social life and wider ministry of the church.

The financial situation of the church had been a cause of concern for some time. Income was dropping and despite examining and trimming expenditure where possible, the outgoings were considerably more than the income. The PCC appointed Michael Younger as stewardship officer. While recognising that an individual's time and talents is part of stewardship, it seemed to be essential that the income should be addressed first. Letters were sent to each member of the electoral roll to explain matters and appeal for help. A gift day was held in June and people were also encouraged to review their regular giving and to donate using Gift Aid if not already doing so. This produced a fantastic response and enabled the church accounts to end the year with a small positive balance, as can be seen in the Financial Review, section 5. The PCC wish to thank Michael Younger, Sue Ellis (treasurer), and members of the church for enabling the downward trend to be reversed. A deficit budget is not sustainable nor is it a good situation for a new Rector to inherit.

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The Revd Canon Dr Maggie Guite began her ministry as Rector of the Linton Team at the beginning of July. The service of institution and induction was extremely well attended and was followed by a reception supper in the infant school. The church was beautifully decorated as it was the start of a wonderful flower festival weekend, organised by Nanette Blackmore. The weather on the Saturday was warm and sunny, allowing the pavilion café to expand onto the grass adjacent to the stalls to the south of the church. Expenses were kept to a minimum as people were very generous with their time and donations. A profit of more than £4,700 exceeded expectations and was a welcome boost to the fundraising.

At the October meeting, Maggie Guite explained that she was reviewing some areas of worship and proposed some minor changes; e.g. having a five-minute time of quiet for prayer and contemplation before the 10.00 service, conducting Baptisms outside standard service times, starting an all-age Eucharist on second Sundays in 2016, inviting members from The Camps and Horseheath to first Sunday services until a Team Vicar is appointed.

Barry Easton, youth worker, left Linton at the end of July. Since his departure, the Beacon Community Trust has been reviewing the provision of youth work in the village. The church had been contributing financially to the work of the Trust. In January the PCC had a presentation from one of the original Trustees who explained the plans for the future. This is described in more detail in section 9.2.

Ely Diocese has been developing a strategy for the next ten years called 'People Fully Alive' with a mission statement of 'We pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ'. Parishes were consulted about the plans during the previous twelve months. The strategy was launched in September 2015. Parishes are now being encouraged to use the proposals to shape their own worship and activities and to review the role of church in the community. Discussion on how to proceed was the main topic for the March meeting and has resulted in two working groups being set up, led by David Parry-Smith and Molly Warrington. Anyone is invited to join either group, as described in the pew sheet recently. The groups will report back to the next two PCC meetings and the recommendations will be included in the updated Mission Action Plan for St Mary's. See the Deanery Synod report, section 8, for more detail.

The PCC has noted the concerns about the sound system in church and is investigating ways to make improvements. A former church member has kindly given expert advice at no cost and funds have been offered for repair or replacement if required.

The fabric committee, led by Andrew Gore, has submitted regular reports to the PCC for discussion and approval. See section 7 for more information. The project to create step-free access in the north porch has certainly made an attractive and easy entrance to the church. The PCC are very grateful to The Friends of St Mary's for their ongoing support and funding for improvements and repairs to the church building.

The Diocese of Ely offer training courses in specific areas of vocation for parish-based people to become Authorised Lay Ministers (ALM). Appointments are renewed every four years. In 2015 the PCC was pleased to support the reappointment of Sue Filby, Pam Richardson, John Thorne and Sarah Thorne.

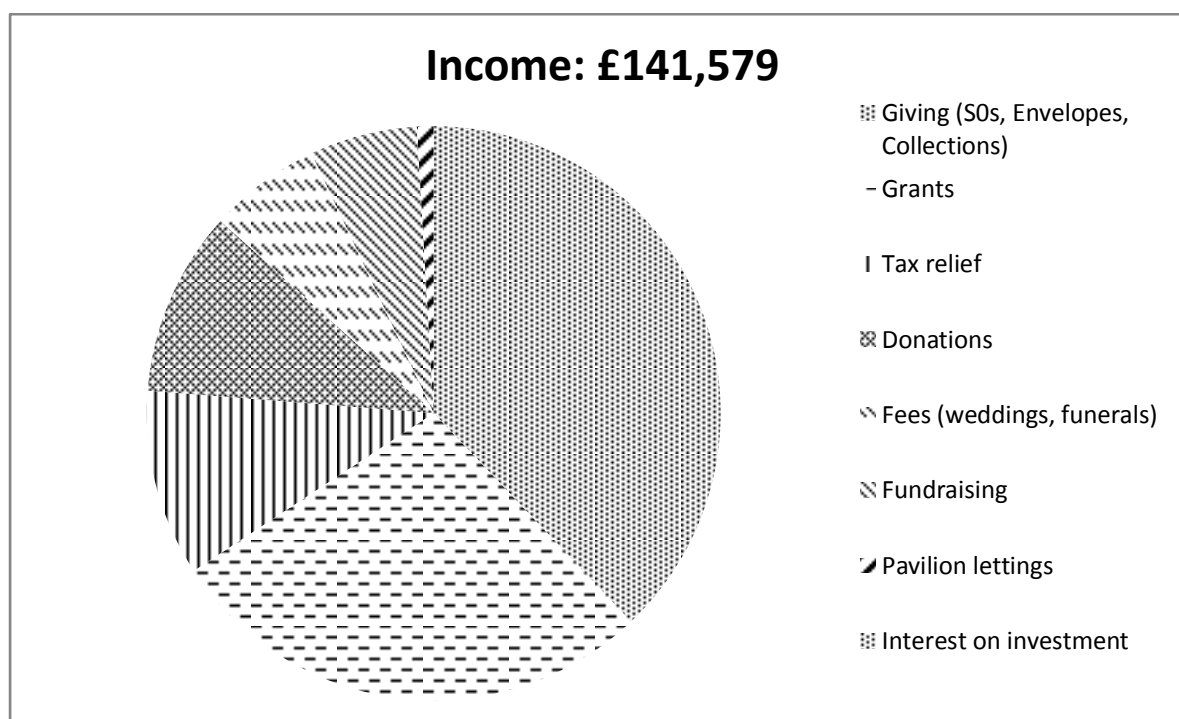
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5. FINANCIAL REVIEW TO 31ST DECEMBER 2015

Where does the money come from?

In 2015 St Mary's received a total of £141,582 in income, an increase of 76% when compared with 2014. Of this total, £39,370 came from donations from the Friends of St Mary's and the Parish Council and the PCC would like to express its gratitude to these organisations for their ongoing support. In particular, we are hugely indebted to the Friends, for a very substantial donation which supported significant fabric repairs and renewals. Excluding these donations, regular income rose by 27%, a remarkable achievement in the current economic climate.

The chart below shows the main sources of income and highlights the church's crucial dependence on regular giving. We have been very encouraged by the response to the Stewardship campaign; the June Gift Day raised £7927, much of which was gift aided, and in addition regular giving (planned giving through standing orders and envelopes and collections made at services) increased by almost £8,000 compared to 2014. As a result, tax relief (the amount recouped on gift-aided giving) increased by £3,333 (29% compared to 2014) to almost £15,000, showing the vital importance of members of the congregation completing gift aid forms wherever possible. In addition, the £4,765 profit made by the Flower Festival was very significant amongst our fund-raising activities.



NOTES on Income

- Donations include all income from church boxes, legacies, donations, some gift-aided and some of which are made in response to a special appeal (for example for the porch floor, through the Linton News).
- A set amount from each wedding and funeral is retained by the PCC.
- Interest does not show on the graph as it only amounted to £10 in 2015.

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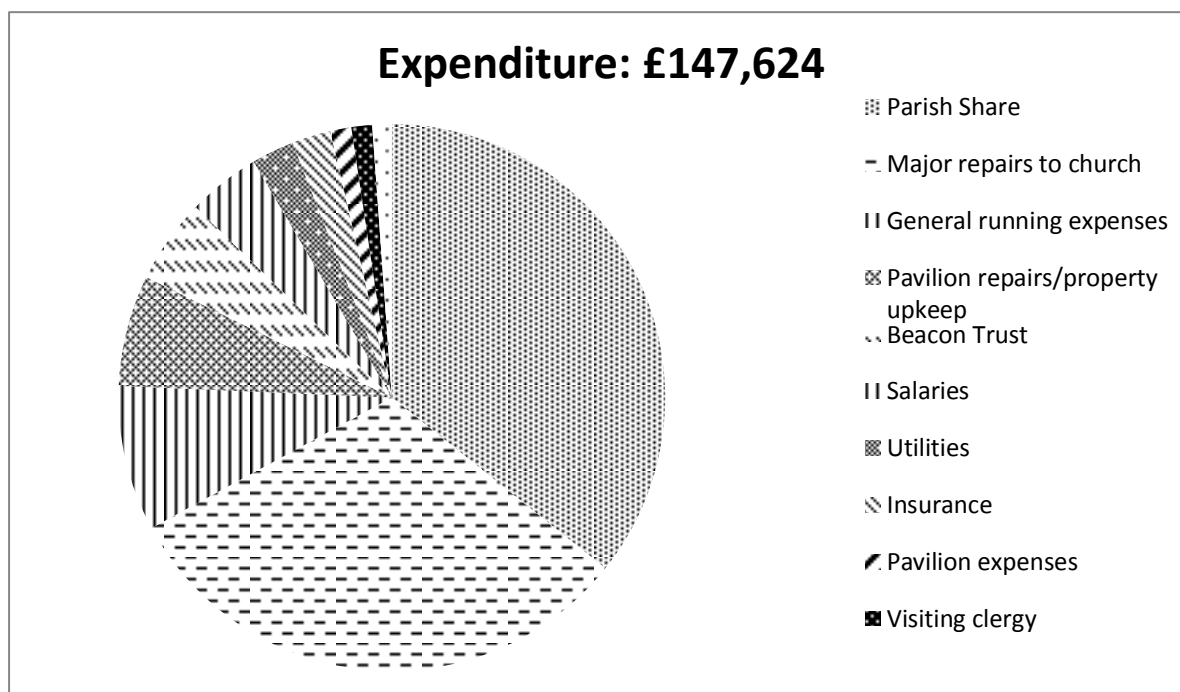
Where does the money go?

Total expenditure during the year was £147,624, an increase of £52,032 on the previous year, but much of this increase was due to expenditure on the fabric of the church £46,274, which was funded largely by grants from the Friends of St Mary's.

As the chart below shows, the most significant part of expenditure goes on the Parish Share, which at £52,755 accounts for 52% of regular outgoings. The PCC is committed to paying the Share in full, principally because otherwise the Diocese would not provide us with a full-time Team Rector – but the amount requested by the Diocese continues to increase year on year and it is a major challenge to meet this commitment.

In budgeting beyond the Ministry Share, the PCC continues to prioritise expenditure on:

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



NOTES on Expenditure

- General running expenses include day-to-day maintenance such as boiler and organ servicing, boiler repairs, wine, wafers and candles, photocopying and paper, reading leaflets, etc.
- Pavilion repairs/property upkeep: this includes work on the pavilion and peace gardens.

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Summary

The final accounts for 2015 show that expenditure exceeded income by £6,042. This figure includes a notional figure of £7,703.10 for depreciation of the Pavilion, and if this is ignored, the bottom line of the accounts shows that income (£141,579) exceeds expenditure (£139,921) by £1,658. Given that the original budget set by the PCC for 2015 anticipated a deficit of £23,923, this is an incredibly encouraging outcome. Investments (the Sterling Bond) total £41,383 and cash in hand at the bank totals £20,426 (our working capital), meaning that total assets at the end of 2015 were £61,809.

Reserves Policy

In 2015, the PCC, reviewing our reserves policy, agreed to retain a sum of £30,000 for urgent repairs and as contingency cover; these reserves are currently held in the sterling bond fund.

Financial Statements

The financial statements which follow comprise:

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

Accounting Policies

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

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Statement of Financial Activities

For the period from 01 January 2015 to 31 December 2015

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Incoming resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Voluntary income	122,269	450	—	122,719	65,911
Activities for generating funds	8,592	—	—	8,592	5,629
Investment income	5	4	—	10	59
Incoming resources from charitable activities	10,260	—	—	10,260	8,659
Other incoming resources	—	—	—	—	—
Total incoming resources	141,127	454	—	141,582	80,260
Resources used					
Cost of generating funds	379	—	—	379	434
Cost of generating voluntary income	—	—	—	—	47
Fundraising trading cost of goods sold and other costs	799	—	—	799	60
Charitable activities	143,598	2,847	—	146,445	94,858
Governance costs	—	—	—	—	—
Total resources used	144,776	2,847	—	147,624	95,400
Net incoming / outgoing resources before transfer	(3,648)	(2,393)	—	(6,042)	(15,140)
Transfers					
Gross transfers between funds - in	22,952	114	—	23,066	—
Gross transfers between funds - out	(23,066)	—	—	(23,066)	—
Net incoming / outgoing before other gains / losses	(3,762)	(2,279)	—	(6,042)	(15,140)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains / losses on investment assets	(22)	—	—	(22)	4,116
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	—	—	—	—	—
Net movement in funds	(3,785)	(2,279)	—	(6,064)	(11,024)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	93,835	4,852	—	98,687	109,711
Total funds carried forward	90,049	2,572	—	92,622	98,687

There may be minor discrepancies in the totals if the pence are not being shown

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Return of Parish Finance for year ending 31 December 2015

Incoming Resources	2015 £	2014 £
Voluntary Income		
Tax efficient planned giving		
Gift Aid - Bank	39,453.00	33,338.00
Gift Aid - Envelopes	5,632.45	3,125.70
Total tax efficient planned giving	45,085.45	36,513.70
Other planned giving	3,041.10	2,844.77
Loose plate collections	5,583.08	5,297.59
Regular Gift Days	7,927.25	
Giving through church boxes	407.59	430.79
One off Gift Aid gifts	3,251.20	2,306.39
Donations, appeals, etc	2,779.00	3,716.01
Tax recovered through Gift Aid	14,875.28	11,542.28
Legacies	400.00	
Non-recurring one off grants (note 1)	39,369.88	3,260.10
Total for voluntary income	122,719.83	65,911.63
Activities for Generating Funds		
Other funds generated (note 2)	2,419.20	1,066.66
Flower Festival	5,144.18	3,662.88
Christmas Event		240.36
Social Events (note 3)	1,028.69	659.79
Total for Activities for Generating Funds	8,592.07	5,629.69
Bank and building society interest	10.39	59.69
Church Activities		
Fees for weddings and funerals	8,943.00	7,245.00
Pavilion lettings	1,317.00	1,414.00
Total for Church Activities	10,260.00	8,659.00
Total for Incoming Resources	£141,582.29	£80,260.01

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Resources Expended	2015 £	2014 £
Costs of Generating Funds		
Cost of Fetes and other events		47.89
Flower Festival Costs	379.03	371.88
Christmas Event Costs		62.40
Costs of Social Events	799.61	60.19
Total for costs of Generating Funds	1,178.64	542.34
All Mission Giving and Charitable Grants & Donations (note 4)		
Giving to missionary societies		531.00
Giving - relief and development agencies		
Home mission	7,384.90	7,111.92
Total for All Mission Giving etc.	7,384.90	7,642.92
Church Activities		
Parish Share	52,755.19	51,639.02
Salaries (note 5)	6,342.96	6,022.26
Expenses (clergy, pastoral staff, etc)		
Working expenses of Incumbent		410.65
Rector's telephone	112.20	237.50
Education	400.15	377.85
Total for Expenses	515.35	1,026.00
Regular Church running expenses (insurance, cleaning, admin)		
Visiting speakers/ locums (note 6)	1,804.80	3,036.65
Church running - insurance (note 7)	3,403.03	1,960.35
Organ / piano tuning	407.40	392.70
Church maintenance	3,212.89	404.11
Upkeep of services (note 8)	6,866.32	4,785.00
Upkeep of churchyard (note 9)	297.37	
Administration	1,906.75	1,527.09
Flowers (note 10)		124.63
Total for Regular Church running expenses	£17,898.56	£12,230.53
Church utility bills (gas, electricity, water, oil)		
Church running - electric	568.04	490.36
Church running - gas	3,139.70	5,809.74
Church running - water	20.35	21.94
Total for Church utility bills	3,728.09	6,322.04

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

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

Pavilion running - electricity	606.86	485.88
Pavilion running - maintenance	1,196.79	1,959.00
Pavilion running - water	22.08	22.29
Total for Costs of trading	1,825.73	2,467.17
Total for Church Activities	83,062.88	79,704.02
Total for Resources Expended	91,628.42	87,889.28

Major Capital Expenditure

	2015	2014
	£	£
Church major repairs	46,274.78	
Pavilion Depreciation	7,703.10	7,703.10
Peace Garden	2,020.00	
Total for Major Capital Expenditure	55,997.88	7,703.10
Total Expenditure	147,624.30	95,592.38

	2015	2014
	£	£
Total Income	141,582.29	80,260.01
Resources Expended	139,921.20	87,889.28
Major Capital Expenditure Including Depreciation	7,703.10	7,703.10
Total Expenditure	147,624.30	95,592.38
Balance	(6,042.01)	(15,332.37)

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

St Mary's Linton

Balance sheet (Summary)

As of: 31 December 2015

	Total Funds £	Prior Year Funds £
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets (see note 11)	30,812	38,515
Investments (see note 12)	41,383	41,406
	72,196	79,921
Current assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	20,426	18,765
	20,426	18,765
Net current assets less current liabilities	20,426	18,765
Total assets less current liabilities	92,622	98,687
Total net assets less liabilities	92,622	98,687
Represented by		
Unrestricted-		
Unrestricted - General fund	28,684	31,428
Designated		
Designated – Contingency	30,000	15,000
Designated - Fabric Fund	0	8,020
Designated – Magazine	722	722
Designated – Pavilion (see note 13)	30,812	38,663
Restricted		
Restricted – Bells	895	892
Restricted – unused	—	—
Restricted - Churchyard (see note 14)	202	500
Restricted – Contingency	—	—
Restricted – Music	200	328
Restricted - Peace garden (see Note 15)	1,105	3,080
Restricted - Youth & Children	0	50
Funds of the church	92,622	98,687

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Notes to Financial Statements

Return of Parish Finance

1. Grants received this year are £38,569 from The Friends of St Mary's for the fabric of the Church and £800 from the Parish Council for general running expenses.
2. The income from other funds generated relates to mini market raising around £326, £18 from Give as you Live scheme and income received from the Diocese to cover priests taking services, and our team churches' contribution for our advertisement for a Team Rector.
3. Social events covers coffee after both Friday and Sunday morning services. It also shows the income of £544 for the Hunstanton trip which cost £497.
4. Charitable giving paid this year amounts to £7020 to The Beacon Trust supporting youth work in Linton and a collection of £364.90 made at the Induction Service for the Diocesan Mission Fund.
5. Salaries relates to payments made to our organists and parish administrator.
6. Visiting Speakers shows amounts paid to clergy who took our services during the interregnum and were covered by the Ely Diocese funds which were included in other funds generated.
7. Our insurance premium from June 2014 was £3,364.45 per annum but is being paid by monthly instalments at no extra cost. The premium from 24/6/2015 is £3,433.53 and continues to be paid by monthly direct debit.
8. Upkeep of services includes fees paid to Ely and Non Stipendiary priests for taking weddings and funerals. In 2015 this was £4,877. This means the cost of running our services in Church was £1,989.35.
9. Upkeep of Churchyard is from money held for the Monday Gang see also note 14.
10. This year flowers have been covered by separate collections at the end of some services and the generosity of the flower arrangers.

Balance Sheet

11. Pavilion at cost £77,031 less depreciation at £7703.10 per year brings the figure down to £30,812.
12. Investments £41,383 is the value of the Sterling Bond Fund held at Barclays. At the year ended with the troubled markets it has almost managed to maintain its value.
13. The Pavilion fund has been amended to reflect the written down value of the cost of building. Income and expenditure for the Pavilion are entered in the general fund.
14. The Churchyard fund represents monies held for the Monday Gang.
15. The peace garden fund represents the donations received. Expenditure has also been made against this for work undertaken to the land behind the Pavilion.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

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

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2015, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and s.43 of the Charities Act 1993 ("the Act").

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the Examiner

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

Basis of this report


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

Independent Examiner's statement

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

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

(Signed)



ANDREW J. COHEN
Chartered Financial Planner.
21/FEB/2016.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

6. ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

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

I took over the role of Electoral Roll Officer last year and at that time there were 142 people on the roll. There has been some revision – a number of members had died or moved away; some have been added, so currently there are 144 names on the roll. The next full review is due in 2019 (these are carried out every six years). At this time a number of those on the roll may wish to be removed.

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

You can be added to the electoral roll if you have been baptised and are over 16 and either: 'live in the parish', 'live outside the parish and have attended St Mary's for 6 months' or 'are a member in of good standing at another church and have attended St Mary's for 6 months'. If you would like to be added to the electoral roll or have any questions concerning the electoral roll, please feel free to contact me on justpam1@hotmail.co.uk.

Pam Richardson, April 2016

7. FABRIC REPORT

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

Works to the fabric of the church

The remaining works from the 2010 QI report were completed soon after the last APCM, together with the work to create step free access to the church from the north porch. The insurers would not accept liability for the leaking drain under the porch, but, in part with the benefit of a special appeal for funds, the additional costs were met.

The 2015 QI report was received in September. Subsequently specialist advice was obtained from a local drainage company regarding the existing drainage on the south and north sides of the church. As a result the PCC agreed to take the steps necessary to obtain a faculty for the work recommended in the QI report, subject to confirmation from The Friends of St Mary's that they were in a position to fund the works, other than the north side drainage which we are advised is satisfactory. The Diocesan Advisory Committee has recently approved the works, which are almost entirely external in nature, and our architect is now preparing a specification with a view to inviting tenders, following which the faculty will be sought.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

The rear part of the church floor is about to be cleaned and protected. As well as creating a better impression for those entering the church, it should enable suppliers of terracotta tiles to indicate whether they can supply replacements for damaged and worn tiles in a good colour match.

Fixed installations and services

The electrical system has functioned satisfactorily during the year.

The dispute between the owners of the former rectory and Cambridge Water regarding the church water meter appears to have been resolved.

Following the major repairs last year, the boilers have operated satisfactorily.

We are aware that not everyone finds it easy to hear everything that is happening during services. The reasons are not straightforward and trials are ongoing.

The architect has been asked to suggest the names of lighting contractors who can advise regarding better lighting, especially for the choir and music group. Under the new scheme for work to church fabric work which came into force in January, this can probably be approved by the archdeacon without the need for a faculty.

Church furnishings

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

The archdeacon authorised a temporary re-ordering of the Children's Corner and the noticeboards last year. This has met with general approval and the DAC will be asked to agree that the re-ordering should be made permanent.

One matter which is under consideration is the possible replacement of the brass eagle by a smaller lectern, to make it easier for readers, and enable the choir and music groups to see the nave altar and screen. Views about this would be welcome.

The pavilion

No significant work has been carried out to the pavilion, other than the installation of an outside tap. External maintenance will be required in the coming year.

The lawn behind the pavilion was laid last summer, and the area beneath the rear steps subsequently laid to slabs. We are grateful to Hugh and Cynthia Paton who have agreed to keep the grass mown and to Rebecca Rix who planted the boundary hedge.

Further work has been carried out to the Peace Garden area. Whilst funds for the work and voluntary assistance have been limited, it is hoped to have the area ready for the sowing of grass later in the spring, and for some other limited landscaping. More help with the work would be very welcome.

The churchyard

The fabric and vegetation of the churchyard is the responsibility of the Parish Council. The northern part of the west wall was repaired last year, and the Parish Council intends to rebuild the southern part this summer, including the collapsed section of wall. This will complete the major wall repair project.

The contractor carrying out the repairs to the west wall last year discovered root infiltration. It appears that laurels are prone to seeking out lime mortar, and the PCC accepted that they could be removed. We had anticipated that the Diocese would require a replacement planting

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

programme, but the precise position, including the Parish Council's future intentions regarding vegetation alongside the wall, are currently unclear.

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

Andrew Gore
Chair, Fabric Committee, on behalf of the Churchwardens

8. DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

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

The Synod met on three occasions during the year.

On 21 April the Deanery treasurer reported that all parishes had paid their share in full for the year 2014-5. The main business of the evening was a facilitated conversation on the Pilling Report on the Church's approach to human sexuality and the concept of "generous disagreement." It was clear that Christians in the Deanery held widely differing views, as they do nationally both within and without the Church of England. Whether those views will converge to some extent in the future is impossible to forecast. Generous disagreement is probably the best that can be hoped for, unless and until that happens.

On 16 July the Synod welcomed Anne Parry-Smith as our Secretary. The main business of the Synod was finance. The Deanery Treasurer reported that the internal finances of the Deanery and of the Diocese were in reasonably good order. It became clear during the discussion that there is a great deal of disquiet in many parishes at the opaque nature of the way in which Deanery shares are calculated.

On 4 November the main business was the presentation by Archdeacon Hughes of the agreed Diocesan strategy. The five aims are to:

- nurture a confident people of God, going deeper and nurturing strengths,
- develop a healthy church, with fresh expressions of church life and worship alongside existing ones,
- serve the community, recognising that there are increasing levels of need in the Diocese,
- re-imagine church buildings so that they work for us and the wider community, especially new communities in this fast growing part of the country,
- direct support to key areas, tackling problems head on rather than wishing them away.

The PCC has agreed to work through the strategy and groups have been established to look at some of the principles.

Dates for 2016-7 Synods are 27 April, 7 July and 17 November.

The whole issue of Deanery shares towards Diocesan costs remains outstanding and will be discussed again at the forthcoming Synod. Three things have become apparent to me. First, the use of the new formula based strictly on clergy costs results in some parishes in small communities bearing a much greater burden per member or worshipper than those in larger communities, however hard the church in the small community works. Second, it tends to benefit gathered churches, of which there is one in our Deanery, at the expense of community churches. Third, it is not in practice being applied by the Diocese anyway: the share the

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Diocese is seeking from each Deanery is still calculated by taking the share paid under the old formula and simply uprating it for inflation. I am preparing some notes about this prior to the next Synod. Please let me know if you would like a copy.

Andrew Gore

9. REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

9.1. BELLRINGERS

Another excellent year of ringing is over and our progress is continuing.

Practice nights are still well attended and Sunday morning attendance is even stronger. We rang for nine weddings during the year and for all the usual Church services. I think we failed to ring for Sunday service on only two or three occasions due to holidays, sickness etc.

We were especially pleased to be able to ring a quarter peal for the induction of the Revd. Canon Dr. Maggie Guite in July, followed hot on the heels by another to mark the close of the Flower Festival. We also had a mobile bell at the Flower Festival to introduce people to the mechanics of ringing and try to entice new learners. Sadly although many people tried the bell on the day, we haven't had any takers but they are always welcome.

In May we hosted a Cambridge District meeting and provided a famous 'ringers tea'. In July we had a joint outing with Little Shelford tower to Hertfordshire and many of us also went on the Cambridge District outing in October. We continue to strongly represent St Mary's at many other towers and district events, both furthering our own learning and helping to teach new recruits.

Our youngest ringer Jason, aged thirteen, is making excellent progress and is likely to be in the team representing the Ely Diocesan Association at the Ringing World National Youth Contest in London this summer. He also has his own page on the Ely DA young ringers website, 'Jason's Facts', which is full of fascinating details about bells and ringing!

Our overall position in the Gipson Trophy striking competition was third out of three, but we had lots of fun going to other towers for the matches. Hopefully this year more teams have entered.

Please remember that anyone is welcome to come up to the tower any Wednesday evening to see what we do – we practice from 7.30 to 9.00, and as always, we look forward to continuing to welcome worshippers to St Mary's for another year.

Jackie Latham

9.2. BEACON TRUST YOUTH WORK

The last twelve months have been a time of change and reflection for the Trustees and Management Team of the Beacon Trust. In May, our Youth Worker, Barry Easton, gave notice that he wished to terminate his contract in order to move on to new challenges as Lead Youth Worker of an exciting new project in Enfield.

Barry finished work at the end of the School Term in July and it was decided to explore a number of different avenues for the continuation of both faith and non-faith youth work in Linton. Conversations were held with Romsey Mill, a Cambridge charity who already employ a number of youth workers in the Cambridge area but, in the event, a collaboration was not

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

possible at this time. In order to continue some of the work that Barry had been doing on a weekly basis and to honour the commitment to the Parish Council, the Trustees have employed two very experienced youth workers, Malcolm Coxall and Jenny Hanlon, to do sessional work at the Redzone Youth Club, the drop-in centre by the recreation ground and the Mocha Soccer after school football. We are indebted to them for enabling us to maintain contact with some of the most vulnerable young people in Linton. There has been no opportunity to do specifically Christian youth work but this is to be addressed very soon.

What of the future? After years of commitment the current Trustees have decided to stand down and this has afforded an opportunity for a complete rethink of the existing Trust including a chance to change the liabilities of the Trustees. The current Beacon Community Trust is to be formally closed and a new Limited Liability Trust is to be founded. This will be known as the Beacon Youth Trust. This is still embryonic but, at the time of writing, the Trustees are to be Revd Canon Dr Maggie Guite and Hannah Foote from St Mary's and Stephen Munday and Al Wood from the Free Church. Hugh Paton has agreed to be Treasurer. The purpose of this Trust will be to provide robust and imaginative faith and non-faith youth work in Linton through the appointment of a suitably qualified full time youth worker or two half time workers.

These are exciting times and the new Trustees ask for your prayerful support as well as the continuation of financial giving, both from St Mary's Church and from individual sponsors who have been so generous in the past. If you feel you would like to help in any way, either with your time or with money, please speak to Maggie or Hannah. They would be very pleased to hear from you.

Gill Powell, Beacon Trust Management Team member.

9.3. JUNIOR CHURCH AND CRÈCHE

Historically, we have provided teaching and entertainment for the children in the safe environment of the pavilion building next to the church. The children are welcomed with everyone else in the church, then after a collective prayer specifically for the children after the first hymn, they head out and later return to families in time to receive communion or a blessing.

A committed team of people have been leading on a rota basis, whereby Junior Church and Crèche is offered every Sunday apart from the 3rd of the month, as this is when we have Messy Church. With the introduction, at the start of 2016, of the All Age services on the 2nd Sunday of the month, this took Junior Church and crèche down to yet one less Sunday.

We will be running as usual up until the 24th April. However, after this point we have had no other option but to suspend Junior Church. Regular helpers are leaving and others cannot commit any longer, leaving us in a situation of too few helpers which, sadly, leaves us with skeleton support making Junior Church unviable, even though we are running it on fewer Sundays.

We hope and pray that time and change will mean that we can restart in September, given we have renewed support by then. We all trust that God has a great plan for our children and that this gap will bring with it new enthusiasm and a great teaching plan whereby we can really show how much we care for our little people and our future for the church.

Nicola Collard

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

9.4. LINTON CE INFANT SCHOOL

Linton CE Infant School is about to enter into a significant period of change. At the end of this Summer Term we shall be saying farewell to several members of staff who are leaving for pastures new, all for different reasons. Louise Clark, our current headteacher, having led the school for eight years, has decided to refocus her working life. We wish her well and thank her for all that she has done for the school over this time. Claire Sleeman, our Assistant Headteacher, will also be leaving in the summer as she and her husband are relocating to the USA with her husband's work. Claire has supported Louise over a similar period and we thank her for her significant contribution to every aspect of school life. Two of our younger teachers have also decided to leave the UK. Tiffany Martin is returning to Australia, after nearly two years at the school, on the expiration of her work visa and Suzy Baber, after completing her NQT year, is taking up a post in the Bahamas. Lucky for some!

All this means a busy time for the Governors as they seek to recruit new staff for the 2016/17 academic year. Hopefully, by the time of the APCM, we shall know how successful we have been.

On a more positive note, we finally managed to complete the installation of the Multi Use Games Area, which has been very popular and put to good use by the children, addressing a considerable need for a soft surface sports area facility.

As a result of the fantastic support of the PTFA and a generous grant from the Anderson Trust, the children now also have new play equipment ready for the Summer Term, which, hopefully, addresses the deficiencies of the outdoor play space, which have existed for some time.

Having said all this, and recognising the hard work and dedication of Louise Clark, the teaching and non-teaching staff, the demands of the current educational climate will bring new challenges for the new Head, staff and governors, to ensure that all the children at this school have the best possible start to their formal education.

As you will be aware, the significant challenge for the Governors will be a decision related to becoming part of an Academy and with whom. This is neither a simple nor an instant process and has the potential to be problematic, illustrating further the demands made on school governors. Thus it is now necessary for new governors to provide specific skills and abilities to enable such far-reaching management decisions to be made. As the majority of governors for this school are church appointments, the responsibility to fulfil this requirement falls to the PCC and its church members. This is something that needs careful consideration by the whole church community. The school continues to be classed as 'Good' and the children receive a broad-based education within a happy, caring and enthusiastic environment. We must ensure that this continues and develops.

Lawrence Powell, Chair of Governors.

9.5. MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church is mission-shaped church.

For those who haven't yet heard - Messy Church is a way of being church for all ages, based on creativity, hospitality and celebration. It is church primarily for those who wouldn't normally go to church. There are now Messy Churches across the world, and we at Linton are supported and encouraged by the national team at The Bible



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Reading Fellowship. They regularly produce new session outlines, send us newsletters, run training events and publish books to help us explore topics such as discipleship or the theology of being an inter-generational network.

If you are able to join us on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 2.30pm, you will be made very welcome. You will find a group of around 40-50 children and adults busily creating, or simply chatting, at 4-5 activity stations around the church. Messy Church is a safe space where the kingdom of God meets the community – conversations frequently involve God-talk and this can help us all move closer to Jesus.

We thank God for new team members during the last year, and for the support of the Anderson Trust.

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

1. Pray. For the team, as we prepare each month and also for the families who come along. We always pray at 2.15, before families start to arrive, but also need prayer cover while we are busy with activities. It would be such a blessing if there were pray-ers who we could count on to regularly intercede for the Messy ministry.

2. Help. We are of course grateful for help following the 10am service with moving furniture but we also need more team members of all generations, donations for the tea we share after Messy Church and offers of “junk” as requested through the pewsheets.

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

I have included some photos to give you a taste of Messy Church and will be very happy to talk about the work we do after the 10 o'clock service, or my phone number is 891952.

Sarah Thorne



9.6. MOTHERS' UNION

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

The 2015 programme was varied, and included sessions on Uganda, Mum's Link, Cursillo and Guide Dogs. Our nearly new Toy Sale in November was again successful, and the Deanery Carol Service in Balsham provided an opportunity to meet with Mothers' Union members from nearby villages.

So far in 2016 we have enjoyed travelling with the Revd Canon Dr Maggie Guite, and Chris & Di Morse; and benefited from a Lent Meditation in church. In April we will be learning about being a Vet with Nick Bane, and then in May we will be experiencing an alternative pilgrimage to Palestine with Frances Armes.

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Other meetings for the year include talks about becoming Ordained, the 1950's, being a Farmer's Wife, and a Christmas Social. In November we will hold the annual nearly new Toy Sale at Linton Village Hall.

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

Ann King

9.7. MUMS' LINK

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

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

Meetings are usually on the second Tuesday evening of the month and in a move to accommodate changing needs, we sometimes arrange a morning meeting once a month.

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

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

The level of love and support has been shown quite markedly over the past year. Although our meetings have been rather sporadic recently due to busy lives including parenting!.. There have been great personal needs within the group which have been supported unconditionally and affirm what we stand for. It has served to bring us closer together, demonstrate how much we care for one another and is an amazing witness to the community in which we live.

Nicola Collard

9.8. MUSIC MINISTRY

Musical Ministry is carried out by a wide range of people and includes the Music Group, led by John Thorne and Jacqui Burge. We were sorry to lose the special skills of Phil Kirkman who has now moved with his family to Cambridge. We are always seeking to expand the musical leadership and recently welcomed Russell Taylor to lead on alternate months with Jacqui. With the introduction of an All Age Eucharist on the 2nd Sunday of the month, the Music Group leads the music at this service. The Eucharist on the 4th Sunday is accompanied by organ alone.

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The Choir resumed regular rehearsals in June 2015 in preparation for Maggie Guite's induction service in July for which I composed a special descant (When all thy mercies, O my God) and the choir sang Wesley's "Lead me Lord". St Mary's is affiliated to the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) and several choir members took part in the Diocesan RSCM Choirs' Festival at Ely Cathedral in May. The same week I was asked to form a Deanery Choir for the Deanery Ascension Day Service at Harston Parish Church. This was composed of St Mary's Choir plus members of other choirs in the Granta Deanery. We rehearsed and sang special Ascensiontide music.

Throughout the year, the choir sings for the Sunday Eucharist on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month plus major festivals (Advent, Christmas, Candlemas in particular this year). Additional events such as Choirs' Festivals give opportunities to tackle some challenging works for larger forces. Such festivals included the Archdeaconry of Cambridge Church Music Society Festival in King's College Chapel and the RSCM Celebration Day at St Edmundsbury Cathedral. Members of the Choir and Music Group formed the nucleus of a choir for the Diocesan Mothers' Union Commissioning Service in Ely Cathedral which I was privileged to be asked to assemble and direct. This was the occasion for composition of another new descant, this time "Lord for the Years" which we have subsequently sung at Linton.

These services all demand additional musical rehearsals, procurement of music and a host of other operational details not to mention the commitment of singers and other musicians. We are indebted to Alan and Monica Clarkson and Anne Parry-Smith for dealing with the Choir Library and rapid turnover of music, not least since the introduction of responsorial psalms at the Eucharist!

Here we put on record our remembrance of Jeanne Boutal-Chapman who died in November 2015, so much a part of the Choir over so many years. Her musicianship and infectious joy in singing will remain with us and we plan to celebrate her contribution in a memorial concert later in the year.

David is very grateful to members of his software development team at work for turning out to assist with congregational stewarding for the King's Festival in 2015. As ever, we are immensely heartened by the enthusiasm of members of the choir in supporting this full programme of services and musical events.

David Parry-Smith
894715 David@parry-smith.co.uk

9.9. SCHOOL LINKS AND ASSEMBLIES

Friday Church continues for the Infant School. Staff and pupils come to church every Friday at 9am for a service which lasts for approximately half an hour. It is fun, engaging and a wonderful opportunity for Christian teaching for our little ones, (and grown-ups alike, staff, parents, grandparents who are always welcome with younger siblings). This service helps cement strong relationships with staff and children at the school and acts as another arm of the church being a strong presence in our local community. We offer refreshments for mums after every service, which again offers support and helps to build friendships.

Maggie Guite, Nicola Collard and Chris Kemshell, (pastor for the URC), work on a rota basis to lead these services.

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Together we have built a good relationship with the new head teacher at Linton Heights and although this school is not a Church of England school our help in running assemblies has been very much welcomed. This is wonderful for the children in offering continuity and reinforces all that we have been doing at the Infant School at a level with which they can engage. Currently, we are offering a Monday morning once a month between us. St Mary's also welcomes the Heights School at Harvest, Christmas and Easter when staff and children work very hard to give a special assembly.

Nicola Collard

9.10. THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

The Friends of St Mary's Linton have continued to provide funding for items that are covered by our constitution namely "the restoration, preservation and repair, maintenance, improvement and beautification of St Mary's Church in Linton, Cambridgeshire ("the church") and of any ornaments, fittings, fixtures, stained glass, furniture, ornaments and chattels in the church and of the churchyard belonging to the church".

This year we have funded £12,780 of work associated with the 2010 Quinquennial inspection as well as repairs to drains identified when the floor of the main porch was levelled to make access easier for those in wheelchairs.

The Friends have also agreed to fund £12,000 worth of works that have been identified in the 2015 Quinquennial report, which will be called off over the next two years.

A number of social/fund raising events have been held during the year including Afternoon Teas in the summer, a Quiz Evening in November, a Christmas Tea in December, and our traditional New Year Coffee morning in January. We had a stall at the local ACE Garden Party and one at the St Mary's flower festival where we also arranged a Teddy Bear jump from the church tower. A concert in February with Malcolm Guite provided an evening of poetry, sonnets and music and contributed almost £1000 to our funds. Our thanks to Malcolm and Rob for a great evening.

The committee are currently reviewing our merchandise and plan to have some new items for sale at events later this year.

I took over as Chair at our AGM in May 2015 and have been well supported by the Committee who I would like to thank for all their hard work. We are fortunate to have a very efficient Secretary and a Treasurer who is brilliantly managing our portfolio. We were sad to accept the resignation of Sarah King and Rebecca Richardson during the year – our thanks go to them for their contribution.

We are still looking for new members of The Friends (we currently have 109 members) and also for additional people to serve on the Committee where we have three vacancies. Further details on membership can be found on the notice board at the back of the church – please be in contact if you wish to join or feel that you can contribute as a member of the committee.

Chris Morse
Chair

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

9.11. THE MONDAY GANG

Since I joined the Monday Gang over 15 years ago many changes have taken place in the churchyard. We have lost a number of mature trees, particularly limes, but the hedge behind the Garden of Remembrance, planted by Iris Sharmen and that along the path to Camping Close, planted by Susan Anderson have both matured. They provide good screens, dividing the churchyard up into a series of distinct spaces.

The Garden of Remembrance inevitably acquires more graves each year and this poses, perhaps, the biggest challenge in terms of mowing to prevent the slabs becoming overgrown. The other challenges are the artificial flowers in this area and irresponsible dog owners who allow their pets to foul the churchyard.

More spring bulbs have been planted and the display of spring flowers - aconites, snowdrops and daffodils - one came out in early February this year - has been beautiful. Perennial flowers have been planted along the southern boundary wall, where they provided a good show last summer.

The wet winter has prevented much activity by the Monday Gang but we will all be back in force now, mowing, trimming, and weeding.

Margaret Cox

9.12. TOTS IN TOW

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

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

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

About midway through the session we break for refreshments. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided for the grown-ups, (we are sometimes lucky enough to have homemade cake made for us on occasion too!), and all the children sit down for a little bowl of healthy snacks and a drink, which the children love and the parents appreciate. We now have a steady rota for kitchen helpers week on week, for which we are extremely grateful and could not function without their help. In the last ten minutes there are songs, sometimes a story and short simple prayer or 'Two Little Eyes to Look to God' song to finish. Any relevant notices are said during this last bit of the session.

This group is as much a support for the parents and carers as it is for the children. There is always somebody available with a listening ear and we provide a wide selection of Christian based and general resources to borrow and other information to introduce links to the church. The personal contact at this group is of great practical importance and relevance. The group provides a feeder for baptism enquiries, Messy Church, the local Infant School and more.

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Historically, I have invited various local individuals to sell or promote their local business. For example, Beth Purser from Hilltop Bakery set up a table, Emily Saunders did a photo session, we welcomed Sue Frankish to come and sell her homemade crafts etc, other things include children's haircuts, health visitor and Crazy Ceramics. While attracting people to come to the group, it helps to promote local business and maintains good, strong links with the community and in turn with St Mary's. This has tailed off massively due to the fact that the majority of organising has fallen on my shoulders and with growing commitments, I have not been able to organise as much as I would have liked. I now attend every other Wednesday, with a view for others to 'own it' a bit more and reduce a little pressure on me.

Our FaceBook page remains hugely popular. This is a great vehicle to keep parents and carers up to date with information about the group and for followers of the page to add their comments...all of which have been very supportive and encouraging to date. It is also a great way for me to post notices, those general to the group and relevant church activities, ie. Messy Church, Flower Festival, seasonal services etc. and keeping information up to date eg. Needs for the Haverhill Foodbank. We have a donation box for the Foodbank on the welcome and signing in table and I make sure that supplies get deposited at the back of the church regularly.

Numbers have remained high, (about 20 families on average). We continue to see new faces from week to week.

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

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

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

Nicola Collard