



Annual Report 2022

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About St Mary's, East Barnet

The charity's full name is The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of East Barnet.

It is governed according to the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure (1956) as amended. It operates according to the Church Representation Rules (2020).

At the time this report was issued, the Parochial Church Council consisted of:

The Revd Dr Alec Corio (Rector, PCC chair, ex officio member)
Mr Roger Melling (Churchwarden, PCC vice chair, ex officio member, and deanery synod representative)
Prof Alison Blunt (representative of the laity)
Mrs Margaret Cranfield (representative of the laity)
Mrs Katherine Duncan-Kerr (representative of the laity)
Mr Stephen Edwards (representative of the laity)
Mr John Hawkins (PCC secretary, representative of the laity)
Ms Gail Phillips (representative of the laity)
Rev Shaun Sanders (Methodist minister, ex officio observer)
Mr John Savage (representative of the laity)
Mrs Angela Stancar-Johnson (representative of the laity)
Mrs Christine Watson (representative of the laity)

The charity exists to advance the gospel in the ecclesiastical parish of East Barnet, according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England, for the benefit of the public.

The charity cooperates with the Rector to provide and maintain a building used for religious purposes; provide and maintain a building as a local heritage asset; conduct public worship, including services marking life events; sponsor cultural and artistic events; support local community formation; support educational activities; further the ecumenical and interfaith engagement of the Church of England; and provide pastoral care to peoples of all faiths and none.

The parish church is located at:
The Church of St Mary the Virgin
Church Hill Road
East Barnet
Hertfordshire
EN4 8XD

The parish office (for all correspondence) is located at:
East Barnet Parish Office
Brookside Methodist Church
2 Cat Hill
East Barnet
Hertfordshire
EN4 8JB
Email: administrator@stmaryseastbarnet.org

The PCC's charity number is 1143134

The Independent Examiner of the PCC's financial reports was Ms Victoria Neil of 30 Cedar Avenue, East Barnet, EN4 8DX.

Rector's Report and Introduction

2022 was not a normal year in the life of St Mary's, although I must admit that I am not sure what a 'normal year' would look like! However, declining Covid-19 infection rates and the positive health-outcomes of mass vaccination programmes allowed us to make an appropriate relaxation in our risk assessments fairly early in the year.

This has permitted us to seek to expand the church's mission and ministry through more creative worship, a greater number of engaging events, and innovative community outreach work; all in order to create the right conditions for a sustainable improvement in the quality of our community life, and a more invitational approach that will allow its growth.

Our pattern of Sunday services was therefore re-stabilised, so that we now offer an All Age Messy Eucharist on the first Sunday of every month; the Parish Eucharist on other Sundays; and a sung Evensong on the first Sunday of every month.

In addition, the provision of special seasonal and festival services has grown in ambition across the year, and in 2022 these have included:

An All Age Messy Christingle; A Service of Music and Readings for Good Friday; A Good Friday Messy Church; A Festal Eucharist for Easter Day; Songs of Praise at the East Barnet Festival; A Farewell Eucharist for Mrs Mel Adams; A Memorial Service for Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II; A Harvest Messy Church; Come and Sing: These are a few of my favourite hymns; Caring for Creation (with Brookside Methodist Church, at St John's United Reformed Church); The Memorial Service; The Launch of the Poppy Appeal in East Barnet (at Brookside Methodist Church); A short Act of Remembrance on Armistice Day (at East Barnet War Memorial); An interfaith Act of Remembrance on Remembrance Sunday (at East Barnet War Memorial); The Advent Carol Service; Community Christmas Carols (in the snow); Christmas Carols in the Prince of Wales; St Mary's School Carol Service; The Brunswick Park – Church Hill School Federation Carol Service; The Christmas Carol Service(s); and a Family Crib Service. Some of these were extremely well attended.

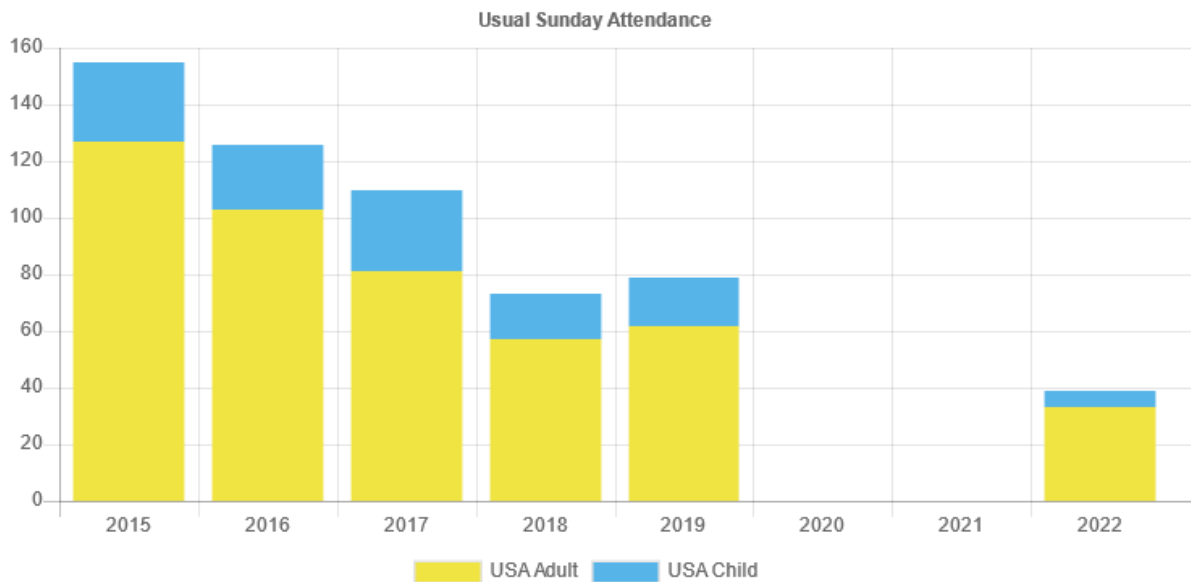


I am delighted that, because of relaxation in Covid-19 risk assessments, the scope for music in these services has expanded under Alan Danson's care: it's has been wonderful to have the Church Choir and Young Voices leading our worship in person; to welcome brass

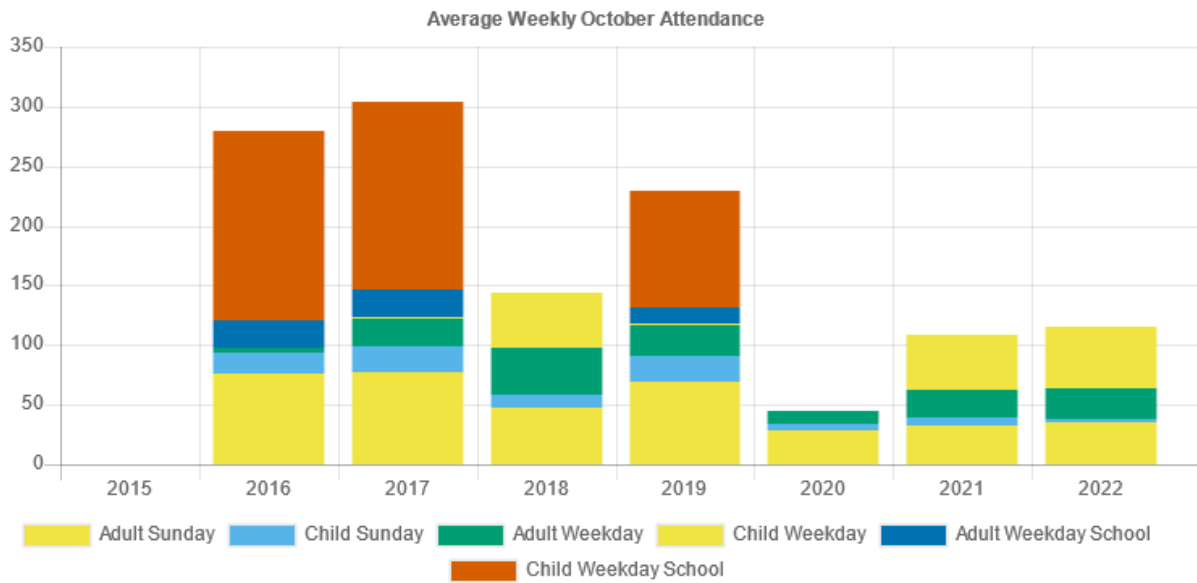
instrumentalists at celebratory services; and to try to squeeze a 27-piece orchestra into the chancel for Christmas Carols. Alan and I have worked closely together to create new formats for our Easter and Christmas services, which include more creative material. For example, the carol services have included poetry and drama, as well as readings from scripture and carols.

Alan has also worked with me to choose and embed a new sung setting for the Eucharist. Anne Foley has been able to coordinate a team to offer prayer during healing Eucharists, quarterly. And we have welcomed a number of guest preachers: Rev Dr Martin Wellings; Mr Nigel Wildish; The Revd Preb Marjorie Brown; and Dr Paula Gooder, to themed Sunday services. I am also very grateful to The Revd Brian Blackshaw who provided some cover for my August annual leave. The return of Collective Worship services to St Mary’s Church, and the increasing use of musical elements within those services, has also been a great joy for everyone who values our special church-school connection.

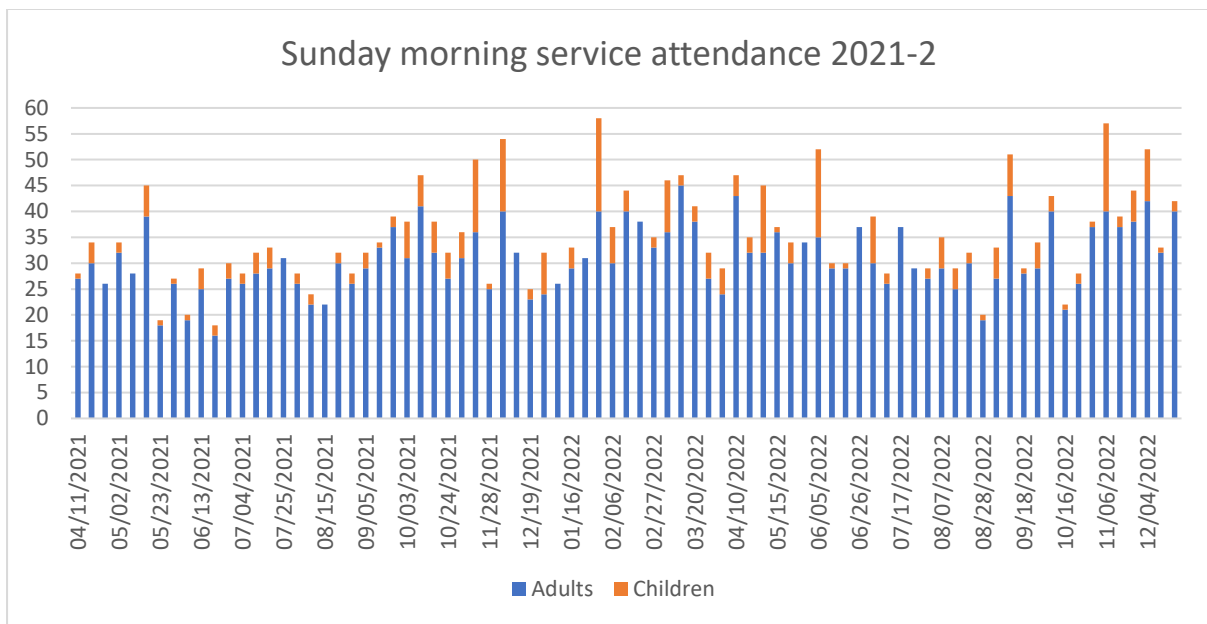
Diocesan figures for attendance at services are open to misinterpretation, and tend to flatten because they are taken on an annual basis. But usual Sunday attendance (USA), averaged across the year, has been recorded as 33 adults; 6 children.



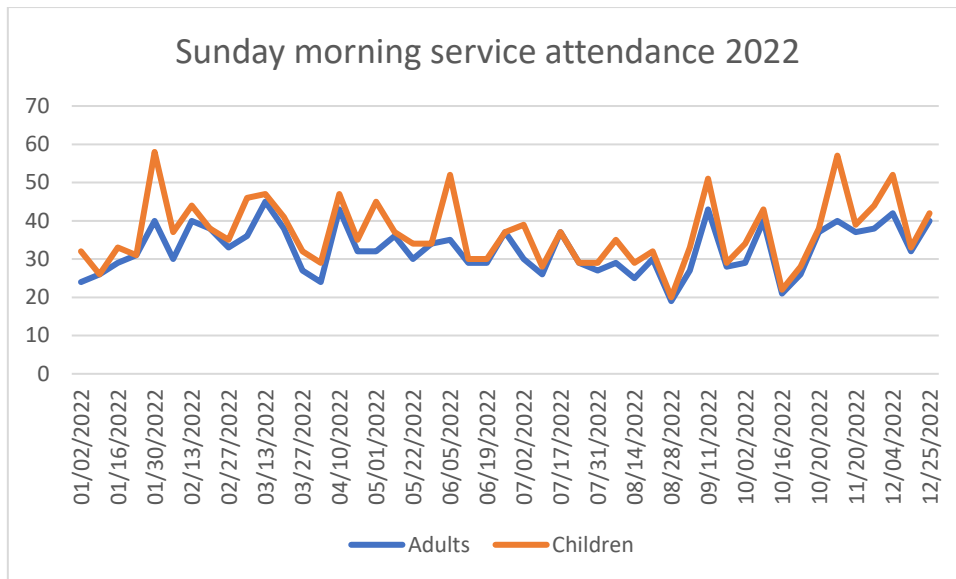
Average weekly attendance in October – which diocesan figures also measure – was averaged as 35 adults in Sunday attendance; 3 children in Sunday attendance and 26 adults in week day attendance; 51 children in week day attendance, because of occasional offices and the fortnightly timing of school Collective Worship (at present I lead Collective Worship in the church and the school hall on an alternating basis, and always in the school hall in bad weather).



If we map trends in adult and child attendance at 10am services from the resumption of public worship in April 2021 and then across 2022, removing special services and those where there is an obvious reason for exceptionally large or small attendance figures, then we can see a consolidation of attendance figures in 2022.

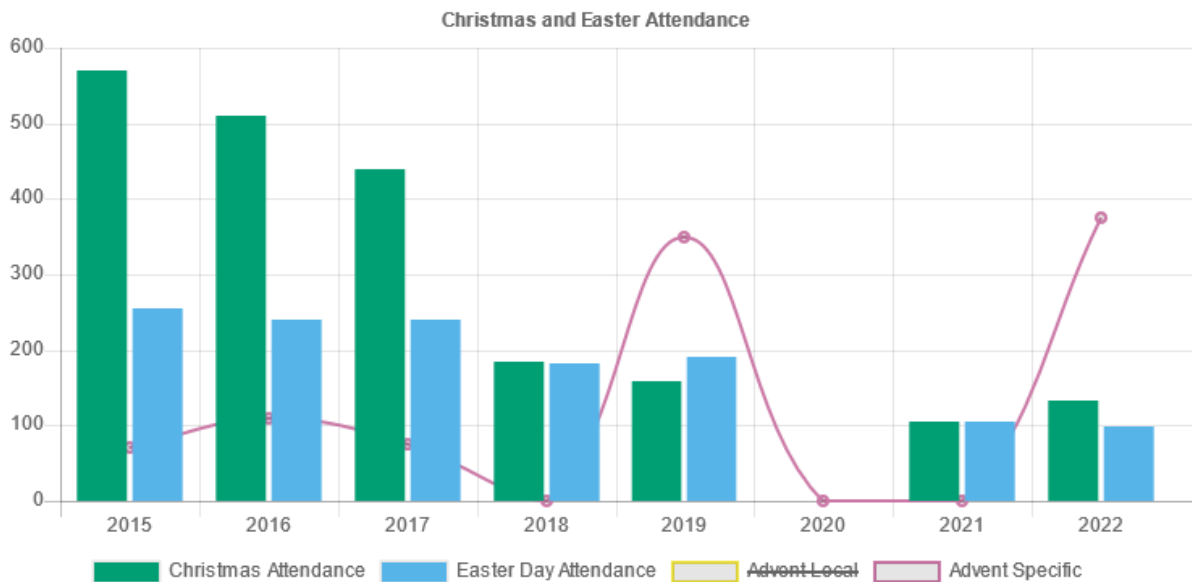


We can also map this in more detail, just for 2022. A best fit of average attendance shows a small increase across the year.



Overall, adult attendance at All Age Messy Eucharists and the Parish Eucharist was very similar in 2022: averaging 32.15 and 32.72, respectively; however, children’s attendance was much higher at All Age Messy Eucharists compared to the Parish Eucharist in 2022, averaging 10.07 compared to 2.11, respectively.

Returning to diocesan figures, attendance at our Easter services was broadly in line with 2021, probably because of continued uncertainty regarding the pandemic. Attendance at Christmas services increased compared to 2021.



And Advent service attendance was higher than prior to the pandemic, because of the addition of school carol services to our pattern of worship.

It is difficult to take these figures as a complete reflection of the size of the worshipping community connected to St Mary’s. While deaths among the congregation and departures from East Barnet over the last few years are reflected in the numbers, they also conceal a large element of continuity in our life together.

They conceal the fact that some members of the worshipping community cannot now attend church due to illness, but instead are receiving communion and visits at home on a regular basis. These are very special opportunities to make the Church's care for our community incarnate, in the places where people are. The figures also make it hard to see that many members of the worshipping community are attending services regularly, but now over a two or three week cycle, rather than weekly as before the pandemic.

What is clear is that there may have been a growth in the numbers composing the total worshipping community. The congregation certainly has new members. However there has not been a return to the patterns of attendance which were in place before the pandemic even among those who attend services regularly. The ongoing stresses of the pandemic continue to be a general factor here, as well as specific personal and familial circumstances.

There has also not been a 'return to normal' when it comes to occasional or sporadic church attendance, outside of Christmas Day services, among those on the fringes of the worshipping community. The pandemic may have led to a sense of detachment from community organisations and may even have accelerated secularisation trends in the general population.



Working with Maria Constantinou, the newly substantive Head at St Mary's School, and Stephen Edwards, the Chair of Governors, has been very satisfying for me. Our vision of education there has been advanced and its theological foundations have been well-laid. I feel that the school is seeing great continuing progress in its quality of leadership, and I am constantly amazed at the enthusiasm and skill of its teaching staff. As well as seeking to deepen the church-school relationship further through Collective Worship; governance; RE curricular support; and pastoral care; we have also continued to try to form links with other local schools, especially Church Hill School and Brunswick Park School, through educational visits and their carol services.

Children's work at St Mary's has also been advanced, thanks to the leadership of the Church Council, who placed the development of a strategy for children and youth work on their 2021-2022 Mission Action Plan. This has led to increased attendance and engagement among several young families.

Learning opportunities have also included a focus on work with children and young people, especially through courses of preparation for admission to Communion and Confirmation. In 2022 3 children were admitted to Communion, and although there were no Confirmations at St Mary's, 2 children were prepared for the deanery Confirmation service that occurred at St Peter's, Arkley, and 1 child was prepared for the Confirmation service at St Mary's that will occur in 2023. In addition, 9 babies and children were Baptised this year. There were also 10 funerals and a number of memorial services.

The important idea that St Mary's should be a community engaged in and formed by learning has been reflected in a continuing commitment – often shared with Brookside Methodist Church and now sometimes with other churches too – to seasonal courses, such as the Lent course on Luke's gospel; and the October course on Holy Places.



The aim of embedding learning in our community year-round has also been continued in monthly activities like the Book and Film Club and a series of conversations called Reflecting on the Readings. It's also been very satisfying for me, personally, to learn alongside Francesco Aresco during his period here as an ordinand on attachment; and to teach the liturgy module to ordinands and candidates for Licenced Lay Ministry as an Associate Tutor on the Eastern Region Ministry Course.

At St Mary's, our ability to hold community events has been limited for almost 30 years by the absence of appropriate facilities. In 2022, it was ironic that the work of building new community halls made this even more difficult as we lost access to parts of the church site and even - for a time - heating and water supplies. But this has been for a great long term gain in the form of those completed facilities. The Events Committee, and especially Gail Phillips, coordinated several really enjoyable social occasions, despite the obstacles of building works, including a barbeque (cooked - rather than burned - by Alastair and Katherine Duncan-Kerr) for Pentecost and the Platinum Jubilee; a summer picnic; and a Harvest Supper.

The community hall building project has required my constant engagement, legally, financially and on occasion structurally too. I've been generously supported in this – as in so much else – by Roger Melling. As we move from the construction of the halls to their use, I am keen to see how the Church Council envisions the new scope for outreach and wider public service they will give us; this will be a key feature of the 2022-2023 Mission Action Plan.

My videos showing different phases of the building works at St Mary's have proved very popular on social media, and there our engagement has grown across the year. Event promotion and news sharing on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter is now the normal way of building awareness of St Mary's and of inviting people into engagement with our work.

Across 2022, our Facebook page included over 300 posts, which reached 13685 people and the page has received a total of 544 likes and follows. That's an increase on the figures for 2021. We put less emphasis on use of Instagram, though there the page has grown in likes and follows slightly, so that it had 177 followers. On Twitter, posts were chiefly used for engagement with other organisations and professional bodies, and regrettably Twitter does not now supply analytical data on an annual basis.

Unfortunately financial pressures have disrupted the Church Council's plans to appoint an administrator, who it was intended would have a distinct focus on fulfilling a communications strategy. This work is important, and time-consuming, and at present sits with me.

More traditional forms of communication have retained their reach, however, and in 2022 the Church Council had to acknowledge with sadness that St Mary's was not capable of producing the East Barnet Herald any longer. Instead we have focussed on distributing News from St Mary's via email and distribution points in East Barnet Village and at church; on the production of eye-catching posters; on the erection of new banners at church; and on the delivery of Christmas Cards to circa 3000 homes in the centre of the parish. These were designed by a child at St Mary's School, and have been received very positively.



The completion of the community halls; the renovation of the school house; the construction of a house at 54 Church Hill Road; and the rebuilding of the Rectory means that over 4 years we will have completed those major capital projects necessary to establish a firm physical foundation for future mission in the local community.

It is my hope that in many ways 2022 has been a year of stabilisation, and that we will make steady and sustainable progress to grow a spirit of invitation and of deeper engagement which will be reflected in numerical growth into 2023.

Alec Corio

Methodist Minister's Report

We continued to rebuild our work together in 2022.

In order to allow Brookside Methodist Church to register to conduct same-sex marriages, our building sharing agreement with St Mary's had to come to an end. This was required in order to observe legal constraints on the position of the Church of England. However, we continue as a Local Ecumenical Co-operative Scheme with a shared Covenant and shared ministry and mission. Although there are feelings of loss, sadness and even anger in having to do this, we also rejoice that this new initiative by Brookside also enhances St Mary's mission as an Inclusive Church through our Partnership.

Luke's Gospel was the theme for our shared Lent group. We met in person in the afternoons at Brookside and in the evening on Zoom. Numbers varied, especially in the evenings, and so we need to continue to assess the format and venue of our meetings. The pandemic taught us that patterns of worship and gathering can change quite quickly. Mark Leach from Manor Drive Methodist Church led some sessions and is a reminder that our Partnership reaches out beyond East Barnet. Rev Julian Templeton from St John's United Reformed Church also led a session, which shows it even reaches beyond our denominations.

It was a joy that Rev Colin Smith led Brookside's anniversary service, which the congregation from St Mary's also joined us for. Many folk from Brookside and St Mary's also travelled to Cambridge in July for Colin's farewell service, to mark the end of 31 years of his active ministry, 14 of which were happily spent in Barnet. He is now retired in Chester but continues to lead worship there.

Our book (and film!) club continued on Zoom, where the group talked about a diversity of books and films such as Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca and a biography of Aretha Franklin.

For our October teaching course on 'Holy Places', we visited Barnet Synagogue, Wesley's Chapel and St Paul's Cathedral. The Revd James Milne, Canon Precentor at St Paul's, generously gave us a guided tour of the cathedral and remarked that the cathedral building is a place of transformation. That's something which all our churches and chapels can be in their own ways.

The annual Memorial Service, Launch of the Poppy Appeal service and Interfaith Act of Remembrance on Remembrance Sunday were also marked. These services continue to be especially appreciated by the wider community. They are a reminder of the impact of our shared mission and ministry in East Barnet, and beyond.

Shaun Sanders

Ordinand on Placement Report

I am writing to express my gratitude to you all for the experiences I had in my second year on placement at St Mary's. It was an excellent learning opportunity to be with you as I prepared to be ordained deacon.

The congregation gave me invaluable support and guidance all throughout my placement.

Their kind and compassionate nature have been a constant source of inspiration and motivation for me, and I am truly grateful for their friendship and help.

At St Mary's I learned so much about the importance of compassion, empathy, and selfless service. It has been an incredible journey of personal and spiritual growth to be with you, and I feel truly blessed to have gained such valuable insights into the work of a deacon.

I am also most grateful to the Rector for his wisdom and advice as I prepared for my ordination as a deacon. Working with him, I could explore new ways to engage with and offer spiritual care for those in need.

The Rector's good-humoured approach to guidance has made my time at St Mary's all the more enjoyable, and I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to learn from him and all the congregation.

Francesco Aresco

Churchwarden's Report

Those of us who have been members of the congregation at St Mary's for some years have had a recurring dream. Like many dreams, you don't seem to be able to get to where you want to be. There are obstacles blocking the way, or the route you want to take has changed. Sometimes this dream has turned into a nightmare and everything has seemed impossible. However in 2022 our dream came true: I am of course talking about the completion of our new community halls.

I have said before that a book could be written about the processes we have been through to have these halls built: the multiple surveys, the planning process, the legal complications, and the problems of raising finance. And by the way, the finances are still an issue.

The possibility of building a hall on the church site was first raised when Andrew Proud was the Rector, but the issue really came to a head when the heating system in the old parish hall failed, and was found to be beyond repair, in the summer of 2010. Prior to this, an extraordinary meeting of the Church Council in January 2008 had agreed that architects should be appointed to prepare a 'building development scheme' for St Mary's. In December of that year the architects presented their scheme to the Church Council. This was rather different from the hall we have today. Yes, 15 years have elapsed since this scheme was proposed, and I find that I am the only remaining member of the Church Council which took the decision to pursue it.

Many people, including successive Rectors, have put much time and effort into this project. However, I don't think we would have the new halls if it were not for David Howard. It is very sad that he never saw the fruit of his labours. Inevitably there were differences of opinion about plans for the halls within the Church Council, but David provided continuity for the project. He burnt the midnight oil dealing with many twists and turns as the project developed. He dealt with architects, surveyors, engineers and diocesan officials. This all took up much of his time when he was still in full time employment.

The development at the church was linked to the redevelopment of the old parish hall site. A detached house was also completed on the old hall site in 2022, and this will be a

“Curate’s House” for St Mary’s. We hope in the future to have an Assistant Curate again, but in the meantime that house has been let to provide essential funds for the Parish.

The period of lockdown has had a continuing impact on many organisations, including churches. We are creatures of habit and most churches have noticed that some people have lost the habit of attending church frequently. I am pleased to say that attendance at St Mary’s picked up during 2022 and it is most encouraging to see new members of the congregation, including young families, joining us and getting involved in our activities.

Sadly one longstanding member of our congregation, Philip Graham, died in September 2022. For many years he had been a very active member of our community. I still expect to see him walking to the village for his shopping.

On behalf of us all I would like to express our appreciation of all that our Rector, Alec, brings to St Mary’s. Hopefully things should ease for him by the end of 2023. The building project, which has taken a disproportionate amount of his time, will be completed. Covid, which I guess will always be with us, like flu, will no longer have the impact it did. And he will have moved into the rebuilt rectory, so cutting out the rather time consuming journey from Bells Hill. The appointment of an Administrator would also relieve him of a number of routine tasks, but this will be dependent on the state of our finances.

I could not do the job of Churchwarden without a huge amount of support. I must thank Heather again for this, and I am very grateful for the support and advice of the three Assistant Churchwardens and the Church Council. I am also very conscious of all the work undertaken by “Team St Mary’s”. Everything from music to cleaning, sidesmen to flowers, finance to catering, fundraising to Guides and Brownies, sacristy to churchyard maintenance, and others I have missed. Thank you, all of you.

This will be either my last or penultimate report as Churchwarden. I will stand for election at the APCM and if elected will serve until the 2024 APCM. However, I will be 81 by then and feel it will be time to stand down. So it is time for others to step forward to ensure that we continue the mission of St Mary’s. Please think about it. What about shadowing me to find out what the job entails?

My thanks to you all for your prayers, support, friendship and love.

Roger Melling

Parochial Church Council Report

We welcomed three new members to the Church Council this year: Margaret Cranfield, Angela Johnson and Katherine Duncan-Kerr, and we are very grateful for the contribution they have already made to the leadership of the church community. Chris Yates and Matthew Eade both stepped down from their Church Council roles in 2022, with our thanks for everything they have contributed. We remain grateful for the contribution made by all our current members, and for the leadership and ministry of Alec during a memorable year in the history of St Mary’s.

This year we were able to resume in-person Church Council meetings, although our Standing Committee meetings have remained online. We have continued to use email to

determine a number of resolutions, with the outcomes recorded and accepted at subsequent meetings. This, in part, has allowed us to move to a less demanding meeting schedule of four Church Council business meetings per year. Our first in-person meeting of the year allowed us to formally accept and record all resolutions that had been passed during the period when we had been unable to meet in person.

Whilst 2022 has allowed us to move on from the pandemic, the Church Council and standing committee still frequently reviewed our COVID-19 Risk Assessment, and will continue to do so for as long as is required. We aim to follow government guidance wherever this can be applied to our specific situation.

A key role of the Church Council is to define, review and track progress against our Mission Action Plan, which the Church Council has created to guide our ministry in East Barnet. Our November meeting gave us time to review what we had achieved against our plan and review new goals for the year ahead. A pledge to review our communications strategy; increase our welcoming team; and gain a bronze eco-church award all feature in the revised 2023 plan.

A major focus for 2022 was the completion of the community halls. The Church Council as a body provided oversight of all significant decisions on the building project especially where additional costs were incurred in-contract. During this time the Church Council has seen the enormous amount of co-ordination and persistence required from Alec and many others in order to see the project through to completion.

The Church Council maintained a strong focus on safeguarding, working to ensure all members had completed the required safeguarding training provided by the Church of England and that all required trustee and DBS checks were up to date. Chris Mears, our safeguarding officer, attended one of the meetings to give a detailed update on this important subject.

The brief of the Church Council is extraordinarily diverse and we consider all manner of church and community issues in order to further the mission of St Mary's in East Barnet. As always, we would like to encourage other members of the congregation to consider standing for the Church Council and remind them that it doesn't matter how long you have been worshipping at St Marys or how regularly you are able to attend. If you are interested, then any current member of the Church Council would be happy to share their experience with you and we would encourage you to consider what most find a very worthwhile and rewarding activity.

I would like to thank my predecessor Alison Blunt who stepped back from the role of Church Council Secretary, but remains a valued member of the team. My job has been made considerably easier by the handover provided and the professionalism with which she undertook the role.

John Hawkins

A vision of St Mary's

East Barnet Mission Action Plan 2022-2023

We are aware of the blessings we have received as members of the church of St Mary the Virgin, and the signs of inclusivity, welcome, commitment and care that already exist within our congregational community.

Following the example of Mary, and learning from the words of the Magnificat, we are seeking to share them more effectively with our parish community, and become a people of God who are confident to speak words of hope and perform signs of service in the world.

The Anglican 5 Marks of Mission, the PCC's related objectives within our parish, and SMART goals for the 2022-2023 Church Council year

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom we will communicate effectively with those resident in the parish of East Barnet by developing an integrated communications strategy

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers we will create a welcoming atmosphere in our church building and at congregational events by increasing sidesmen numbers by 50% and providing invitation and welcome training to lay volunteers

To respond to human need by loving service we will develop the use of our new community facilities by inviting community groups into partnership in them

To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation we will further develop St Mary's commitment to being an Inclusive Church by making a commitment as lay volunteers to pray for an ecumenical pioneer ministry on the NLBP housing development

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth we will reduce our consumption of resources, and our contribution to climate change by achieving Bronze eco church status

This Mission Action Plan was created in 2021, and we have updated the SMART goals for 2022-2023.

These goals will be a standing item on every Church Council agenda, so that our progress can be monitored. They will be renewed annually.

Electoral Roll Report

The Parish Electoral Roll is our list of all those entitled to vote on our electoral matters. Anyone over the age of sixteen who resides within our parish or who regularly worships at St Mary's may join the roll.

Our 2022 Electoral Roll contained 112 names.

In accordance with the Church Representation rules, our electoral roll will be updated again in 2023 and in 2024. In 2025 the list will be deleted, and a new roll compiled.

John Hawkins

Fabric Report

During 2022, maintenance work on the church's historic fabric continued at a low level, while dedicated attention was focussed on the community hall project.

Annual maintenance, inspections, and checks were conducted on the following areas of the historic building: the Lightning Conductor; Fire Safety Equipment; the Organ Blower and Humidifier; Portable Appliances; Boilers and Gas Appliances. The PCC is grateful to Roy Mears for organising these inspections. Shared Access also carried out maintenance work to the tower phone mast installation.

For a substantial part of 2022, the church's gas supply was cut off, to allow the community hall project to proceed. Since it has been reinstated, and Roy has recommissioned the boilers, he and the Rector have devoted considerable time to the adjustment of all heating controls, to try to balance the maintenance needs of the historic building with ecological and financial concerns.

The Rector was also able to arrange for the installation of a new media player, and the servicing of the church sound system, thanks to a small schools project grant from the Diocese of St Albans.



The Organ was also subject to maintenance, tuning, survey and safety visits. The Church Council is grateful to Alan Danson for his continuing care of the organ.

The Rector has been continuing to work with the London Borough of Barnet Council, which is statutorily responsible for the maintenance of the churchyard in good order and safety, to improve its condition. In addition to the process of repositioning gravestones and monuments that was connected with the community hall project, a number of gravestones and monuments that are in danger of collapse have been fenced off; the John Sharpe monument has been strapped and scaffolded. The south fence has also been fully replaced. Steve Harris has begun very helpful work to clear brush and bramble from the churchyard into a stick pile and slow compost heap.

The existing garden of remembrance, in which ashes are interred, was closed due to lack of space during the year; and so the Rector and Roger Melling have worked on plans for its extension and an additional garden of remembrance. The faculty procedure to extend the garden of remembrance has been worked through.



The rectory and its garage continued to degrade in condition throughout 2022, with the widening of large cracks in the walls aiding several burglaries in the spring: on one occasion, burglars found that the bricks were so loose that they just lifted them out of the wall to enter the building. Unfortunately for these industrious visitors they found that everything inside had already been stolen by previous burglars.

In the spring, the Diocesan property committee entered into negotiations with a contractor to have a new rectory built on the same site, but these failed. The Diocesan property subcommittee then appointed Ash – also contractors for the community hall - as their preferred contractor for the building of the new rectory.

Ash took over the rectory site in October, and the shell of the old rectory was demolished in December. Practical completion of the new rectory is predicted for June 2023.



On the site of the old parish hall, four houses have been built over the course of 2022. Three of these are due to be transferred to the developer, in exchange for a payment that provided the bulk of funding toward the community halls. The largest house, 54 Church Hill Road, will be retained in our use and held by the PCC as managing trustee. The Church Council will be able to house a minister there or let the property and apply its income to

our charitable objectives; and a tenant has been found for the next two years with an option to renew for a third year. There have been some difficulties in liaison with the developer and between the developer and site neighbours, but 54 Church Hill Road is now complete, with a certificate of practical completion due early in 2023.



The Church Council is still looking to transfer management of the schoolhouse, and its funds to the Diocese of St Albans as managing and custodian trustee. While that process has been ongoing through 2022, the renovation of the house's garden was completed; an electricity installation and energy efficiency test was carried out; and repairs to the shower were effected. The Church Council is grateful to John Savage for organising these works.

Alec Corio

Community Hall Building Project Report

Over 2022, the community hall project came to fruition: the halls were constructed. The project management of this work has placed a heavy and continuous burden on the Rector's time, but these facilities will release the church as an whole into many new possibilities for our common life and mission.

In January, the Church Council's preferred contractors – Ash – occupied the area of the churchyard designated as the hall site, and began their set up work. The actual start date that they had planned to observe was subject to unexpected delays due to the finalisation of contractual terms; the issue of planning permission; and utilities disconnection. Ash therefore actually began works in February, and this delay – as well as increases in labour and material costs – has led to an increase in costs beyond the original budget over the course of the year.

In the spring and early summer, excavation, foundations and framing for the hall was completed. As the project advanced, access to the church for services was maintained only through the north door, down its steep steps. This dramatically limited the accessibility of the building. The disconnection of utilities supplies at various points during the project has also been a temporary inconvenience: particularly during the month when the church's only working WC was a portaloos by the lych gate.



During the summer, beams and brickwork were erected. Throughout the whole year the Rector has reported on progress with the halls to the congregation and wider local community through videos shot under, on, in and above the building site. These videos have built considerable interest and emotional investment in the project – and other aspects of the church’s mission and ministry .



In the Autumn, the hall was roofed and made water tight, and first fix work was being undertaken on its interior. The landscaping and accessibility works outside the halls were also completed, so that the historic building now has a fully accessible path and entrance. Second fix work was undertaken as we rushed toward a deadline for the formal opening of the halls, on a date that had been arranged for us by Martin Russell, His Majesty’s Representative Deputy Lieutenant, as part of a royal visit to Barnet.



In November the halls were formally opened in a small ceremony by HRH Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Prince Richard inaugurated a plaque marking this important occasion, and a much larger celebration and service of dedication will follow early in 2023.



Following his visit, the floors were carpeted, and remaining electrical and fit out work was completed. A certificate of practical completion was then issued, and while Ash have been fixing a series of snags the building has come into use. It has already hosted Christmas hospitality, and plans for its use to underpin future community-building work can now also progress.



The project's costs have been supported by the sale of part of the site of the old parish hall; funds from Church Council controlled trusts; historic congregational fundraising; the Garfield Weston Foundation; the Benefact Trust; the Diocese of St Albans; the City Churches Fund; and the London Borough of Barnet. The Diocese of St Albans and the City Churches Fund have made an additional contribution to the Church Council because of cost increases in 2022. The PCC is extremely grateful to these funders.

There are still some further costs that still need to be met, which will be finalised in 2023. The Church Council will be seeking an appropriate settlement of these costs, and determining a strategy to meet all those which are legitimate.

We are grateful for financial assistance from the following organisations who have made grants to support this project:



The Church Council is also very thankful to all those whose dedication and wisdom, imagination and prayer, have supported this project over its long history. This includes many current and former members of the staff and congregation of St Mary's; the Diocesan Advisory Committee; Alastair Woodgate; JKBS Architects; Ridge and Partners LLP; Ash Construction Ltd, and other advisors and contractors.

Alec Corio

Partnership Enabling Group Report

The East Barnet Anglican–Methodist Partnership Enabling Group did not meet in 2021 or 2022. Following Roger's wish to stand down as chair I took on the role of chair in early 2023.

Both churches need to refresh the membership of the group and when we are back up to strength we can call a new Partnership meeting and review the objectives of the group in the situation in which we now find ourselves.

Graham Wheeler

Deanery Synod Report

Deanery Synod met on three occasions in 2022.

In February Rachel Johnson, the Diocesan Environmental Officer, spoke on the theme of Christian responsibility for the natural world and the challenge to find a theology that enables us to live in harmony with creation and to restore God's world.

She explained that the Diocese was aiming to be an 'Eco' Diocese and that churches were encouraged to become 'Eco' churches. There are three levels of attainment: bronze, silver and gold. There is an extensive questionnaire to determine whether a church qualifies for any of these awards.

In June Synod had three presentations:

- The work of the Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust
- The Deanery Mission Action Plan
- David White, who had been appointed Deanery Secretary in October 2021, spoke to Synod about his role and his aims for the future

The October Synod was a social occasion so representatives from churches across the Deanery could get to know each other and share their different experiences. In the course of the evening Synod also heard reports on:

- The 'Hike and Bike' event, to raise funds for the Historic Churches Trust
- The Deanery Youth Programme
- The operation of the Deanery website

Roger Melling
Deanery Synod Representative

Safeguarding Report

As in previous years, St Mary's has followed the Church of England's safeguarding guidelines in 2022 and has worked to create a safe environment for all who attend.

The PCC adopted Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Policies, which are in keeping with the relevant Church of England Policies.

Safeguarding training is ongoing for everyone involved in leadership and ministry activities at St Mary's.

As I always say, it is the responsibility of everyone to continue to be vigilant and report anything suspicious. Let us ensure that we keep our community as safe as possible.

Chris Mears

Minutes of 2021 Annual Meeting of Parishioners 29th May 2022

- 1 The meeting opened with prayers, and a welcome to all attending.
- 2 Chris Mears was elected as clerk to the APM and APCM – proposed by Alec Corio, seconded by Roger Melling, and unanimously approved.
- 3 Apologies for absence were received from: Margaret Cranfield, Graham Cranfield, Roy Mears, Ann Savage, John Savage, Brian Gregory.
- 4 The minutes of the 2021 APM were accepted as a true record, with one abstention.
- 5 Election of Churchwarden: Roger Melling was nominated by Chris Mears, seconded by Gail Phillips and unanimously approved.

Roger was thanked for his amazing work throughout the year. Alec said Roger does a great deal for St Mary's, way beyond what is absolutely required by his role as Churchwarden, and thanked him for agreeing to stand for another year.

Minutes of 2021 Annual Parochial Church Meeting
29th May 2022

1 Apologies for absence were received from: Margaret Cranfield, Graham Cranfield, Roy Mears, Ann Savage, John Savage, Brian Gregory.

2 The minutes of the 2021 APCM were accepted as a true record, with one abstention.

3 Annual Reports

Alec invited questions on the 2021 Statutory Reports.

Georgina Oliver pointed out that receiving the Report just before the service didn't give people sufficient time to read it through and consider the contents. Alec apologised, saying that he had needed to wait for the Independent Examiner to sign off the accounts before printing the Report.

Alan Danson said that nowhere in the MAP was there a mention, by name, of Jesus. Alec said this should be noted and considered for inclusion in the next MAP.

Barbara Campbell wanted to know what progress was being made with the community hall project. Alec said the information for last year was in the Report, but that since then progress had been made rather more slowly than was desirable. However, thanks to works over the last couple of months, the foundations have now been completed. Due to the council and utilities work delaying the project's start date, there could possibly be add on costs. It is hoped that the work will be completed by the end of October or beginning of November.

Alec said that community groups have already been contacted, and it is hoped that the hall will be in use from the opening date.

4 Alec invited questions regarding strategies for the future:

A visitor named Raven spoke at length about the need for more sustainable food production. He mentioned in particular an organisation called "Organically". Land owned by the council has been given over to the group in order to aid food production to be given to those in need. Other organisations he mentioned were "Food Matters" and "Sustain". Raven said there is an ecological crisis, huge price rises for food and there are so many displaced communities throughout the world in desperate need. Raven was willing to speak with anybody who wished following the meeting.

Alec said that if anyone wished to know more about the life of St Mary's, they could seek information from him at any time, not just at the APCM.

5 Conduct of elections to Deanery Synod: There were no nominations at this time and Alec said that the vacancies could be filled during the coming year if anyone came forward.

6 Conduct of elections to the PCC: Four of the five possible vacancies were filled:

Katherine Duncan-Kerr
Margaret Cranfield
Angela Johnson
Gail Phillips

proposed by Roger Melling, seconded by John Savage
proposed by Graham Cranfield, seconded by Roger Melling
proposed by Roger Melling, seconded by Chris Mears
proposed by Lesley Danson, seconded by Alan Danson

7 Alison Blunt was thanked for her hard work, diligence and help as PCC secretary over the last year.

Chris Yates was also thanked for his work as PCC treasurer. It was stressed that his financial reporting had been very clear, making everything much easier to understand.

8 The meeting ended in prayer, followed by a loyal toast to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

1374 Squadron Air Training Corps

1374 'East Barnet' squadron of the Air Training Corps currently has two flights, comprising nearly 40 cadets between the ages of 13 and 17.

I has taken just over two years, but my appointment as squadron chaplain has now been formally approved.



As squadron chaplain, I've been given the privilege of visiting the unit on a monthly basis for 'padre's hour', where I help the cadets to deepen their character education and explore ethical issues; and of visiting on other occasions to provide pastoral support and a ministry of presence.

In 2022 the focus of padre's hours have been Getting to know you...; the Nolan Principles of Leadership in public life; Military Ethics; and Developing resilience.

Alec Corio

2nd East Barnet Brownies

At the start of 2022 we had 13 girls attending our Brownies group, mostly aged 9 and over. We were assisted in leading them by our helper, Stephanie Wennell.

In our weekly meetings we ran a mix of different Skill Builders, designed to stretch and challenge girls of all abilities, and enable them to develop core skills throughout their Guiding journey. These are all fun, ready-to-go unit activities of varying lengths and styles, to add balance and variation.

We completed the Live Smart SB 'Tool School', identifying DIY tools.

Then we started the Have Adventures SB 'Explore', stage 2. We made a compass to find north, and the other points of the compass, and learned how grid references help find your way. In 'Custom of Customs' we learned what different countries permit, or not, in your baggage. 'A Country Walk' was a challenge about the Country Code. Another popular activity was 'Indicator Navigator', and we added extra elements because in January 2022 the Highway Code for road users changed.

We completed 'Network', stage 2 which involved various activities such as teams of girls building a tower of playing cards, which is a lot harder than anyone would think. Everyone persevered, accepting that it is "ok to fail". We also did a planets and solar system activity that involved a lot of circling the sun.

World Thinking Day was celebrated on 22 February. It's the day when 10 million girls and young women in 152 countries explore how we're part of a bigger movement: the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. We taught each girl how to light a candle with a safety match, so then they were all able to light their own candle to remember a country in the global family of Girlguiding.

We learned the national anthem to sing on Thursday 21 April, the late Queen Elizabeth II's birthday, and spent the run up to the Platinum Jubilee planning a party and designing a banner.



Each Unit in Middlesex East County was invited to make a banner for display at the Beacon Lighting event at Northern Heights campsite. They made a grand display.



We also tried a couple of the jubilee challenges like 'Doggie Language' which taught how to be confident around strange dogs, and learned how to put on an arm sling.

Over the summer term weeks we welcomed two new girls to the unit, and played hockey using the indoor set. In the hottest weather we wanted something quiet to do, so our final week was spent using the Hama Beads craft. At end of term four 10 year olds said farewell to the Unit, two joining the Guide Unit; Stephanie also stepped down from the Unit.

The start of the autumn term on 8 September coincided with the sad news that Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, had died. The Queen had been our patron from 1953 until her death. She was a Guide and a Ranger, and loved guiding.

Following the popularity of indoor hockey earlier in the year, we spent the next few weeks playing with the various other sports equipment: hoops, balls, ropes and bean bags.

Each term we need to remind the Brownies about the fire evacuation procedures, so also did the UMA about fire safety. This taught us how to escape safely from a building on fire. A simple obstacle course was set up in the hall to help use plenty of imagination power and add a physical element.

The new Brownies made their promises in early October. However, regular meetings were then interrupted by the need to repeat our mandatory (leader) first aid qualifications, and the partial incapacity of Elaine. That meant that we only managed to meet for some Christmas crafting on 15 December. That was also when a community carol singing evening was held outside the church. It was bitterly cold outside, but a few braved it.

In 2023 we experienced a sad reduction in Unit membership, to a level that meant we are unable to offer the full Girlguiding experience. Therefore the Unit has been closed, but we are pleased to say that three Brownies have transferred to another unit and one has decided to join the scout movement.

On a personal note, you may know that both Elaine and Anne have been leaders at 2nd East Barnet Brownies since 13 January 2000, but our leadership in Girlguiding has stretched back another couple of decades. We have seen many changes over the years. We would like to thank everyone who has helped and supported us during our time leading the Unit, and those who offered their backing to all the former leaders of the 2nd East Barnet Brownies dating back to its foundation on 23 April 1932.

Incredibly, one of the Unit's first brownies is still in the area, now aged 97: Olive Kettle.

2nd East Barnet Brownies
St Mary's
1932 – 2023

Elaine Eyles and Anne Malloy

2nd East Barnet Guides

In 2022 our numbers unfortunately dropped a bit, despite being open all year post-Covid. That said we still managed to do a fair bit across the year: we tried our hands at some experiments which didn't go off with the expected bang, but more successfully the Guides turned their hands to making coasters and then selling them back to the leaders, to then make more whilst learning the art of bartering. We also did a litter pick around the local area which got many a "Thank You" from the local community.

We did our usual visit to the park for some water-based activities, and a general run around.

In the summer we joined 3,500 other guiding members at Foxlease Guide Camp site in the New Forest for "Wellies & Wristbands" which is a 3 night camp. During the day, the Guides got to take part in all sorts of activities including high ropes, abseiling and archery; then in the evening they got to attend live music concerts.

We also had 2 of our members attend the Kent International Jamboree, where they spent a week with other Guide and Scout members from across the world. Around 6,500 members attended in total and again, they did various adventurous activities including microlight flying and driving.

In October we ran our own camp at Northern Heights in Elstree with a Christmas theme where they did Christmas crafts, Christmas baking, and had a Christmas dinner.

At the end of 2022 our County, Middlesex East, were responsible for the Guiding Float in the Lord Mayors Show and one of our Guides took part in the parade along with 39 other representatives.

Hopefully our numbers will improve as we move into 2023.

Karen Binns

Chipping Barnet Foodbank

The Foodbank's main expense this year has been to supply vouchers to most of their needy clients and organisations. Vouchers have been delivered via Solace Women's Refuge Centre; Citizen's Gateway; Jim's Cafe (at St James Church); and individual clients. They have supported Christmas Angel bags and Easter Bunny treats; young people leaving care; refugees; and fuel bill payments.

In this way, the Foodbank has spent far more than in any previous year. This was intentional: at the year's outset the board pledged to ensure that as much of their assets should be distributed to local people in need as possible. In 2022, over £13,000 was spent on supermarket and school uniform vouchers, with an additional £10,000 worth of vouchers purchased for Easter and Christmas support schemes. Over £20,000 was spent on fuel vouchers; and over £3,900 on food purchases.

Greater use was made of the Barnet Food Hub (in the old East Barnet Library) for which they are very grateful. It means that more can be provided in the way of fresh produce and

to clients, including fresh bread and pastries. Over the year well over 4,000 people were fed.

The Foodbank has also received hundreds of Vodafone SIM cards in the past year, and over 500 cards have now been distributed to refugees in the borough, supported by Citizens Gateway. SIM cards offer clients unlimited calls and texts and 20GB of data, for six months, free of charge. To build on this work to combat digital poverty further the Foodbank are looking to establish an Internet cafe during Foodbank opening hours and are hoping to start receiving donated mobile handsets through a partnership with the Good Things Foundation.

Last year saw huge changes in the way the Foodbank operates. Most significant was the appointment of their first paid manager, in June. The Foodbank received a generous grant from the Trussell Trust to fund the strategic development element of the manager's role. The aim of this investment is to eliminate poverty, making Chipping Barnet a poverty-free zone, in collaboration with other similarly minded organisations.

Sadly, due to the worsening financial climate, the Foodbank experienced a significant increase in demand towards the end of 2022, and they are preparing for a very busy time ahead.

A Citizen's Advice Service is now operating during Foodbank opening times. Staff from the Citizen's Advice Bureau worked tirelessly to ensure that the right people were allocated appropriate vouchers.

The Foodbank has now been able to resume their normal training schedule and has 193 volunteers, spread across four rotas and ancillary roles.

Last year Debbie Windeler from St Mary's joined the team and has now become our new church representative. St Mary's is one of 7 local churches who originally established the Chipping Barnet Food Bank, along with Brookside Methodist Church, Christ Church, St Gregory's Roman Catholic Church, St John's United Reformed Church, St Peter's Roman Catholic Church and Barnet United Reformed Church. Each church has a representative with voting rights at General Meetings. This year St James Church has also been added to that list.

Chris Watson

Christian Aid

Volunteers to help with Christian Aid collections were very thin on the ground in 2022, and this was reflected in the low amount we were able to collect and donate to Christian Aid in their Christian Aid Week appeal. It became clear there were insufficient volunteers available to run 'street collections' or 'station collections'.

So two thousand 'deliver only' envelopes were distributed in the community, all individually stamped with instructions as to how to make contactless donations, or where to deposit a return envelope at the parish office.

Through an e-mail to the many people on our church contact list, details of our Just Giving page, which was set to receive CA donations, were distributed.

Through social media the details were also well publicised.

However, only a few donations were made through church envelopes and only four responses were received through the Just Giving page. The total amount raised for Christian Aid was £251 through 'deliver only' envelopes, £287.12 through church envelopes, £97.50 (including gift aid) through Just Giving, making a total of £645.62.

Gail Phillips

Fundraising Events at St Mary's

A variety of fundraising events were held throughout the year, despite the last restrictions of the Covid-19 risk assessment and building works.

In March, the ever popular Quiz Night raised £178; followed by a Table Top Sale in April resulting in £568. May saw a spring Plant Sale in the churchyard, which contributed £381.60 to our coffers. To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, St. Mary's offered a free barbeque to the community, from which donations amounted to £43.31. The annual East Barnet Fair in July was its usual successful week end with £429 being raised through a bottle tombola. A Harvest Supper was celebrated in October, which made a contribution to church funds of £96. To round off the year, the annual Christmas Fayre was enjoyed at church on Friday 2 December and raised £1078.10. It was followed the next day by St Mary's participation in the East Barnet Village Fair where a further £136 was taken.

As always, our grateful thanks go to all the people who continue to help to make these events successful. Your combined efforts raised £2910.01 for St Mary's in 2022.

Gail Phillips

Green Christians Barnet

Green Christians Barnet has relaunched its meetings at St John's United Reformed Church. Meetings in 2022 have included sessions on:

- Reports and Ideas from A Rocha
- Support for Good Samaritan School for the Deaf, and what climate change looks like in Africa
- Work with Incredible Edible on the community garden there

A major focus of shared activity across the churches was an ecumenical service that Julian Templeton and the Rector led in September, where I preached on 'the Hope of Creation'.

The service – its liturgy, readings via Zoom from Uganda, excellent music, and my talk – all focussed on the relationship between Genesis 1 and Romans 8: which tell us that creation is good, but creation is groaning. We are called to celebrate God's good creation but also recognise the environmental crises we face, and take action to preserve creation.

God's ultimate restoration of all things is our eternal hope, but in the meantime we are called to live lives of hope including taking action, like:

- Praying
- Ethical financial practices
- Green consumer choices
- Pushing for corporate and government accountability

Sarah Edwards

Music at St Mary's

As the Covid-19 risk assessment has developed, our major musical services at Easter, Advent, and Christmas, were able to take place with the addition of the instrumentalists who had regularly played for these events before the pandemic.

At Easter, we also introduced a service of Music and Readings for Good Friday. 2022 also saw the introduction of a new sung setting for the Parish Eucharist, The Mass of St Thomas by David Thorne, with which the congregation is becoming familiar.

Our Advent Carol Service included the 'back-up' sound of two industrial-sized heaters provided by Ash, because due to building works there was no heating in the church.

Our Christmas Carol Services were very well attended. The twenty-seven orchestral musicians, eight Church Choir members and four Young Voices members were able to enjoy refreshments in the new community halls between services.

The loyal commitment of members of the Church Choir has enabled the congregation to hear anthems sung at services throughout the year, including at resumed services of Evensong. I am very grateful to their hard work, patience and enthusiasm.

The members of Young Voices excelled themselves, especially in part in the Christmas Carol Services, singing with clear diction, projection and confidence accompanied by the orchestra. Well Done!

Currently, Young Voices has two loyal members, and I am taking the opportunity to enlist and encourage children from local schools to join.

I pray that 2023 will see more members of the congregation encouraged to support the choirs to keep live music a prominent part of our worship at St Mary's Church.

Alan Danson

Pioneer Ministry on the North London Business Park development

Throughout 2022, monthly prayer walks have been conducted on the North London Business Park site, to pray for the current users of the site; those now living around it; its flora and fauna; the residents who will come to live there following its development; and the flourishing and reconciliation of all their many different needs.

Members of the congregation at St Mary's have attended these prayer walks occasionally, alongside members of other local churches. We have also been joined in prayer by local civic leaders, and by church leaders active on a deanery, diocesan or equivalent level in different denominations.



These prayer walks have also provided a natural forum for the discussion of the proposed development there among local church members, and with representatives of the developer, Comer Group UK.

Ministers from Brookside Methodist Church, St John's United Reformed Church, St Mary's, and St Paul's, New Southgate, have become increasingly committed to working together to support a pioneer approach to ministry on the site as it is developed.

Having built an honest and effective relationship with Comer's team, the ministers have even been offered the chance for their churches to curate a community space on the developed site. This possibility then led to a more developed discussion about the site's requirements for community space, and the key resources necessary to serve the wellbeing of its residents (including, but not limited to, their spiritual care).

The ministers therefore began working with CWC Livewell, a charitable organisation which has established a delivery model for GP healthcare services and social prescription services together. With Livewell, we have been exploring advanced and ambitious plans, to see whether a wellbeing centre could be established on this site, with the churches' involvement but operating as a sustainable independent concern. This kind of centre would provide both services and community space for the site.

Comer Group UK have offered the space and building shell necessary for this kind of provision, dependent on them gaining an additional planning permission, which would also increase the number of housing units on site. At the end of 2022 they were refused this additional planning permission. It is not clear how they will proceed with development, or whether this form of community space will still be a possibility.

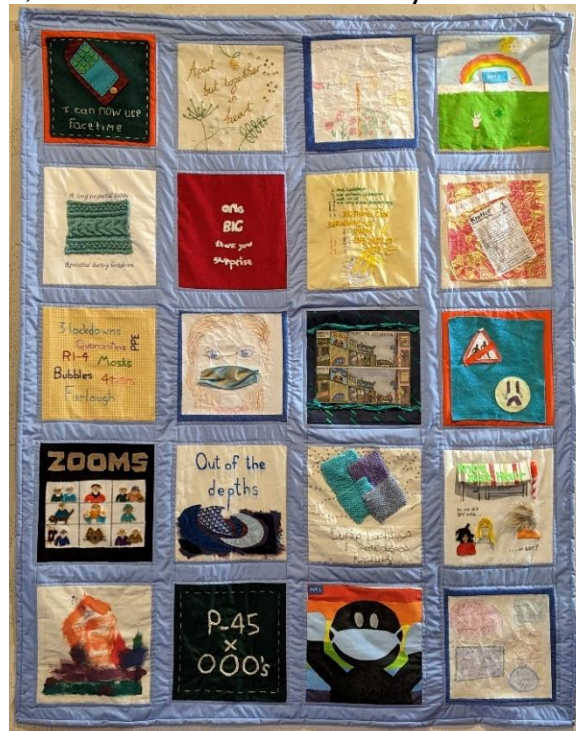
The churches are still committed to continuing to work to support pioneer ministry on the site, and in 2023 there will be discussions about whether this can be resourced with diocesan or equivalent funds, as well as how we will relate to the revision of Comer Group

UK's plans for the scale of site development, as these affect the possibility of a wellbeing centre being created on the site.

Alec Corio

The Quilting Project

During the second Covid-19 lock-down of 2020, Debbie Windeler had the idea that St Mary's should invite people in the community to contribute a 'square' to a quilt depicting life during the pandemic. Over time, twenty contributions were received. These efforts have now been combined into a wall hanging, and the resulting decorative piece now hangs in the church's nave. Great idea, Debbie – and thanks to everyone who took part!



Gail Phillips

St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided School

The past year has been another eventful one for the school community at St Mary's. We have really enjoyed being able to have in person events in school again, including nativity plays, bi-weekly collective worship in church, Christmas and Summer Fayres and of course the infamous St. Mary's school May Day. This normality has brought great enthusiasm and joy to school life once more.

At the end of last academic year, we formally said goodbye to Mel Adams who has dedicated 26 years of her life to headship at St. Mary's school. In July, we celebrated Mel's significant contribution to the school with a special church service and a farewell party in school.

This academic year saw the introduction of a brand new school logo, capturing the essence of the parable of the mustard seed, which is the theological underpinning of our school vision.



‘At St. Mary’s, inspired by Christian values, we are excited by our learning, proud of our achievements, determined to be the best we can be and caring for all of God’s creation.’

We chose this particular parable as it demonstrates so much of what our mission is at St. Mary’s school. We are so committed to the flourishing of children wholly and providing them with growing knowledge and understanding of the world, as they grow too! We are also proud to provide a safe and secure place to learn so that in time, the children can provide this safety and security to others; through their words and actions.

Mark 4:30-32 - The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Then Jesus said, “How can I show you what the kingdom of God is like? What story can I use to explain it? The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. The mustard seed is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. But when you plant this seed, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants. It produces large branches. Even the wild birds can make nests in it and be protected from the sun.”

Our Christian foundation is undoubtedly our strength. From this comes our aspiration to live life in all its fullness, to care for one another, all people everywhere, all God’s creatures and this wonderful planet. We have learned that even in the most challenging of times, our St. Mary’s School family is united and strong, bound by the greatness of God’s love. We continue to pray for each other, our school families, our community and our church.

Maria Constantinou
Headteacher

Stephen Edwards
Chair of Governors

Together in Barnet

In 2022 the Covid-19 pandemic led to the Night Shelter operating in a hotel in Golders Green. Faith groups were again requested to provide a main evening meal and a packed breakfast to be delivered to the hotel.

St Mary's continued to work with East Barnet Baptist Church to provide meals for the homeless. Many thanks to those who were able to assist with this important charitable work.

Roger Melling