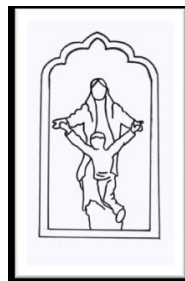


St Mary the Virgin
Ringmer



ANNUAL
PAROCHIAL
CHURCH
MEETING

15th May 2023

7.30pm

Prayers

Annual Vestry Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of Annual Vestry Meeting 2022 (*in italics*)
3. Election of Churchwardens

Annual General Meeting

1. Minutes of APCM 22nd May 2022 (*in italics*)
2. Electoral Roll Report
3. Vicar / Churchwardens' Report
4. Finance
 - 4.1 Treasurer's Report
 - 4.2 Appointment of Independent Examiner
5. Safeguarding
6. Fabric & Maintenance Report
7. Presentation of Inventory
8. Deanery Synod Report
9. Other Reports
10. Election to the Parochial Church Council
 - 3 for 3 years
 - 2 for 2 years
 - 1 for 1 year
11. Election to the Deanery Synod
 - 3 for 3 years
12. Announcement of Sidespersons for 2023/4
13. Any Other Business

SIDESPERSIONS FOR 2023-2024

Mr H Bailey

Mrs M Bailey

Mr K Barber

Mr M Brickell

Mr G Clark

Mrs J Clark

Mr C Gebbie

Mrs S Howes

Mr K Humm

Mrs E Humm

Dr C Kingswood

Mr D Lambird

Mrs T Lambird

Mrs J Linehan

Mrs C Smith

Mrs C Speed

Mr P Speed

**ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING & PAROCHIAL CHURCH
MEETING 22nd May 2022
ST MARY THE VIRGIN, RINGMER**

*Due to temporary closure of the church for the re-ordering project, the meetings were held in the Church Room
The incumbent, Revd David Bouskill welcomed those present and began with a prayer of thanks for all achieved in 2021 and in remembrance of all who had died during that past year.
He explained that two meetings would be held: the brief Annual Vestry Meeting to elect the churchwardens, followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in which to report on the activities and financial business of the previous year and to appoint members to the Parochial Church Council.*

***Minutes of the ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING held on Sunday
22nd May 2022 at 11.30am in St Mary's Church Room with
Revd David Bouskill in the chair.***

27 members on the Electoral Roll attended.

1. Apologies for absence

*Deirdre Booth, Margaret Constable, Ian & Jenny
Loughborough, John & Jenny Payne, Ruth Peters, Carol
Speed, Shirley Squires.*

***2. Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held on
Sunday 23rd May 2021***

*These had been circulated in advance by email and hard
copy and were approved as a correct record of the
meeting and then signed by the Chairperson of the
meeting.*

3. Election of Churchwardens

There were two nominations

*Anne Franklin was proposed by Rosemary Colebourn and
seconded by John Payne.*

*Richard Vincent was proposed by Shirley Squires and
seconded by John Howes*

There were no other nominations and there were no objections so Anne and Richard were duly elected to serve until the next Annual Vestry Meeting.

Revd David thanked Anne and Richard for all they had done since the last Annual Vestry Meeting.

Minutes of the ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING held on Sunday 22nd May 2022 in St Mary's Church Room with Revd David Bouskill in the chair.

27 members on the Electoral Roll attended.

Apologies for absence were the same as for the Annual Vestry Meeting.

1. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 23rd May 2021

These had been circulated prior to the meeting by email and hard copy. They were agreed and signed as a correct record.

2. Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll Officer, Chris Kingswood, reported that the number on our Roll stood at 106 during 2021 including 5 new members that year. He noted that the Roll has since increased to 111. He was reassured that he was permitted as Electoral Roll Officer to contact new members to ask their preferences for contact details to be available for authorised church communications or to be retained only for the Electoral Roll and kept private.

3. Churchwardens' and PCC Reports for 2021

3.1 There being an interregnum during 2021, Richard Vincent, as churchwarden, presented the PCC's Annual Report for the year. This had been circulated by email and hard copy in advance of the meeting. He explained that this report of the church's activities was required by the Charity Commission predominantly to ensure that St Mary's charitable aims were being fulfilled;

also for the Diocese to be informed of our work during the year. It therefore contained information from all the Working Groups of the PCC and from most other groups within the church.

Additional activity reports for information for the congregation and for prayer had been provided in the separate APCM booklet and also circulated in advance. He thanked all involved for their hard work in these areas.

3.2 Adding to her report for 2021, Marisa Hayes, Authorised Lay Minister for Youth & Families, had attended the Diocesan 'Growing Faith Foundation' day conference. She provided some alarming statistics about abuse and violence among young people nationally, and about the increase in pressure for rural young people to become involved in drug activities via County Lines. She gave a current update on her youth outreach within Ringmer: Friday Club had been absorbed into the new Friday Youth Café open to all young people, with a view to starting another church-based group eventually. She also had weekly involvement with Tiddlers and Toddlers. She thanked the congregation for recognising that children and teens are also part of our church family and encouraged members to learn from the successful practice of many schools in having a school pupil council to influence decisions and practices.

4. Finance

4.1. Presentation of the 2021 Financial Statement and Treasurer's Report

Detailed accounts had been made available to everyone before the meeting and were presented by Richard Vincent as Acting Treasurer. He noted that the Annual Report and Financial Statement had been reviewed and approved by our appointed Examiner of Accounts, Malcolm N Preece, and also fulfilled the requirements of the Charity Commission.

He thanked Jonathan Franklin and Peter Smith for all their extensive work in keeping finance and records on track.

He reported that in 2021, church income had increased by close to £10,000 compared to 2020. Regular giving through the Parish Giving Scheme had increased and he encouraged use of this method as it enabled forward financial planning. He noted that the requested Parish Ministry Contribution (PMC) had been sustained at £74,040 for a second year, but that this would almost certainly be increased by the Diocese next year. St Mary's had paid all but 3.81% of this requested sum, a decision made by the PCC due to the uncertainties of the pandemic and interregnum in 2021. Revd David urged the members to work towards giving at least 100% of the PMC in future.

Richard Vincent reported that the financial deficit between regular income and expenditure was lower than previously at approximately £23,000.

To cover our annual spending, legacies and investments were slowly being reduced. He reminded the members that these gifts, though unrestricted, had been donated to move the work of the church forward rather than to be used for regular outgoings or left unused. There was an intention to address the dormant Friends of St Mary's group in order to assist with costs of maintaining the buildings. He reminded the members of Jesus words to be generous in a way that is extraordinary in the world's eyes, (Mark 12.43 & Luke 6.38) and that we were to follow his teaching in our approach to finance.

4.2 Appointment of Examiner of Accounts

Richard Vincent proposed that Malcolm N Preece, Price & Company Chartered Accountants, 30/32 Gildredge Road, Eastbourne BN21 4SH be appointed as the Independent Examiner for the coming year. This was seconded by Margaret Sweatman and agreed unanimously.

5. Safeguarding Report

A written report from Brian Wignall, outgoing Safeguarding Officer, had been included in the APCM booklet. No incidents of concern had been reported over 2021, and members were reminded to be alert to any

observed behaviour which could lead to exploitation. He thanked Marisa Hayes and all working with young people for maintaining their levels of Diocesan safeguarding training and DBS checks. It was reported at the meeting by Marisa Hayes that he had also undertaken DBS checks for helpers at the new youth club and also for bellringers, and she encouraged all members dealing with vulnerable people to undergo safeguarding training.

Revd David thanked Brian Wignall for his work as Safeguarding Officer, and was pleased to announce that Deirdre Booth was willing to take over this responsibility. She was nominated as Safeguarding Officer by Anne Franklin, seconded by Richard Vincent, and approved unanimously.

6. *Fabric & Facilities Report*

Richard Vincent noted that this report had been included in the Annual Report. Throughout 2021 many small repairs and upgrades to our church and grounds were undertaken by the Fabric & Facilities Working Group. In March, a major repair was made to the lead roof of the Church Room at a cost of £10,593. Other contracted works included removing the asbestos-laden roof of an old bier shed, the installation of a new equipment shed in the new churchyard, and repairs to a section of the exterior church lighting.

Revd David informed members that it was intended that worship in the church would resume in August.

7. *Presentation of the Inventory for 2021*

Anne Franklin reported that the only addition to the Inventory in 2021 was a key-safe in the church porch to hold the key to the Springett Chapel. It was currently being used for the key to the Church Room during closure of the church itself for building works.

No items had been added to or removed from the archives during 2021.

During the return of furniture and items to the church after completion of the building works, the Inventory and Terrier would be checked. Revd David reminded the

members that they were temporary custodians of St Mary's and its contents, and thus that they were to manage these responsibly for future generations.

8. Deanery Synod Report

Richard Vincent summarised the report provided by Margaret Sweatman.

Three Deanery Synod meetings had been held since the APCM last year. During Covid, Chichester Diocese had lost more than £1m due to parishes being unable to raise money. If parishes were consistently unable to pay their Parish Ministry Contribution (PMC), numbers of clergy in the Diocese would need to be reduced by 3-4 a year over the next 5 years. Parishes had been asked to submit their Mission Action Plan (MAP) in order for the Deanery to assess each parish's vision and plans to achieve it. St Mary's MAP had been received warmly by the Deanery. Revd David reported that, to reduce its cost of salaries, Church House has reduced its staff as far as it is able. In reply to a question from members about why St Mary's PCC had chosen to pay less than the full amount of its PMC, having in the recent past paid more than 100% of the required amount, Richard Vincent stated that this had been a decision made during the financial uncertainty produced by the interregnum the effects of the Covid pandemic, and would be addressed again.

Revd David encouraged the church to aim towards paying more than our full share when making our commitment for giving in 2023.

9. Other Reports

These were available in the printed booklet. Revd David gave thanks for the reports, and for all the many people who run groups for church members and for the village community. He also noted the frequency of the same names running the groups.

10. Election of Members to the PCC

There were four vacancies: two for 3 years and two for 1 year. There had been one nomination:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>	<i>Term</i>
<i>Kenneth Humm</i>	<i>Meriel Vincent</i>	<i>Kay Fitzgerald</i>	<i>3 years</i>

Kenneth Humm was unanimously elected to this post.

11. Election of Sidespersons for 2022/2023

The names of the 18 people who had agreed to be sidespersons had been circulated before the meeting and were duly appointed unanimously.

Revd David emphasised the vital importance of the job of sidesperson being the first contact for any visitor to a church service. A friendly and helpful welcome makes all the difference to the experience of the visitor.

12. Any Other Business

None.

Revd David thanked the churchwardens, the PCC secretary, the Treasurer, the Church Administrator, the ALMs, the PCC and all involved in the church and the community.

He thanked all who had worked from October 2021 to make the vicarage a welcoming home for him and his family.

He encouraged the members to use the additional space in the church imaginatively for small groups, for children and for alternative forms of services. He was looking forward to working together with the members and in the strength of God, to encourage people to become followers of Jesus.

The meeting ended at 12.30 with a prayer by Revd David and in saying the Grace together.

REPORTS 2022/2023

PCC WORKING GROUPS

Pastoral Care

Co-ordinator - Sue Howes

The Pastoral working group has continued to support the Vicar in the pastoral care of the parish by visiting and telephoning people, and bringing Holy Communion to those unable to attend church and those in the three care homes in the village.

People on their own and especially those recently bereaved have been invited to Sunday afternoon tea during the summer months. We support the six-week Bereavement Journey course run by Trinity church.

The group support the Intercessory prayer life of the church through a monthly prayer meeting, the daily office of Morning Prayer and maintaining the prayer board in the church.

With the help of the church safeguarding officer, we have ensured that everyone in the group has the relevant safeguarding certification.

Children, Families and Youth Co-ordinator – Marisa Hayes

The CFY group met 4 times in the year to review and plan for outreach to families of all ages.

Involving families in services became quite tricky during the time in the Church Room and since, in the cold weather, but we continued to play an active role outside. Revd David's assembly slot at Ringmer Primary School is well-established and Rosemary continues to connect with Kings Academy Ringmer over eco-matters and music. Marisa is warmly welcomed at Tiddlers and Toddlers to lead story and song time.

The primary school accessed the church on occasions such as a spring walk, the Evergreen Carol Service and a small group met parents at tea and tissues at the start of the school year to facilitate introductions to parents new to the primary school.

Baptism services were supported by members of the MU and we held a lovely tea party for church families in the vicarage garden in September.

Members of St Mary's were behind the establishment of Ringmer Youth Cafe, with the church facilitating the necessary DBS checks for volunteers.

The inaugural Parade Service took place in October, with invitations to all uniformed groups in Ringmer to attend a simple Eucharist service. This will be established three times a year, in each of the school terms.

A small group attended mini Maycamp in November, an evening of fun and worship with young people across the diocese.

Welcome & Events

Co-ordinator – Anne Franklin

The team organised several opportunities for socialising, fund raising, outreach and welcome, all of which were well attended. These included:

- A welcome party for the Bouskill Family in February
- Lent Lunches in aid of St Mary's Disaster Fund in March
- Posy making for Mothering Sunday
- Easter Morning Breakfast
- An information meet and greet stall at the Village Hub event in July
- Summer Garden Party on the Vicarage lawn in August
- Coffee morning with the sale of surplus kneelers in November
- Christmas card distribution to every house in the parish
- Christmas Fair in the Village Hall in December

Our thanks go to everyone who helped at and supported these events.

Church Re-ordering

Rosemary Colebourn

2022 saw a major change internally in the church with the opening up of the chancel and front nave. After Easter until the beginning of August services moved into the Church Room while the choir pews, the front two central nave pews were removed and the stone chancel floor extended forward into the nave in a curve. Striking black and gold hand rails have been provided. In addition 6 new oak choir small frontals and 12 new oak choir chairs, a priest's matching stall and chair were set out facing the congregation for the first service on August 8th, on time and on budget. A set of wheel chair ramps were bought for access from

the Springett chapel into the chancel. In addition, 16 stacking oak chairs were acquired enabling up to 30 people to be seated 'in the round' in the chancel. The impact has been very positive indeed, with the quality of the new furniture, fittings and the stone floor providing a fresh bright view to the high altar, as well as bringing the choir and forward altar closer to the congregation. The flexibility of being able to move the furniture and seating for smaller services, as in the evenings or funerals, or the complete removal to open up the space for performances and events is meeting all our hopes and plans for the future.

OTHER CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Choir and Music Rosemary Colebourn and John Howes

A regular SATB choir of up to 10 singers has continued to contribute to all our services with a wide variety of anthems and Taizé chants enhancing Eucharist services and Evensong. A new book of anthems was first used at Rev'd David's installation service in February, and new contemporary anthems interspersed with familiar favourites and new hymns were linked with the service themes. A small group of singers from the church and village joined in with special services, with 16 ready to lead the Advent Carol Service on December 11th, only to have it cancelled on the day due to snow! The music band quartet of guitar, keyboard, violin and piano accompanied the All-Age Services once a month, and since the autumn, have included a special song or hymn rehearsed for children to lead.

The whole chancel area was cleared for a performance on December 18th of Shepherds Arise! a concert of traditional carols, dances, poems and a play, all originating in Sussex. A full church endured the cold with the help of mulled apple juice and mince pies.

Two Saturday afternoon workshops, led by our choir leader, our organist on the piano and a professional singer, entitled Ringmer Sings in the Spring! and Ringmer Sings uplifting Songs! were enjoyed by over 30 parishioners in April and November. Two 6-week courses on 'How to Sing from Music' were completed during the year by 10 adults in total.

The piano has coped with the damp and low temperatures with the aid of an internal small lamp but the organ has not been so

fortunate. Already showing signs of wear and tear in her 100th year, following the closure of the church over the summer, the cold and damp have been giving voice to some additional 'notes' of their own from time to time. Some repair work has been done on the wear and tear, but further improvements will have to wait until warmer weather. It is still hoped to hold a celebratory recital for the centenary in due course.

St Mary's Toddler Group

Marisa Hayes

This was established in July to provide additional support for families over the summer holidays and to provide a regular church-led group in the community. This continues with a loyal group of supporters alongside coffee break on most Wednesdays. St Mary's pays a contribution to Tiddlers and Toddlers for regular use of toys.

Members of the group say: We love the group and the helpers are fantastic. Mega friendly group with lots of space, the regular helpers are an extra bonus and very friendly. We love our Wednesday group! I think it's great L really enjoys the singing at the end!

We always feel very welcome and don't need to rush if we are running late. My older children are welcome in the holidays which is great!

If you are free to help on the occasional Wednesday morning, please let Shirley Squires know.

Bellringers

Marisa Hayes

St Mary's band of bellringers rang for most of the Sunday services and practised on Wednesday evenings throughout the year. We were pleased to ring to welcome Revd David and family to the parish in February and made sure that they saw the ropes as soon as possible.

Plans laid out nationwide at the death of Queen Elizabeth II meant that we rang the bells during September with the tenor (heaviest bell) fully muffled. We mourned the loss of a lifelong ringer and friend, Mary Rice in October. We were pleased to entertain at coffee and carols in December.

We have a loyal band of all abilities, who enjoy the social side of ringing as well as building our skills. New members are welcome so please get in touch.

Floodlighting

Anne and John Stamper

During 2022 the church has been floodlit on 48 occasions at the request of people to commemorate loved ones or to mark special events

St Mary's Website

John Stamper

During 2022, the average number of unique visits per day to the church website was 20.0, though the average number of page views was only 25.6 showing that most people only looked at a single page.

There were noticeable peaks in the number of visitors on Tuesday 22nd February, David's induction (63), Saturday 16th April, the day before Easter Day (71), Saturday 3rd December, day before the Christingle Service (59) and Saturday 24th December, Christmas Eve, of course (85).

I think these figures show that the site continues to be a useful resource for the parish.

Votive candles - I have been keeping records of the numbers of votive candles that people have lit in church. During 2022, a total of 996 candles were used which, bearing in mind that the church was closed for 120 days for building work, is an average of 4.1 candles every day. On only 21 days during the year were no candles lit when the church was open. I think that this shows that our open church is a valued resource for the village.

PRAYER AND STUDY

Bible Study Groups

John Howes

Thursday afternoon Bible-based readings/discussions continued throughout 2022, with up to 20 people meeting each week. In the longer afternoons of summer we ventured to meet face to face in the Church Room, retreating to Zoom once again after the autumn clock change. The recurrent theme of the year was reading through Genesis: rediscovering the family history of

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Amidst what we thought would be familiar stories, we all discovered insights that we were never taught in Sunday School! Other topics covered during the year included the Letter of James and the songs of the Nativity story. Thank you to everyone who took part.

The Church Book Club

Margaret Sweatman

We are a small, friendly group who love reading and discussing a wide range of religious, or uplifting, books. We meet on a Thursday morning once every two months in someone's home and end up with coffee and biscuits – or home-made cake on occasions. The six books read this year include "That was the Church That Was" by Andrew Brown and Linda Woodhead which examines, in an honest and entertaining way, the history and reasons behind the sad decline of the Anglican Church. In contrast, "How to Spend a Trillion Dollars" by Rowan Hooper suggests practical ideas for saving the world and the book provided some stimulating discussion. Sometimes our book choices are more personal. "Braver" by a local author Deborah Jenkins is a warm and engaging story of Hazel whose life is turned around by her friendship with the local vicar. The poetry of Malcolm Guite in "Lifting the Veil" was another popular choice.

We should like to welcome one or two new members so if you feel inspired to join us please contact Margaret at mam.sweatman@btinternet.com or phone 07969 386605 for further details.

St Mary's Prayer Rugs

Anne Stamper

During 2022 the small team of knitters who make the knee rugs have made 14 these, which have been blessed and given on behalf of all.

Floodlighting

Anne and John Stamper

During 2022 the church has been floodlit on 48 occasions at the request of people to commemorate loved ones or to mark special events.

Bible Reading notes

Shirley Squires

13 members of our congregation take these Notes (three books over the year). *New Daylight* gives a daily Bible reading accompanied by a commentary and *Guidelines* suggests a passage for you to look up, also with a commentary. There are some back-dated copies of *New Daylight* at the back of the church for you to look at. Large print copies can also be available. If anyone else is interested in having these useful notes of *New Daylight* or *Guidelines* do contact me on 01273 752167.

Church Library

Hugh Bailey

Tucked away in the Springett chapel is the church library, offering a good range of books on various topics. They are for all to borrow – and return! – a good way to deepen knowledge and faith. There is also a good selection for children.

At Advent and Lent time, we put a selection of books on a table at the back of the church which are especially suited for these times. This year, only a few books were borrowed but there were many other opportunities to make Lent special.

Maybe we could find a way of sharing what we have learned, enjoyed or puzzled over once we have read a book? Let me know what you think.

OTHER

Mothers' Union

Shirley Squires

Ringmer branch of the Mothers' Union has 25 members and is just a small part of a world-wide organisation which has 4 million members in 84 different countries. Some of our members usually attend the District and Diocesan meetings in order to find out what is happening outside our own branch. We have had some interesting talks during the year including about Homelink, the RNLI, the history of The Firs (Anne & John Stamper's home), a Lent talk by Revd David, The Quicken Trust with Martine, and a wine tasting evening! We had a most interesting visit to Lancing College with a guided tour by a young verger, followed by tea at Shoreham Airport café. The Citizenship Ceremonies at Southover Grange returned in 2022 and we provide the

refreshments for these three times a year. Members help with the running of St Mary's Toddler Group in the Village Hall.

Caring and Sharing East Sussex David and Tina Lambird

St Mary's continues to support Marius Istrate and his wonderful team who have helped seven severely handicapped babes grow into young men, able to live in a loving and caring environment, Amara House, Romania.

The Hamlin Fistula Hospital, Ethiopia, was set up well over fifty years ago; nurses have been specially trained in midwifery. As well as working in the hospital they visit and help in most isolated villages where before there was no maternity health access for women, some of whom were badly injured during difficult childbirth. Operations and health care have completely changed the lives of so many allowing them to integrate into their families/villages once more.

There is always some literature on these charities at the back of the church. Please do take a copy, or read and leave for others. Over the years, your donations have helped achieve so much for these two charities - once again our sincere thanks for your continued support.

Coffee Break

Christine Smith

After the disruption caused by the Covid pandemic and then the refurbishment of the Village Hall, it is pleasing to report that Coffee Break was able to operate weekly from the 30th March until the end of 2022 with just a brief break for the Autumn Drama production (which renders the Hall out of action for other users) and Christmas.

A core group of 'regulars' meet up to chat and generally put the world to rights supplemented by others who drop in whenever they can. All are greatly appreciative of the larger meeting space duly created and renamed the Alan West room. Similarly, the loyal team of volunteer helpers are very grateful for the completely refurbished and refitted kitchen.

An extra dimension was added in the summer with the start of the St Mary's Toddler group who meet in the adjoining Symons Hall. The mums are very grateful to "have someone else make them a cup of coffee " - in return the kitchen helpers love

watching the little ones interact with each other and enthusiastically join in the singing at the end. It is, of course, debatable as to which room makes the most noise!

A particular highlight was in early December when around 30 students from the Academy, led by their music teacher, came along to entertain the Coffee Breakers with Christmas songs and seasonal readings- their first performance outside of the school premises.

As ever, all the proceeds from Coffee Break, after expenses, go to the St Peter and St James Hospice. If you haven't been along yet, do drop by sometime - you will be warmly welcomed. Meantime, many thanks to all those who do and huge thanks to all the volunteer helpers.

Family Support Work

Martine Bailey

St Mary's has supported this charity for many years in different ways. They work with children and families across Sussex. Last year, their team of 14 helped over 400 families.

Nowadays, we mainly support them by donating at Christmas, Easter and Harvest times. We take tins and packets of food, as well as the odd treat. We cannot give them fresh produce but money is very welcome to help with those. 3957 deliveries were made last year. We also give toiletry items, soap, toothpaste etc., which are very welcome.

So remember to feed the box to help feed families. You DO make a difference!

Ringmer Church and Village News

Rosemary Colebourn

During 2022 the monthly magazine benefitted from ideas from the new editor and new vicar enhancing its appearance, notably with a different coloured photograph on the cover each month, and a bright clear layout style for each page. Our new advertising manager and assistant secured adverts at the end of the year ready for 2023, and together with a small increase to 50p per copy have helped us to stabilise the costs. Further promotion of the magazine with new residents and advertisers has helped to offset much higher printing costs, and this is an ongoing aim to balance the budget.

