

Annual Report 2022: Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Nunthorpe



PIC•COLLAGE

Foreword

As I look back on 2022, I give thanks for all the many ways in which we have been able to make the love of God known in Nunthorpe.

Our regular services continue to be well supported, although numbers are still lower than before Covid. It has also been good to see Café Church coming back to life with a wider variety of people attending and to welcome families in for new services such as Muddy Church and Lego Church.

Our work with children and families included a Good Friday workshop and the “Free Family Fun” events which were a great success.

It has been good to enjoy events such as the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee which was celebrated with a Civic Service followed by the planting of a commemorative tree and refreshments. The Remembrance Day service also helped to bring the community together.

In 2022, we celebrated 33 baptisms, one thanksgiving for the birth of a child, 15 weddings, 3 wedding blessings and 19 funerals and 9 burials of ashes. My heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped to provide a warm welcome to those services. It really does mean so much to be there for people in their times of greatest joy and also at times of deep grief.

For me personally, Covid meant that I missed most of Holy Week and Christmas Eve and Christmas Day 2022. This was a source of great sadness. I am grateful to Revv Laura and Lisa and to Janet Hinton for picking up the services which I was no longer able to lead.

Teamwork is important in any parish and the wider variety of people who contribute in so many important ways is a part of what makes St Mary’s such a special place.

As we look to 2023, we do face challenges, particularly in the area of lay leadership. We also need to continue to look at how we can not only serve the community but invite people to join with us in exploring the Christian faith and finding their own place in God’s great story.

With my thanks to you all for everything that you do to support the life of the church in Nunthorpe.

Revd Tessa Stephens, Vicar



Thanks to PremiumP UAV for this image of St. Mary's from the air.

Churchwarden's Report

Activities

The Churchwarden is responsible for reporting to the APCM on the fabric, ornaments and goods of the church and we are again very pleased to report that all items (listed in the Terrier and Inventory) are present and in good order. Some minor changes have been made to the inventory since the last year. The latest marked up inventories for church and hall are included with this report dated February 2023 for examination as required.

I have also made **major enhancements and updates** to the Mandatory Terrier and Property Register. The Documents which have been in use for many years are now updated and available for inspection at the APCM and the Visitation and Inspection in June by the Archdeacon.

Our Curate Rev'd Laura has played a very active part in parish affairs and has recently commenced temporary incumbency at Brookfield/Stainton/Hilton Parish Churches for 3 days per week.

Rev'd Lisa continues to play a very active part in the parish, running a number of events for young families which were very well attended.

18 weddings/blessings were held in 2022 with 14 (as of the end of February 2023) already booked for 2023.

A number of our PCC members have joined the ecological group fronted by Geoff Jaques which is intended to improve our knowledge of green activities. We have 3 registered members from Nunthorpe on the group.

Preparations are proceeding for the Archdeacons Visitation to all the Parishes in the Deanery and she will be coming to St Mary's on 19th June 2023. Canon Law states that a visit should be made to all Parishes every 5 years.

Appreciation

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to our Clergy and Licensed Reader for their enthusiastic ministry as well as the ongoing support of all teams, groups and individuals who offer their time, expertise, and commitment to ensure the smooth running of our church.

We all look towards building on our excellent achievements during 2023.

David Young - Church Warden

Fabric Team Report

The Fabric Team continued to effectively maintain all parish assets including the Church and Churchyard, Millennium Garden, Parish House 15 Ripon Road, and the Church Hall.

As a result of the pandemic, limited meetings were again held during the year but essential work was completed without formal meetings.

Activities were carried out to ensure compliance with Government and Diocesan Guidance.

Essential tasks undertaken included –

- Continuation of **all** Statutory and Mandatory maintenance procedures including fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, gas appliance maintenance and provision of GAS SAFE certificates (including Ripon Road Curates House). We currently have 5 central heating boilers under our control - two each in church and the hall and one at Ripon Road **All with Gas Safe Certificates**
- Weekly visual inspections of church and hall, particularly building fabric, roofs, plumbing and drainage.
- Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) of all church and hall equipment completed including equipment owned by third party hirers (at their cost.)
- A potential flood in the church from the small toilet cistern fill valve (due to a cracked plastic pipe (cold) was fortunately alleviated by the rapid action of the cleaner.
- Maintenance of graves and grass cutting in the churchyard and Millennium Garden with special attention to hedges as well as grass cutting at the hall.
- Very sadly, burglars entered the hall during November and December 2023, twice in quick succession. First entry was by extreme crowbar force applied to the kitchen emergency exit (aluminium skinned) door. Damage experienced included breaking door locks on many cupboards in kitchen with debris spread all over the floor, similar in the vestry and on the stage. Two laptops were stolen, one church the other Nunthorpe Players'. Attempts were also made to attack the safe in the vestry but they failed. The second burglary occurred approx. one month later, on this occasion via the aluminium door in the vestry. Damage was similar but not so severe. Discussion was held with Middlesbrough Crime Prevention and an action plan was devised, essentially with additional localised automatic lighting at vulnerable points of entry plus a number of decoy alarms. It was also agreed to to abandon use of the safe at the hall and transfer all silverware to the church safe. Arrangements were also made to transfer insurance responsibility for Nunthorpe Players equipment directly to the Players rather than this being church responsibility. We must state that Ecclesiastical Insurance were extremely helpful and cooperative in the handling of both claims.

David Young.

Mothers' Union

After a delayed start due to high Covid numbers in January, Reverend Lisa spoke to us in February about her role in the Chaplaincy Team at James Cook Hospital. We met for a further eight afternoons including the MU Wave of Prayer and services for Lent and Advent. Reverend Pat arranged a service to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee which was followed by Afternoon Tea. In September our branch member Denise spoke to us about her experiences in preparing for and hosting a lady and her son from Ukraine. Later in the year when the lady was given accommodation in Guisborough, as a branch we provided new bedding and members donated clothing, household goods and personal items. We also had three evening meetings in the summer months together with our summer evening outing at the Dudley Arms. We held a successful lunch in July for the MU Summer of Hope Appeal, two coffee mornings with MU cards available and ended our year with our Christmas Lunch at the Royal Oak. Members were invited to a commissioning service in York Minster in March and the Deanery Festival at Stokesley in August.

Members act as welcomers at Baptism services. Refreshments were provided at Summer and Christmas Fayres and members generously filled fifteen hampers with food and drink for the MU Christmas Hamper Raffle. The branch ended the year with 29 members. Sadly 3 members died. Thanks to the Clergy for their support and encouragement.

Edith Dobson

Pram Service

We met on 36 Thursday mornings during 2022. We had regular contact with 19 families with several more joining us occasionally.

We celebrated the major Church festivals and the weekly pattern remained as Songs, Story, Prayer and Play which was received with noisy enthusiasm.

The children were given flowers and cards for Mothering Sunday. Summer and Christmas terms ended with lunch and small gifts for the children. During the year our generous families donated £526 to Church funds and £125 to charitable causes. Thanks to the Clergy and all members for their support.

Edith Dobson

The Children's Society

In Nunthorpe parish we have 43 Children's Society boxholders who together have donated the amazing sum of £1,258 in 2022. A further £100 was collected during Christingle. The Society says "Your compassion makes it possible for our project workers to support young people as they overcome huge challenges and move forward to face their futures with hope. Your generosity makes it possible for young carers struggling with family expenses to get the right support and pursue their dreams, for children in crisis to enjoy the healthy, happy childhood they deserve and for young refugees and migrants to get essentials such as food, heating and clothes".

Edith Dobson

Youth Activities

2022 has been a year of endings and beginnings in Youthwork and Community Outreach. The core members of Element 4:12 Youth Group all took on new responsibilities in the Autumn so the youth group closed at the end of Summer, with a bowling party as a fun conclusion. Most of the young people are engaged in volunteering alongside their studies so it is good to know they continue to grow in independence.

In September 2022 both Lego Church (indoors) and Muddy Church (outdoors) launched once a month on different Sundays. Each of these ventures have a small core of regulars and draw in faithful attendees each month. There is an openness amongst children in particular to worship in different ways. From September 'Events for Families' fliers and posters have been produced to promote all the opportunities to worship at the Church Hall.

Thanks given to God for St. Mary's Church Hall and grounds, for the flexibility of a welcoming space to gather.

Prayers appreciated for the children and young people to continue to grow in faith!

Revd Laura Wild, Curate

A trilogy of outreach events:

A free afternoon with Lego - Monday 6th August. Over 100 children with parents attended this event and the children and families had a fantastic time together building and growing in friendship. It gave the leaders of the Church a platform to become known within the local community and wider afield. Following the success of the Lego, I would like to build outreach events that people will recognise and appreciate in the hope that they will begin to engage with ministers and their own faith and possibly attend Church events and support the church in new way.

The Stick Man Story, Monday 24th October. 160 people attended, including 6 members of the Outreach Team. Ordinand Elaine Curry helped and it was Elaine's idea to focus upon 'Autumn Crafts collected from nature' as a zero waste and ecological venture - stickman, fir cone owls, acorn people, autumn leaf wreath making and story time. Elaine drew upon her vast experience in leading and engaging in Children's Ministry with Starz Kids Club, and proposed a strategy based upon foundation outreach principles that make up effective family missional ministry.

'A Very Grinchy Christmas' Wednesday 21st December. Over 100 people booked for this event. Elaine Curry suggested the Grinch Theme and a film afternoon. The Grinch has 3 Christian principles that underpin the moral of the story. 1. Community is important. 2. Presents aren't the reason for the season. 3. Jesus is the Saviour of the world! This 3rd Mission Outreach had 'Nativity Focussed Crafts' We gave out a Bible Society 'Christmas Story' to each child to take home, engaged families in singing Christmas Carols, and provided an opportunity to share the Liturgical events at Church over the Christmas period. This event recognised some new upcoming leadership in the Parish, but we struggled to find people willing to volunteer to help.



Revd Lisa Opala, Curate

St. Mary's Ladies' Luncheon Club

A FINAL GATHERING ON 23rd February 2022.

The Chairman welcomed 36 members, 2 Past Chairmen, plus our two Curates Laura and Lisa. The Rev'd Tessa had given her apologies as on a family holiday. Joint Chairman Brenda had to give her apologies, as she discovered that morning, she was a close Covid contact. She was very sad not to be with us. We also received apologies from Elizabeth Howard who along with Olwyn Harrop had instigated the luncheons 40 years ago. This gathering was to formally close the Luncheon Club following the decision made early in March 2020 that it would close on the 40th Anniversary in February 2022. This event was a free coffee morning with free raffle and 'just for fun quiz' to say 'thank you' to the membership.

The Chairman thanked the ladies who had participated in the life of the club in any way, some from the very beginning, for their support over the 40 years. Treasurer Janet gave us some very interesting figures, 40 – the number of years, 340 - the number of meetings, 24,000 – the number of meals served. To date over £74,000 had been given to St. Mary's Church.

It was a very happy morning with lots of chat on a beautiful sunny February day. After the quiz answers were given and the raffle drawn a club member thanked the committee for all their hard work. The meeting closed at 12 noon.

Over the last 40 years we have certainly lived up to our aims to provide St. Mary's Church with a regular income and to enhance the social life of Nunthorpe.

Patricia Bingham and Brenda Thompson, joint Chairpersons.

Flowers at St. Mary's

During the year a few members of the congregation have been able to provide fresh flowers on the Altar and to decorate our lovely church at the Christmas and Easter festivals. Owing to the careful expenditure of these persons we were able to give the church £200.00 recently. Hopefully we will be able to continue this good work and new helpers are always welcome.

Donors for Altar flowers are also most welcome.

Betty Griffin



Nunthorpe Players

This has been one of our most successful years for awards and audiences alike.

Cinderella kicked off 2022 written by the church's very own Liz Taylorson with Cath Pigott, and directed by Cath and Julie Hobson. The ticket sales were the highest the players have ever achieved. This pantomime won best panto in our district which we are very proud of. We then had our spring play *3rd week in August* which was directed by Alex Duncan. The set was unbelievable with half of a real caravan used as the set which was very realistic.

Before our autumn play, the younger section of our group took a play to Sedgefield festival called *Can You Hear the Music*, this was directed by Kate Dawson and Pierre Brown. This won 6 awards and we were absolutely astounded with its success. The play was showcased in our sixty-year jubilee performance on November 12th. I'm sure you will agree this day was very special and it was lovely to see members of the church attending this day. We are delighted by the addition of a flower bed on the church grounds to commemorate this.

Our autumn production finished the year with a play called *House Guest* directed by Tracey Legg. This was a dark suspenseful thriller set in the 80's, which the audience loved.

Throughout this year we have been supported by the South Cleveland heart fund and continuing support from NODA.

I have been asked to include three things the players are grateful for this year.

The first is ongoing church support particularly in this difficult year with the 2-break ins. The second is we are grateful for continued audience support despite cost-of-living crisis. Thirdly thank you to our old and new members for keeping the society going entertaining the people of Nunthorpe and surrounding areas.



Julie Hobson (Chair)

Deanery Synod

St Mary's has two Deanery Synod Representatives, Linda Smith and Christine Young. We have met 4 times during the year.

Living Christ's Story discussions has been a large part of our meetings and the results of these have been presented to York. Laura presented Children of Light when she had a candle from the recent Children of Light Festival to be passed around the parishes in a worship setting. We have also had Carousel Conversations where there will be 4 tables each with a leader to discuss various topics which may be of use in Parishes throughout the Deanery. Some of the topics have been Cafe Church; How Village Churches Thrive; Lego Church; Open Air Services. All Parishes are encouraged to share skills and expertise they may have with each other. The Synod is an excellent way of meeting people from other Parishes and discussing ways we may be able to help one another. It's a privilege to be able to represent St Mary's.

Christine Young, Deanery Synod Representative

Safeguarding

It has been an active year, after the lull brought by Covid. Safeguarding Dashboards were developed for use within the Church of England. The Dashboard can be used on computer, tablet or phone and is simple to use, and is free. The dashboard uses a traffic light system, which allows the authorised user to see the current safeguarding status of St Mary's at a glance: green for good, amber for action, red for urgent. Working with the dashboard has reduced the amount of administration work, it has made follow up easier, and with regular checks, helps me to remain on top of my responsibilities as Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) As with everything with safeguarding, it is highly confidential and limited to who can use it. Currently, the Vicar and myself.

DBS Checks: applying for DBS checks have also been simplified, and are carried out online. PCC members have all made new DBS applications since November 2022, and it has gone very well. Applications are every 3 years.

Self Declaration Checks: PCC members have completed new Self Declaration Forms. Checks are required every 2 years.

Training: PCC members have completed 3 required Safeguarding Training Courses: Basic Awareness, Safeguarding Foundations, Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse. As PSO I have also completed the above 3 training courses, plus have 3 more in the pipeline, as well as attending Safeguarding Forum meetings with other diocese PSO's.

Janet Barker has been accepted by Diocese as 2nd Recruiter, myself being 1st Recruiter. Janet was a great help during PCC training, and I am very grateful to her. I am looking forward to working with her, and I know what an asset she will be.

We look forward to a new year, there is a Safeguarding audit taking place after Easter, and I am confident that St Mary's will do very well, with a solid support base of Rev Tessa and the PCC.

Linda Smith, Safeguarding Officer

Social and Events Team

Social events are happily returning to pre-covid times, and the total raised for 2022 was £5820. This was achieved with a Summer Fayre on 11th June, Quiz on 21st October, Christmas Fayre on 19th November, cake sales in the Church Hall after service and Christmas cakes. I would like to thank everyone who made the sum raised achievable.



There is a huge army of people that make these events enjoyable and successful. People continually give of their time, donate items to sell, and then buy the items for sale, the generosity is astounding. All those who staff the stalls, so many to name, with such good humour, those who help set up the hall for the events, and tidy up after. Edith Dobson and Mothers Union, who work with SET, providing refreshments. Dave Wherrit and Gary Cox who give so much of their time arranging quiz questions, and provide so much fun on the evenings.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to the SET team Margaret and John Cundall, Christine Young, Sandra O'Shea, and Julie Williams for another year of hard work and continuous generosity. It is an onerous task fundraising, its tiring and stressful, but the work is always carried out with good humour. We look forward to the year ahead.

Linda Smith - SET Team Chair

The Website.

The St Marys Website – www.stmarys-nunthorpe.org continues to be maintained as up-to-date as I can keep it. The weekly bulletin is posted there on the front page every Thursday, so if you can't make it to church that week to pick up a paper copy, you can still keep up with what is going on in the Parish by downloading it from the site. The preceding week's bulletin is also available to download. The website contains a wealth of information about the Parish – everything from its history to forthcoming events, as well as a rolling calendar of events and services. When appropriate it has special pages, such as those for the APCM, Lent & Easter, and Advent & Christmas. Any suggestions for improvement are welcome. But please remember, the site can only stay relevant if I am given up-to-date information to post on it in a timely manner. Happy browsing!

Bill Colombi

Church Hall

In 2022 bookings continued to pick up at the Church Hall. We're thankful for a whirl of parties and other events including coffee mornings, social evenings and concerts. Many of these bookers commented on how much they liked the hall, and how clean it was (thank you to Liz Campbell our cleaner).

We were also thankful to welcome some new regular bookings – Alli's Fitness Classes started a new 'Bootcamp' session, very (very!) early in the morning on a Friday. This took place outside in the hottest part of the summer and moved indoors in the autumn. The autumn also saw the start of a children's choir and guitar classes which meet regularly on a Tuesday, and the return of the knitting group on a Monday evening in the Supper Room. However, we were sad to say goodbye to Nicola and her 'Little Movers' on a Wednesday morning when she went back to full-time teaching.

The Nunthorpe Players planted a beautiful 'Jubilee Garden' outside the main entrance, celebrating their own Diamond Jubilee, and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We then had a very hot spell, and noted the dedication of those who came up to water the garden – we're thankful for all the gardeners, mowers and maintainers who tend to the grounds and buildings.

Redcar and Cleveland Council asked us to be a regular polling station, which means that the hall will be in use for voting every election day from now on. We weren't called on in 2022, but expect our first local election in 2023.

Sadly, the hall was broken into in November, and then again in December. This resulted in the theft of items belong to us and the Nunthorpe Players' and damage to the property. We had a visit from a police Crime Prevention Officer who gave us advice to better protect the building in the future.

Liz Taylorson, Administrator.



Churches Together in Marton and Nunthorpe

Our first activities together in 2022 were a joint soup lunch at St. Cuthbert's church hall and a service held at St. Bernadette's, both held during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January. The theme of the service was 'A Star from the East'.

A very enjoyable pancake tea was hosted by St. Andrew's (URC) in late February at which we had an interesting talk from a volunteer with MAP (Methodist Asylum Project). Following the tea, we agreed to make a donation of £100 to the project.

Just before the start of Christian Aid week, we held a fundraising breakfast at St. Mary's church hall on Saturday 14th May. This event replaced the house-to-house collections made by the local churches in previous years. The breakfast was well attended and raised £275.

On the 2nd July, we held a second Churches Together Prayer Walk starting at St. Cuthbert's in Marton and ending at St. Mary's church hall in Nunthorpe, where refreshments were served. A good number of people from the churches joined us for the whole or part of the walk during which we stopped at all the churches and held a mix of prayers and/or hymns.

During the school holidays, on Wednesday 28th July and Wednesday 18th August, a family picnic, running from 11am to 12 noon, was organised at Nunthorpe Methodist church and St. Mary's Church Hall respectively. Activities were provided and a fun time was had by all who attended.

We invited BigKids to our AGM meeting in October where we heard that, despite COVID, mission work to children in Middlesbrough had continued by the provision of live videos, weekly episodes of relevant stories and other resources. Some of these were accessed worldwide via the BigKids website.

Graham Hassall



Scouting

All sections have had many varied and exciting opportunities in 2022.



Visit by Jean and Brodie

The Beavers (6 -8 years old) have had visits within the community, to Nunthorpe Squash Club, Morton Carr Woods and St. Mary's Church, alongside guests at regular meetings. Brodie, a Guide Dog puppy-in-training was a star guest and taught Beavers about Disability Awareness. The Beavers have developed in skills, in personal challenges, in outdoor activities and in confidence. We're particularly thankful that 1st Nunthorpe Beavers had their first residential experience- one night camping at St.



Fire lighting at camp

Mary's Church Hall in April 2022, where experienced leaders taught camp crafts in the courtyard!

The cubs (8 – 10 ½ years old) have had a busy year, many of them building and extending skills gained in Beavers, personally developing with both indoor and outdoor activities: Including pioneering, lots of creativity, writing and directing short plays, cooking, healthy eating, map and compass work, and evening walks from the hall, they took an active part in the Christmas Carol service along with the beavers and scouts. A lot of fun was had, and friends made throughout the year.

The Scouts are now our senior section (10 ½ - 14 years old) We've had Scouts joining from both the cub section and the local area creating a great mix. The programme is varied, building on skills and knowledge already gained without being prohibitive to the new starters. We have invited guest speakers to talk about model aircraft and first aid. The indoor and outdoor activities have included creativity, teambuilding, scavengerhunts, cooking, pioneering, hikes, bivvying, camping, cycling, climbing on both a local Crag and an indoor wall and Kayaking on the River Tees.

Ray Puryer, Scout Leader.



Remembrance Sunday Parade



Scout Camp hike



Kayaking on the Tees

St. Mary's Church Choir



Join the Choir of St Mary's Nunthorpe

We're looking for new members!

- Friendly amateur choir of all abilities
- No auditions
- Beautiful stone built Church with large car park
- Sing at Festival Services throughout the year
- Monthly Choral Evensong

Please email stmarysparish@hotmail.co.uk to find out more or to arrange to attend a rehearsal.

Knitting Group

Following a long absence due to Covid, we finally started to meet again in September 2022.

We are a small friendly group of knitters who meet in the church hall on a Monday evening (term time only) from 7.30pm - 9pm. We are part of the wider Nunthorpe and Marton Knitters Group.

We have various projects and charities we knit for throughout the year. At the present time we are knitting red, white and blue flowers for the displays in Nunthorpe for the coronation of HM King Charles in May.

We are thankful that we are able to meet again to provide fellowship to one another, help support charities and brighten our local communities. If you would like to join us for a knit, natter and a cuppa, please come along or contact Sue Cox on 07568 382087.

Sue Cox