

2025 Yearbook

St. Mary the Virgin, Nunthorpe

Foreword

As I look back on 2025, I am thankful for the many blessings of the year and for the ways in which we have been able to continue to worship God and seek to make him known in Nunthorpe. Our regular services continued to be well supported, and it was lovely to be able to welcome some new people at both morning and evening services. The Oasis study group continued to meet, and it was good to have a time to share, learn and pray together.

Our Easter services were very well attended this year with a mixture of regulars and newcomers and a wide range of services offered. 116 people attended in total across the Dawn Service, Festival Eucharist and the quieter Evening Service. An even larger number attended at Christmas – there were 214 people across the Christmas Eve and Christmas day services. This is a great example of the way in which many people work together to offer different forms of worship, so to Janet Hinton, Fr John Blakesley and Revd Lisa Opala my heartfelt thanks. It's only thanks to you all that we are able to offer such a wide variety of worship in our community.

I am also very thankful to the ministry team and to Revd Paul Peverell who held the fort so ably during my sabbatical. This was a great time of rest and refreshment for me, although I did miss St Mary's!

In 2025, we celebrated 28 baptisms, 8 weddings, 16 funerals and 9 burials of ashes. We continue to keep the bereaved families in our prayers and met many of them again at the November "Remembering Together" service. I am thankful for everyone who helps to make these services places of warmth and welcome. St Mary's is a place that offers both space for celebration and sanctuary at times of grief. During 2025 we also experienced loss as various longstanding members of the church died. We remember Jean Aldren, Janet Jameson, Brian Dinsdale, Merrik Brown, Beryl Levie and Vera Charlton with thanksgiving and continue to pray for all those who mourn.

On a lighter note, we also enjoyed some wonderful social events during the year which help to support the work of the church and helped to build our links with the local community.

Working together as a team and valuing one another is an important part of parish life. Playing an active part in the life of St Mary's helps to build friendships and brings great satisfaction and it would be good to see a greater number of church members involved in this way.

To all of you who are part of the life of St Mary's, thank you for all that you bring to our life together.

Revd Tessa Stephens, Vicar

Churchwardens' Report

Prepared In accordance with section 50 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018 and 1991.

Activities

The churchwardens are 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 mandatory log book was also verified as up to date. The latest marked up inventories for church and hall are included with this report dated February 2026 for examination at the APCM.

The required Quinquennial Inspection was carried out during the year and is reported in the Fabric Team report.

Sadly, the number of volunteers participating in Service Rota activities has reduced during the year and although some new members of our congregation have been recruited more volunteers will be very welcome.



Appreciation

We would like to express our 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 other volunteers who offer their time, expertise and commitment to ensure the smooth running of our church.

We all look towards building on our excellent cooperation and achievements during 2025.

*David Young and Janet Barker -
Churchwardens*

Fabric Team Report

The Fabric Team continued to maintain all parish assets, including the Church and Churchyard, Millennium Garden, Parish House (15 Ripon Road), and the Church Hall, ensuring full compliance with statutory and health and safety requirements.

Essential work was delivered by a small core of Fabric Team volunteers, supported as necessary by specialist contractors, despite limited formal meetings.

All statutory maintenance was completed, including servicing of fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, and gas appliances. **Gas Safe certificates** were issued for all five central heating boilers.

The **five-yearly Electrical Installation Condition Inspection (EICR)** of the Church was completed with a clean result and no remedial actions required.

The mandatory **Quinquennial Inspection** of the Church fabric and grounds identified no remedial works required within the next 12 months. Some roof repairs were noted for future planning. The PCC was commended for the standard of its records.

The Church sound system was upgraded with **Bluetooth capability**, improving ease of use with computers and mobile devices.

A **temporary storage facility for the Scouts** was installed near the Church Hall car park following R and C BC planning approval and local resident consultation. All works were funded and completed by the Scouts.

A replacement **condensate pump** was installed for the Church Hall boiler with no disruption to heating.

The Parish House at **15 Ripon Road** was re-let after one week's vacancy. Gas safety obligations were met and minor shower repairs completed.

Major tree maintenance was carried out on Church and car park boundaries, including crown lifting of 22 protected trees by an approved arborist, supported by the parish gardening team.

Measures to deter pigeons roosting in the Lych-gate were trialled, with an improved solution now in place and showing encouraging results.

David Young

Mothers' Union

Our branch of 28 members is part of a worldwide Christian organisation, which began with the work of Mary Sumner, advocating the value of family life and working on initiatives globally on critical issues such as gender-based violence, literacy improvement and empowerment of women. In our parish, MU members play an important role welcoming families to Baptism services in Church. Indeed, MU members are intrinsic to many aspects of parish life.

In January, Edith formally stepped down as Branch leader at the ACPM and the branch began to be led by the committee: Christine Young (Treasurer), Julie Williams (Secretary), Edith Dobson, Dorothy Buckle, Alma Nicholson, Denise Rabbetts, Linda Smith (Church Safeguarding Officer) and Gill Hughes.

In January a Christmas Tea was held in the hall, then in February Archdeaconry Vice President Anne Dewing made a visit to the meeting with members. In March the last meeting in the hall was held and a consensus was made about moving to the Narthex, whilst changing the day to a Wednesday. Highlights of the spring included the World Day of Prayer on March 7th at St Andrew's URC, and a Lenten service led by Janet Hinton. Easter was a special time this year, as Vera Charlton was a recipient of the Royal Maundy money at a service in Durham and Revd. Pat Harrison reached the grand age of 90 and we celebrated with cake! In May the topic of the meeting was the York Wave of Prayer. Nunthorpe Branch also hosted a Deanery committee meeting on 11th June, and thirteen members enjoyed the Summer Tea at the Dudley Arms in July.

After a summer break in August, in September Denise talked about her work with Care Standards Tribunals, which was a very interesting insight into her work on the appeal process, following a complaint, for childminders, care homes and boarding schools. In October there was a presentation on fraud awareness



from John Kingsbury of Home Instead. November saw a Christmas Craft bottles workshop, led by Denise, and the year was rounded off in December with an Advent Service led by Revd Paul Peverell and a Christmas Lunch at the Royal Oak.

Fundraising for the MU Summer of Hope Appeal raised £425 from a coffee morning and a summer tea, and a Ukrainian family enjoyed a special break at the MU AFIA (Away From It All) caravan.

Julie Williams

The Website.



The St Mary's website (stmarys-nunthorpe.org), powered by Church Edit, continues to be maintained as up-to-date as possible. To help keep it this way, please supply me, in a timely manner, any information which helps to promote activities in the life of the church which is suitable for publication on the website. Relevant graphics, pictures or posters for events are always welcome. Also, please report any missing or out of date information

(or any broken links) to me so that I can correct them.

As I noted last year, I have been doing the website *almost* continuously since 2004 – at the start of Gill Henwood's ministry here – so if anyone feels like saying to me: "Bill, you've done a ____ (fill in your own adjective!) job over the last 22 years, time I gave you a rest and took up the reins," please feel free to do so. The software provided by Church Edit is reasonable easy to use – and help, if required, will be freely given.

This being our Centenary Year, you will find a section of the website dedicated to how we are celebrating this great year – and how you can take part, making it a year to remember.

Bill Colombi

Deanery Synod

There are two representatives from Nunthorpe on the Deanery Synod, Linda Smith and Christine Young. We had three meetings in 2025. March was at St Mary's Nunthorpe; June St Mary Magdalene Yarm and October St Augustine's Church Hall Kirby.

In March it was announced that Revd Darren Moore had been appointed as Assistant Area Dean and he would take over whilst Revd Tessa was away on her Sabbatical. There was a presentation by the Generous Giving Team. Representatives from Bilsdale and Kirby gave a report on Safeguarding issues.

In June at Yarm it was announced that a new Minister had been appointed at Great Ayton; Sarah Cliff formerly Curate at Barnard Castle and currently serving in Blackburn. Carousel conversations took place: 1. Creative Prayer, 2. Spirit Awake Leadership Team SALT, 3. St Ambrose (patron Saint of beekeepers). Financial update.



October at Kirby saw Revd Tessa return from her sabbatical. There was a Deanery Financial Update and a presentation on safeguarding issues. A new member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team is to be recruited to provide better responses to any safeguarding concerns. There was also a BiGKIDS presentation.

It is always interesting to hear what is going on in all the parishes around the Deanery and helping one another if we can.

*Christine Young,
Deanery Synod Rep.*

Safeguarding

In a year where safeguarding was a topic of concern for the wider church, we have endeavoured to do our own part to ensure that St. Mary's takes our safeguarding responsibilities seriously.

The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard records our compliance with a red, yellow and green traffic light checklist of mandatory requirements for Parish Safeguarding Officers. Ours is currently at 90%. PCC members are due DBS checks, and we are in the process of completing them for 2026. Once they are in place we will return to 100% on the dashboard This year has seen changes to DBS applications and most are now able to be completed online, making the task much simpler.

In 2026 I will be delighted to welcome Sue Cox as a safeguarding Lead Recruiter (an administrative role focused on ensuring that safe recruitment practices are followed, particularly criminal record checks for St Mary's.) I will remain as Parish Safeguarding Officer (a layperson appointed by the PCC to lead on safeguarding within the Church/Parish and monitor compliance with policy and promoting a safe culture). Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lead Recruiter are two separate roles, so to be able to split this responsibility with Sue in future will be a great relief, and I am grateful to have her on board.

I have continued to attend both Diocese and local Parish Safeguarding forums, finding them informative and interesting.

Linda Smith, Safeguarding Officer

The Children's Society

In Nunthorpe Parish we now have 28 Children's Society boxholders who together have donated the amazing sum of £1,106.50 in 2025. A further £130 was collected during Christingle. The Society says "Thanks to your Boxholders, children who feel isolated, neglected or without hope are now receiving the support and care they desperately need. You're providing them with a brighter future, helping them feel seen, valued and empowered to overcome the challenges they face."



Edith Dobson

Social and Events Team

2025 was another good year for social events! The Valentine's Quiz on 14th February was well attended and great fun. For the first time we brought in outside caterers for pie and peas. It was very popular and, of course, we still had pudding. There was a raffle and £900 was raised. We dabbled with a Fashion Show on 11th April with a good attendance from Church and the community. We provided tea and biscuits, and an excellent raffle. It was a couple of hours of fun, a minimum of work, and £570 was raised. The Summer Fayre on 7th June was popular with a good community spirit, well stocked stalls, and fun and games outside. £1474 was raised.



We had a wonderful celebration of Harvest with a quiz on 17th October. We served home cooked food, which was much enjoyed, along with a raffle and £800 was raised. Our Christmas Fayre on 15th November was a huge success that surprised us all - from opening to closing the hall was buzzing with members of the local community, making an amazing atmosphere. We raised £2255.

The cake sales in the hall each month were hugely popular and raised £590 over the year. Thank you to Margaret and John Cundall for organising the 100 Club for the past few years, raising £600 per year. We have made a decision not to continue with 100 Club in 2026.

There are so many people to thank for making these events so successful. The SET team are only 6 people, and we could not achieve what we do without the army of helpers from the congregation. So much time and work goes into these events and how they seamlessly come together, especially the fayres. We are grateful to everyone who donates time, goods and money, and thank you to Dave Wherit and Gary Cox for the quizzes.

So here we are in our Centenary Year. SET will provide refreshments at celebration events, where required, and continue to raise funds for Church to the best of our ability. Thank you to the SET team for your continued hard work and generosity.



Linda Smith - SET Team Chair on behalf of the team Julie Williams Sandra O'Shea, Carol Keen and Margaret and John Cundall

Church Hall



There have been several changes at the hall in 2025. The first, which I am very pleased to report, is that the toilets at the church hall were only blocked once this year, which is a big improvement on 2024. We have removed all paper towels from the toilets, prohibited the flushing of wipes in the Conditions of Hire and put up *even more* notices.

We had a huge increase in the number of private parties booking the hall in 2025 – up 12 from 2024 at 48 bookings. A new trend is bookings for family get-togethers which are too big to hold in someone’s home. We have also had an increase in enquiries from other religious groups wishing to book the hall to hold services. As the hall is a registered place of worship we have to say ‘no’ to these bookings (without the Bishop’s permission) though requests for other churches to use the building for social events have been accepted.

We sadly lost the Ceroc dance group (our regular Thursday evening group) early in the year which was a large loss of income, as well as a popular and well attended event. However, this loss has been at least partially offset by new bookings from Tammy’s fitness, A class Community Learning Pilates classes, Amputation Foundation monthly meetings, and Say Something Improvisation workshops. The Nunthorpe Players have formed a Youth Theatre group, and they have booked (and paid for) the hall on several Sunday afternoons.

As always, there are a number of people to thank who keep things ticking over at the hall. David Young is always the first person on hand in an emergency. Naomi, our cleaner, keeps the building fresh and clean and nobly fights the rising tide of glitter after parties and pantos! I would also like to thank two of our user groups. Ray Puryer and the Scouts help out with maintenance whenever we need help (sometimes before we have even noticed there is a problem!) and the Players have also gone above and beyond this year, helping with technical issues, heavy lifting and odd jobs. It’s a real team effort to keep the hall running smoothly.

Liz Taylorson

Flowers at St. Mary's

2025 has been a busy year for flowers in the church. Betty Griffin has managed the flower finances and arrangements for a number of years and has now decided to hand over the baton to Sylvia King. The church has acknowledged all the work and time lovingly given by Betty presenting her with a bouquet of flowers with thanks.

The flower ladies now consist of 8 members currently providing fresh flowers for members of the congregation or other members of the community in memory of their loved ones and special events that they want to mark in the church. Donations are received and the ladies ensure the flowers requested by the families are arranged behind the altar.



The flower ladies and other volunteers also arrange flowers in the church to mark events such as Mothering Sunday, Easter, Whitsuntide, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas. We would like to thank the ladies who give their time, effort and commitment so willingly to ensure our church looks even more beautiful during those occasions.

2026 will be the centenary celebrations for the church and the flower ladies and other volunteers are currently planning to provide a flower tribute in our beautiful church. Our current budget is insufficient therefore we are requesting additional donations from church members to support this event.

We are also seeking new members to join the flower team!

Sylvia King

Pram Service

We met on 35 Thursday mornings during 2025. We had regular contact with 30 children who came with parents, carers, and childminders, 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 £615 to church funds and £61 to charitable causes, £40 to Comic Relief and £21 to Children in Need. Thanks to the Clergy, Alma, Denise, Ian and Liz for their help and support.

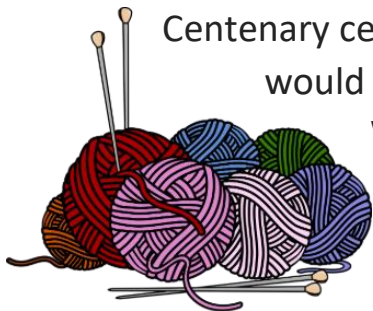
Edith Dobson



Knitting Group

We are a small and 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 knitting group. We enjoy knitting for local projects and charities throughout the year. In 2025 we knitted poppies for the Remembrance Sunday displays in Nunthorpe and Marton, hats for the Mission to Seafarers and hearts and teddies for the patients and their families at James Cook University Hospital.

This year our focus is on knitting flowers to decorate Church Lane for St Mary's Centenary celebrations. We are aiming to knit at least 4,000 so if anyone would like to help, we would very much very much appreciate this.



We are grateful that we can continue to meet regularly to knit and natter and enjoy time together. If you would like to support us or come along and join us, please contact Sue Cox 07568 382087.

Sue Cox

Fundraising

We raise a lot of money for St. Mary's during the year, but we also raise funds and give practical support to other charities. In 2025 we hosted successful coffee mornings at the Church Hall for BiGKIDS (who raised £480 in May) and Macmillan (Sue Cox raised £1900 in September). Two other similar charity events, for Chernobyl Children's Lifeline and JCUH Our Hospitals Charity, were initially booked but unable to go ahead this year. We also host the Scout's annual jumble sale at the hall. We hope to raise money for other good causes in this way in 2026.



Collections during services or for coffee afterwards provided funds for the Royal British Legion (£250) Children in Need (£130) and Teesside Hospice (Share a Card). Our collections for the Children's Society are listed elsewhere in the report.

Donations of food (at our Harvest Festival) and toys (at the Toy Service) were distributed to families in need in Middlesbrough, through the work of the Salvation Army.

Liz Taylorson

Churches Together in Marton and Nunthorpe

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, a joint soup lunch was held at Marton Methodist Church on Saturday 18th January and a combined service at Nunthorpe Methodist Church on 19th January 2025. The theme of the service was 'Do you believe this?'. Both events were well attended with proceeds being shared between Christian Aid and CAFOD. Discussions at our February meeting regarding Lent (commencing 5th March) led to pulpit exchanges taking place involving the two Church of England ministers visiting the United Reformed and Catholic churches. Attendance at both venues was good and everyone enjoyed the experiences of worshipping together. During Lent, various courses were also run by the individual churches, to which all were invited.



It was very soon after our February meeting that we sadly lost our Treasurer, Margaret Gibson, a long and valued member of Marton Methodist church. She was a

staunch supporter of Churches Together and we remember with thanks her loyal service over many years.

At our April meeting, we made plans to join the Methodist church at Nunthorpe in a Christian Aid breakfast which took place on Saturday 10th May. The event was well supported. Before the summer break we held a Community Prayer walk (at the end of June) making our way from St.Mary's and calling at each of the churches for prayers and/or hymns on route to Marton Methodist church where we enjoyed refreshments.

Graham Hassall

St. Mary's Church Choir

The church choir currently consists of 10 singers - 5 men and 5 women - and are very ably accompanied by Andy Devine, our organist. Christmas 2025 marked the last time that Sandra O'Shea sang regularly with the choir, as her condition has meant that she can no longer sing to the standard that she would want. Sandra has sung in the choir for many years, and we are so grateful for all that she has given to the choir and wish her well for the future.

We have continued to sing at the fourth Sunday Choral Evensongs, as well as the festival services. I would like to express my deep thanks to all choir members who turn up each week for our rehearsals (depending upon Andy and my availabilities) and add their voices to the worship throughout the year and also have to contend with my conducting! Naturally, I also need to thank Andy for taking rehearsals when I have been away either on holiday or globe-trotting with work.

Graham Hinton



1st Nunthorpe Scout Group

It's been a busy year for all the sections. At a time when there has been a great deal of change within Scouting, with a refocusing on safety in general and running safe activities, and a drive to increase numbers within sections also a renaming from leader to section volunteer.

The section volunteers' numbers have remained stable throughout this time and a great deal of thanks needs to go to those volunteers that give up their precious time to plan and execute the programmes we've delivered over the last year

As a group we ran a fund-raising jumble sale in May, with the support from the local and wider community, it was a great success.

All sections came together and enjoyed a great family camp at Comondale, with a Pirate theme. We took an active part in the Remembrance Sunday Service at St Mary's Church and enjoyed our Carol service in December.



Beavers (6–8 years old)
Wed 6pm –7pm

Weekly Sessions ran by
Helen , Gill. And Alexa



Cubs (8-10½ years old)

Wed 6pm –7:15pm

Weekly Sessions ran by Heather,
Bernadette and Joel



Scouts (10½ - 14 years old) Wed 7:30pm – 9:15pm
Weekly Sessions ran by Karen, John, Henry , Adam
and Pete



Email: nunthorpescouts@gmail.com

Nunthorpe Players



2025 has been another incredibly successful and rewarding year for Nunthorpe Players. It began with a Noda award nomination for Daisy Wall for the Gordon Richardson award, which she won in September 2025. Our treasurer for many years, Gordon Pargeter, retired and was replaced by Tracy Legg. We wish Gordon and his wife Diane a very happy retirement and thank him for all his hard work. Our spring production this year was a play by Willy Russell, set in Liverpool, which was directed by Sara Ramrekha. The play was titled *Our Day Out* and followed teachers and school children on a bus trip. This showcased the depth of talent within the group, including Chloe Hammil who was nominated by Noda for an individual performance award. The play was also nominated. The production was warmly received and demonstrated our continued commitment to delivering high quality theatre to our local community.

For our autumn production we presented *Curtain Up*, a vibrant showcase celebrating musical theatre and a variety of sketches. Once again audience numbers were strong. This was a team effort for direction and choreography including Julie Hobson, Tracy Legg, Nicola Fox and Katie Legg, with input from Grace Spence. We concluded the year in rehearsal for our yearly pantomime *Charlie and the Chocca Lotta Factory*, directed and written by Julie Hobson and co-directed by Nicola Fox. Choreography was again by Nicola Fox and Katie Legg. This is an ambitious show with a large chorus, full of colour, energy and imagination. This was a fitting end to a productive year.

In addition to our main productions, we are especially proud to have launched our youth theatre in 2025. This new initiative is proving popular and is helping to nurture the next generation of performers and ensure a bright future for our group. Many thanks to Tracy Legg, Katie Legg and Nicola Fox for this. Overall, this has been a year of growth, creativity and continued community support and support from the church, in particular thanks to Tessa, Liz and Gary. Thank you from all at Nunthorpe Players.

Julie Hobson (Chair)