

DECEMBER'S NEWS FROM ST MARY'S PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)

We currently have 124 members on the Electoral Roll.

Safeguarding: St. Mary's Safeguarding Officer, Deirdre Booth, reported that there had been no incidents. Safeguarding Sunday on 17th November had been a timely event in the context of the Archbishop of Canterbury's resignation. The members of the PCC are keeping up-to-date with their Basic Awareness Training.

Finance: The position of treasurer is still vacant which is a major concern to the PCC. A candidate from the congregation would be ideal. If you are interested, please contact Revd. David or the PCC secretary Meriel Vincent for more information. In the absence of any appointment at present, Revd. David and the Churchwardens have taken on the day-to-day financial management of the church finances. They have compiled a draft budget for 2025 based on previous 2024 figures. This shows an income of £100,882 and expenditure of £138,362, a deficit of £37,480. This alarming situation means that we are running at **a loss of £100 a day!** St. Mary's receives **no income other than that raised by itself.** Therefore we all need to consider how we can help to boost our funds.

The Parish Giving Scheme is a simple way to give regularly, as is the yellow envelope scheme. The contactless giving screen at the back of church attracts Gift Aid for donations up to £30, as do any donations put into the wall safe by the main door. These will help improve our income.

Sadly, our financial situation also means that the **current heating in church is the best we can afford at present.** Future technology may well mean we can improve this situation. In the meantime, we are aware that many people suffer from the cold and would encourage us all to offer blankets and hot water bottles to those who might appreciate them.

Friends of St. Mary's: This fund-raising group for the church fabric has been revived and hopes to re-launch their village-wide activity with a gala concert on 15th March 2025.

Children, Families and Youth: Marisa and team have planned Christmas activities for all ages.

Pastoral Care: Sue Howes and team are enjoying providing monthly Winter Warmer soup lunches for those living on their own. They are continuing regularly to visit individuals and the Care Homes.

The Baptist Church has extended an invitation to those alone for Christmas to join them for their Christmas Day lunch.

Worship: The pre-Advent series of four Bible Studies was appreciated and will be followed in January by a series on the Lord's Prayer. The subsequent Lent course will be based on the Creed in line with this emphasis planned by the national Church for the coming year.

Welcome & Events: The Christmas Fair was well-attended and was an excellent opportunity for outreach into the local community, and raised the magnificent sum of £2639

Fabric & Facilities: The Organ is still malfunctioning due to low temperatures. Alternatives are being considered to resolve these concerns. The wifi system in the church has at last been re-installed, enabling the contactless giving system to function again. The crack in the wall of the Springett Chapel is more widespread than first thought and is currently being repaired. The clock should also soon be working again.

Eco Church: The costs of the three successful Eco talks held in the Village Hall had been covered, but in future, such events might be held in the Church Room to reduce this expense.

Parish Magazine: This is now breaking even since the price for inserting advertisements has been increased.

Website: The new website has been launched and is working well. Please note its new address: www.ringmerparishchurch.org.uk

The PCC will next meet on 13th January at 2pm in the Church Room.

Notes compiled by Kenneth Barber, December 2024