

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH OF ST MARY'S SHAW CUM DONNINGTON**

**CHARITY NUMBER 1172611**



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## **Annual Report for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

The members present their annual report together with the financial statements of the PCC of St Mary's Church for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024.

### **AIMS AND PURPOSES**

St Mary's Church is situated on the northern edge of Newbury and serves the areas of Shaw, Donnington and Clay Hill as well as the more rural areas to the north. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility to co-operate with the priest-in-charge, Revd. Raymond Obin, in ministering to the parish and achieving our aims as stated below. It also has the responsibility for the maintenance of the church building on Church Road, Shaw, including the adjoining Church Centre. The activities of the PCC are regulated by the Church of England, Diocese of Oxford.

### **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

St Mary's Church aims to respond to God's love in Knowing Jesus, Sharing God's Love and Caring for People. We are a welcoming community who aim to reach out to all the people in the Parish as we worship together, tell people about the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and care in spiritual and practical terms wherever we can in the community.

We strive to fulfil these objectives through:

- A secure and varied pattern of Worship, Prayer and Bible Study, in church, the church centre, care homes and schools.
- Provision of pastoral care through a committed pastoral team.
- A strong musical tradition and enjoyment of worshipping through music.
- Close working relationship with local schools, especially our church school (Shaw cum Donnington Primary School), the Parish Council, the Village Hall Committee and local organisations.
- A welcoming and interesting programme of social activities.
- Working co-operatively as members of Christians Together in the Newbury Area (CTNA) and the Newbury Deanery.
- To facilitate much of our work, we are committed to looking after the fabric of St Mary's Church, Shaw cum Donnington and its Church Centre, which provides a well-regarded space for many community activities.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Worship and Prayer**

The PCC strives to meet the spiritual, emotional and practical needs of our community by offering a varied pattern of worship, prayer and bible study throughout the week, using the church, the church centre, as well as in care homes and schools. In 2024 we had a service of Holy Communion or Morning Prayer every Sunday at 10am. Baptisms were held during the morning service or separately, depending on the circumstances. We held a weekly Meeting for Prayer in the Church using some of the liturgy from the Morning Prayer and a mid-week Communion service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month. We held a week-day afternoon service for our Home Members before Easter, Harvest and Christmas. Our services are easy to follow, using a projector and screen for liturgy and lyrics, and we make available a printed order of service in large print for those who need it. We have a monthly prayer breakfast on the first Saturday of the month. We held a Lent

course. We have an email 'Prayer Chain' and share requests for prayer with members of the congregation who have chosen to receive them.

Shaw cum Donnington Primary School come to the church four times a year for special services and Trinity School (secondary) use the church for their Christmas assemblies. COINS (Christian Opportunities in Newbury Schools) used the church for their Christmas and Easter events which are attended by other local schools.

We have a particular focus on making sure all are made welcome at our services, and we deliver a Christmas Card to everyone in the parish with details of our Christmas Worship.

There are currently 80 people on the electoral roll, 51 are residents and 29 non-residents.

Our Sunday attendance increased in 2024.

In 2024 we baptised 15 children. We conducted 3 weddings and the clergy conducted 18 funerals at St Mary's or the Crematorium and 3 internments of ashes. These services are essential to our commitment to spiritually support everyone in our parish as they enable our community to journey with God through life and to give thanks to Him at the milestones along their earthly pathway.

We have monthly Holy Communion services in the 5 care homes in the parish.

#### Deanery Synod

Two members of the PCC sit on the deanery synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

#### The Church and Church Centre

The church centre was maintained in order to make it a welcoming space for meetings. This includes the various church groups who meet in the church centre, a drama group and Bridge Church (a Newbury Free Church) who used our facilities to run a weekly parent and toddlers' group.

A quinquennial inspection in October 2023 highlighted a number of issues with the church and church centre. The issues were prioritised in order of urgency and repairs to the church roof were completed. The installation of a replacement CCTV system was completed. The lighting in the church centre was upgraded. 3 of the windows in the Church Centre were replaced.

The church office was decorated and reorganised in preparation for a new Church Administrator. The Youth Lounge was cleared and tidied and storage cupboards were reorganised.

A team of volunteers continued to work on the churchyard to tidy areas that had become overgrown and to plant bulbs. Overgrown trees were trimmed and the grass is now cut at regular intervals by the Council contractors.

#### Pastoral Care

The Barnabas Group, supporting those in the community who have been bereaved, continued to meet weekly in the church centre.

The Myrtle Café project continues to provide a Monday meeting point and support for those who are isolated and lonely in the community.

The monthly Lunch Club for older members of the community continued to be popular and minibus transport is provided as required.

Home Members (those older members of the community who can no longer attend Sunday worship) were invited to St Mary's for special events at Easter, Summer, Harvest and Christmas and joined together in a Communion Service followed by afternoon tea.

The 'Reminiscence' project continued in 2024 and the group meets in person to share memories on particular themes.

Members of the church keep in regular touch with older members of the community who are no longer able to attend services.

A church outing by coach to Waterperry Gardens was arranged.

### Mission and Evangelism

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith. At St Mary's we demonstrate this by our Pastoral Care activities and support for charities at home and abroad. We sell calendars at Christmas to raise funds for Newbury Cancer Care Trust and pack shoeboxes of gifts as part of the 'Link To Hope' scheme. We are a collection point for the West Berkshire Foodbank and support Action Through Enterprise in Ghana with fundraising. We organise special collections for appeals run by Christian Aid. We hope to restart our Youth Work in the future but, until this happens, we are pleased to support the Next Gen Youth Café who meet at a local community centre, as one of our Christmas charities. We organised an 'Easter Kids' event for local children. We support the Bible Society and Bible Sunday was marked on 27th October. The local Boys' Brigade group moved to St Mary's in 2024 and ran weekly activities in the church centre. The children and parents were welcomed at a special commissioning service in October followed by lunch. The group is supported by Revd. Ed Yates as Brigade Chaplain and by a team of volunteers. The group have struggled to recruit new members following the change of venue and meeting day but it is hoped that this will improve in 2025. The Boys' Brigade now has a Girls' Association and welcomes both boys and girls to join.

The Parish Council organised a community fete and St Mary's took part by providing craft activities for children.

Every home in the parish (now almost 7,000 approximately) received a Christmas Card with information about regular services and activities.

### Ecumenical Relationships

St Mary's is a member of Christians Together in Newbury (CTNA) and has a strong history of working together with Christians of all denominations.

### Other Activities

We would like to rebuild our work with families and children and look forward to seeing more children at our Sunday morning services in the future. Our weekly 'Meeting Point' group for parents and pre-school children has been running for many years with the support of dedicated volunteers and continued in 2024 with a small number of families attending.

Our fundraising activities included a concert by a professional string quartet, Tedesca, sponsored by a local resident. We held a Burns Night Supper, an organ recital and a slide show. Our 200 Club continued in 2024.

We organised a group meal at a local restaurant.

We held our APCM in March. In May we hosted a concert as part of the Newbury Spring Festival programme. In September we held our Harvest services, including Harvest Evensong followed by tea. In October we held our Annual Bereavement service and tea.

We take environmental issues very seriously and actively encourage and promote ways in which the congregation can get involved in protecting our environment at a local and national level. We include 'Green Tips' in our pew sheet and 'Remote Action' suggestions in our weekly email communications. We held an 'Environment' service and joined in the national Count on Nature. We are a Fairtrade Church and purchase fairtrade coffee and tea for use in our after-church café. We have achieved the Silver eco-Church award.

### Financial Review

*Add Treasurer's Report Here.....*

### Staff and Volunteers

We would like to thank the many volunteers who continuously work so hard to make our church a welcoming and lively community and further our mission and outreach work. A special 'Thank you!' must go to our Churchwarden, Mrs Ros Stuart, our Treasurer Mrs Rachel Haslam, our Assistant Treasurer Mr Tony Bradford, our Financial Team member Mr Steve Joplin, our Independent Examiner David Cobbett, our Verger Mr Derek Harwood, our Administrators Sally Breach and Maggie Wiseman, and our PCC and Committee members. We are also very grateful to Roger Snelling, Tony Dawkins, Nick Breach and to Councillor Paul Bryant for all the many jobs they do to maintain the church and the church yard. The volunteers have given hundreds of hours of their time to make St. Mary's Church a loving, attractive and welcoming church that actively serves its community. We said goodbye to Sally in 2024 who retired from her job as Church Administrator after over 30 years' service to St Mary's. Sally continued to support St Mary's as PCC Secretary for the rest of the year.

### Structure, Governance and Management

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St Mary's the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent, the curate, the churchwardens, the church's elected deanery synod representatives and those elected as members of the PCC at the APCM, and the Verger, who is co-opted to the PCC. All regular members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including decisions on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. Deanery Synod representatives and Churchwardens are ex-officio. Other PCC members are elected at the APCM, or in the case of the Verger, co-opted.

The full PCC met 5 times during the year.

Given its wide responsibilities, the PCC has a number of committees each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life.

These committees are Ministry, Finance and General Purposes, World Partners and Pastoral. Fundraising activities are led by individual members of the congregation. All committees report back to the PCC regularly with minutes of their decisions being received by the full PCC and discussed and voted as necessary.

#### Administrative Information

The ecclesiastical parish of St Mary's comprises the civic parish of Shaw-cum-Donnington as well as the Newbury Electoral Ward Clay Hill and other small areas of Newbury Town. It is part of the Newbury Deanery within the Diocese of Oxford of the Church of England. The correspondence address is: The Church Office, Church Road, Newbury, RG14 2DR. The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. Our Registered Charity Number is 1172611.

#### **PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2024 until 31 December 2024 are:**

- Priest in Charge: Revd. Raymond Obin
- Assistant Curate: Revd. Ed Yates

#### **Ex Officio members:**

- Warden: Mrs Ros Stuart
- Representatives to Deanery Synod: Mrs Libby Goldsack and Mr David Willetts

#### **Co-opted members:**

- Verger: Mr Derek Harwood

#### **Elected members:**

Mrs Mary Dawkins  
Mr Mark Hutson  
Mrs Rachel Haslam  
Mr Mike Stuart  
Mr Steve Joplin  
Mrs Gill Moore  
Mrs Barbara Bradford  
Mrs Sally Breach  
Mrs Lesley Almond

#### **Electoral Roll Officer**

Mr Derek Harwood

#### **Other Officers in addition to PCC Members**

##### **Gift Aid Secretary**

Mr Charles Garner

##### **Service Stewards:**

Rachel Haslam  
Mark Hutson  
Mary Hutson  
Sally Breach

Mary Dawkins  
Libby Goldsack  
Charles Garner  
Barbara Bradford  
Wendy Seamons  
Karen Fenwick  
Ros Stuart  
Mike Stuart  
Jane Yates

*Add Finance Spreadsheets here .....*