

# Yearbook 2024

Parish of St. Mary the  
Virgin, Nunthorpe



## Foreword

As I look back on 2024, 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 group has continued to meet, and it was good to have a time to share, learn and pray together. It was a particular joy to me to be able to host a confirmation course followed by a confirmation service with Bishop Paul in April 2024.

Our Advent and Christmas services were very well attended this year with a mixture of regulars and newcomers. On the first Sunday of Advent, we had no less than 6 services in one day from Café Church, the morning Eucharist and a baptism to BCP communion, a masonic carol service and a Baby Memorial service lead by Revd Lisa Opala at the hall. Although that one Sunday was exceptional, I think it is a great illustration of the wide reach of our church community and the way in which we are able to host services which touch many people who are not regular attenders. It's also an 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.

In 2024, we celebrated 28 baptisms, 5 weddings, 9 funerals and 12 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 space for joyful celebration and sanctuary at times of grief.

On a lighter note, we also enjoyed some wonderful social events during the year which help to support the work of the church and which also bring the congregations and local community closer together.

Working together as a team and valuing one another is an important part of parish life. The wide number of people who make valuable contributions to our life together helps to make St Mary's the special place that it is.

Since the end of 2024 we have lost two valued members of our congregation as well as one who had moved away to live with family. Jean Aldren, Janet Jameson and Brian Dinsdale will be much missed. It seems particularly important to remember Brian's tireless work as treasurer since his final set of accounts will be presented to this APCM.

To all of you who are part of the life of St Mary's, thank you for all that you do and all that you are.

*Revd Tessa Stephens, Vicar*



## Churchwardens' Report

### **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 latest marked up inventories for church and hall are included with this report dated February 2025 for examination at the APCM .

A number of “new” volunteers are participating in Service Rota activities which is very encouraging but 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 individuals 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 2024 .

*David Young and Janet Barker -  
Churchwardens*



## **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 and to ensure compliance with essential Health and Safety Legislation

Limited team meetings were held during the year but essential work was completed using a very small group of volunteers with additional Contractor support

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 for the 5 central heating boilers under our control.
- Weekly visual inspections of church and hall particularly building fabric, roofs, plumbing and drainage.
- Relining of church and hall car parks including prominent marking of disabled parking spaces.
- Additional external solar floodlighting of the church hall entrances following another break in.
- Major treatment and painting of the church hall external timber doors and the wooden store plus fitting of gutters/downcomer to the store.
- Several blockages of the hall foul drains occurred, caused by notorious wipes and paper towels as revealed by camera surveys. Additional waste bins with very prominent warning notices were installed hopefully to avoid reoccurrence.
- The external oak noticeboard at the hall was completely refurbished and treated.
- The sound system at the hall was enhanced by the addition of new loudspeakers and reconfiguration of the amplifiers. All work was carried out and funded by Nunthorpe Players.
- Maintenance of graves and grass cutting in the churchyard and Millennium Garden with special attention to hedges as well as grass cutting and car park hedge trimming at the hall was undertaken. All work carried out by volunteers, complemented by the Scouts.
- A new uPVC composite front door/window was installed at 15, Ripon Road and the property was relet for a further 12 months from February 2025.

*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.

We have continued to meet once a month in the afternoon, sharing fellowship and support for members, whilst continuing to assist in the life of this church and to fundraise. A service at St Cuthbert's Church, Marton was held in March for the World Day of Prayer, with material prepared by the Christian women of Palestine at a particularly poignant time in the conflict. July was particularly

joyful, as Linda Smith (St Mary's Safeguarding Officer), was admitted into MU, and members recognised the 60 Years MU membership of Dorothy Buckle and the 30 Years Ordination anniversary of Revd. Pat Harrison. Services in Lent and Advent were held, led by Revd. Tessa and in April we celebrated Lady Day, again led by Revd. Tessa. Members have contributed to MU charities through appeals in the summer and for Mother's Day, and raised £280 for the *Count your Blessings* fundraiser, which was sent to the MU Christmas Appeal for Burundi. A further £120 was donated to church funds after the Soup Lunch.

We provided welcomers at Baptisms and MU members support the church in all our Parish life. MU members are visible at fayres, in key roles, on the PCC, at weddings and at church services. Whilst there are changes ahead, and particularly Edith's announcement at the AGM in September of her intention to step down as a Branch Leader after a dedicated 18 years, the committee will continue to meet regularly to move us forward here at St Marys. New members for this valuable organisation are always welcome.

*Julie Williams*

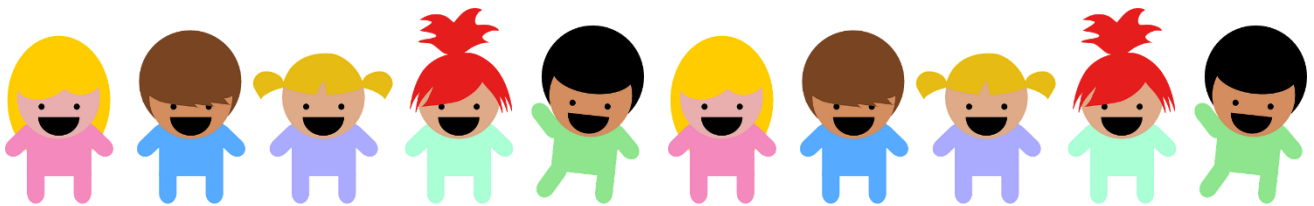
## **The Children's Society**

In Nunthorpe parish we now have 30 Children's Society boxholders who together have donated the amazing sum of £1,165 in 2024. A further £125 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*

## **Pram Service**

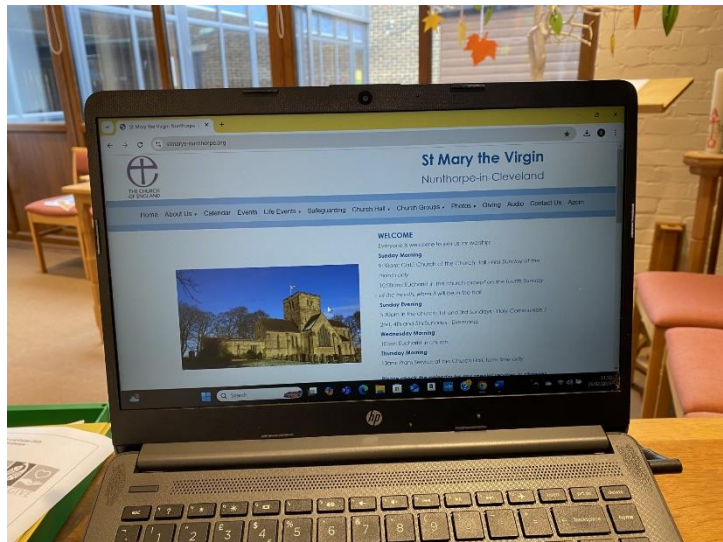
We met on 35 Thursday mornings during 2024. We had regular contact with 24 families with several more joining us occasionally. We celebrated the major Church festivals and the weekly pattern remained as Songs, Story, Prayer and Play which was received with noisy enthusiasm. The children were given flowers 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 £618.00 to Church funds and £45 to charitable causes, £20 to Comic Relief and £25 to Children-in- Need. Thanks to the Clergy, Alma, Denise and Ian for their support.



*Edith Dobson*

## The Website.

The St Mary's website (stmarys-nunthorpe.org), powered by Church Edit, continues to be maintained as up-to-date as possible. The site underwent something of a re-build two years ago due to changes in the software provided by Church Edit. As well as losing the **Facebook** widget on the front page, this 'upgrade' had generated a number of issues in presentation. This meant that the site might appear satisfactory on my personal computer when I've updated it, but when viewed on iPad or iPhone (and presumably other devices as well) it has not always appeared as it should do. These issues have been referred back to the supplier for rectification, but it has been a slow process, and still on-going during this last year. However, I'm glad to say, it is now more or less where it needs to be.



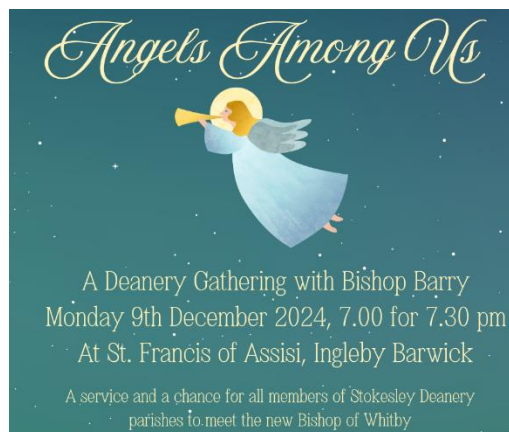
Please assist me to keep this site as a worthy representation of the life of Parish of St Mary's. This is done by supplying me, in a timely manner, with any information which helps to promote the life of the church and that is suitable for publication on the website. Relevant graphics, pictures or posters 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.

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 grand job over the last 21 years, time I gave you a rest and took up the reins" please feel free to do so, but remember, the last person who 'took-over' from me didn't last the course... Thank you.

*Bill Colombi*

## Deanery Synod

We have three members of PCC representing St Mary's at the Synod. Christine Young, Linda Smith and Richard Besford. There have been two Synod Meetings during 2024, and a gathering held in December which was attended by Bishop Barry. It was titled "Angels among us" and a number of speakers gave their thoughts on Angels within the scriptures and the Church of England. Bishop Barry gave some background on his journey to the priesthood and thoughts on Angels among us.



The next Synod meeting will be held on 11th March at St Mary's Church Nunthorpe.

*Christine Young, Deanery Synod Representative*

## Safeguarding

This has been a difficult year on a national level for the Church of England regarding Safeguarding. Within our Church, St Mary's, Safeguarding remains at the highest priority, for myself, as Parish Safeguarding Officer, Revd. Tessa and the PCC. With this in mind, I can confirm that all relevant requirements are being met. Our Dashboard, which is used to measure and report parish compliance, is currently green on all aspects of safeguarding, giving us a 100% result. All training and DBS applications are up to date. I attend safeguarding forums regularly, to maintain up-to-date information, and recently local PSO's have been meeting informally for a cuppa and chat. I would like to thank Tessa and the PCC members for their ongoing support in what has been a challenging year.

*Linda Smith, Safeguarding Officer*



## **St. Mary's Church Choir**

The church choir currently consists of 11 singers – 5 men and 6 women – and are very ably accompanied by Andy Devine, our organist. During 2024, sadly but understandably two of our number, David Wilde and Tom Thomas both stepped back from the choir due to their health challenges. Both David and Tom have sung in the choir for many years, and we are forever grateful for all of their contributions.

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 (whose time and day of the week do tend to vary from week to week!) and add their voices to the worship throughout the year, and also have to contend with my conducting and direction.



*Graham Hinton*

## Social and Events Team

Events continue to be well supported throughout the year and a total of £5698 was raised in 2024.

- We started the year on 10th February with a quiz, a good crowd consisting of Church congregation and community, which is always pleasing. £1050 was raised. Grateful thanks to Dave Wherritt and Gary Cox for their hard work producing the quiz, to all those who supported the evening and gave prizes for the raffle.
- The Summer Fayre on Saturday 8th June was a fun community morning. Various stalls, bursting with goodies, raised £1614.65.
- The Christmas Fayre was held on Saturday 16th November, and raised £1876.50 Again, this event was very well attended by the community, and great fun.
- The SET cake sales, held in the Hall at services, are extremely popular. We raised £1050 from these sales.
- John and Margaret Cundall continued to run the 100 club, raising £600 (not included in the above SET total.) Thank you to them.



There are many people to thank for the success of our Social Events - the team consisting of Linda Smith-Chair, Julie Williams-Secretary, Sandra O'Shea, Carol Keen, Margaret and John Cundall. Christine Young, a founding member of SET and ticket-seller extraordinaire, stepped down this year. We thank her for her dedication and hard work. We would like to thank everyone for the amount of support - time incredible generosity - people give every year. In particular,

- Edith and Mothers Union, for the refreshments at the fayres, and the amazing hamper raffle for the Christmas Fayre.
- All the stall holders, for their time, and donations and many friends who make items to sell and give time and money for our church.
- The SET team for their continued hard work, time and generosity.

It is with great sadness that we lost our friend Janet Jameson in early 2025. Janet has for many years, even before the social events team was set up, run the plant stalls at our fayres, spending many months buying, planting and potting plants. The stall was hugely popular and even in poor health she offered advice and encouragement. We will miss her and continue to honour her with the best plant stall possible.

*Linda Smith - SET Team Chair*

## Church Hall

2024 saw stability in terms of our regular bookings – no new groups, and no cancellations. We hired out the hall for 35 private parties/events which is an increase of 2 from last year. We've also supported several charities by providing a venue for Chernobyl Children's Lifeline, Macmillan and Zoe's Place fundraising events run by members and friends of our congregation. We now have in place an agreement to host a number of such events each year.

Bill Colombi has finished refurbishing all the red chairs and he and David Cook oversaw the restoration of the notice board (which had become leaky.) Thank you. We received a portrait of King Charles III to hang in the hall which the Scouts were kind enough to hang for us. This year, as always, Ray and the Scouts have quietly helped us with maintenance and repairs, and they also deserve our thanks. In the spring, our cleaner, Rachael, left us for the best of reasons – baby Elsie was born in the summer - congratulations! We now have a new cleaner, Naomi, who looks after both the hall and the church – thanks to both Rachael and Naomi for their hard work this year.

In less positive news the hall was once again broken into in September 2024. Nothing was taken (except a few biscuits) but there was inevitably mess, and the front doors were damaged. We have added extra security precautions as a result. It also seems to have been a year of increased damage and wear-and-tear at the hall, which you will



see detailed in the Fabric Team report. Huge thanks are due to David Young and helpers for dealing with all these problems. I think everyone would agree that it would be nice to get through 2025 without hearing the words 'blocked toilet at the Church Hall' again ...

*Liz Taylorson, Administrator.*



## Flowers at St. Mary's



The aim of the flower team is to provide fresh flowers on the Altar each week. There are 8 regular ladies and a couple of casual ones who contribute to providing fresh flowers weekly on the Altar. There were 7 regular members but last year the team was able to recruit an eighth member who is keen and able to help. The flowers are provided by donors and usually in memory of loved ones and special events in their lives.

The team also undertakes flower arrangements for the festivals of Christmas, Easter, Whitsuntide, Harvest, and Remembrance Sunday. Last year posies were provided for Mothering Sunday and given out at the Church Hall.

Sadly, ill health has dogged some of the team members but the fit members have kept fresh flowers on the Altar and whenever required in church. Thank you to all members who give of their time and efforts so willingly to keep fresh flowers in our beautiful church.

*Betty Griffin*



## **Knitting Group**

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 knitting group.

We enjoy knitting for local projects and charities throughout the year. At the present time we are knitting poppies for the Remembrance Sunday displays in Nunthorpe and Marton, hats for the Mission to Seafarers and hearts for the patients and their families at James Cook University hospital. We are so thankful that we can continue to meet and provide friendship to one another, whilst enjoying knitting over a cuppa and a natter. If you would like to join us, please come along or ring Sue Cox on 07568 382087.

*Sue Cox*

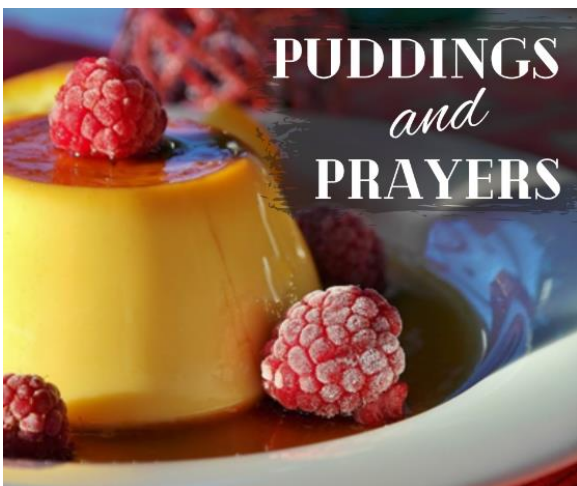


## Churches Together in Marton and Nunthorpe

Despite poor weather conditions during the weekend, events were held for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2024. A joint soup lunch was held at Marton Methodist church on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January and a combined service at St. Mary's Church on 21<sup>st</sup> January. The theme of the service was 'Go and Do Likewise'. Both events were well attended with proceeds being shared between Christian Aid and CAFOD. Discussions regarding Lent (commencing Feb.14<sup>th</sup>) led to the idea of having pulpit exchanges and two took place between the Methodist and Catholic churches. Attendance at both venues was good and everyone appreciated the initiative. During Lent, various courses were run by the individual churches, to which all were invited.



At our July meeting, we said goodbye and offered our sincere thanks to Eileen from St. Cuthbert's. She has been a regular Churches Together representative for many years. Two new members of St. Cuthbert's congregation, Ian Lund and Janet Smith, were welcomed to continue Eileen's good work. Also, in July we heard from Caroline (St. Cuthbert's) about Festival Teesside – an ecumenical event held at Stewart Park on 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> June. Around 27,000 people attended, with 18 outreach events, and 1500 people responded to the gospel message. 43 Alpha courses were registered as follow up.



Before the summer break, there was a good turn-out for a Pudding and Prayer event, held at St. Mary's Church Hall on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July. Each church contributed to the puddings, and prayer stations, each with a different theme, were situated around the Hall.

*Graham Hassall*



# 1st Nunthorpe Scout Group

Beavers (6–8 years old) Wed 6pm –7pm  
 Weekly Sessions ran by Mark, Helen and Gill.  
 Their motto is Fun and Friends.



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 and Laura



These are a few of the activities we've participated in, all the leaders are volunteers, most are parents, all have a common aim 'to help young people develop' Please come, help and enjoy!

*Ray Puryer, Scout Leader.*



## Nunthorpe Players

*Peter Pan* was our panto for January 2024 which was written by Julie Hobson and directed by Julie Ferguson and Eve Smith. The ticket sales were very good. Our very own members Lee Rogers and Claire Bryon Stonehouse were both nominated for best actor and actress at the NODA (National Operatic and Dramatic Association) awards which we are extremely proud of.

We decided to enter Saltburn Festival this year with *Lead us into temptation*. This won best comedy scene (Katie Legg and Iaian Kilcair) and best set. This added to our trophy cabinet.

Our spring production *Wind in the Willows* sadly had to be cancelled due to personal reasons of some of the cast. This left us with time to refurbish the costume cupboard and have a good old tidy up! We revamped our policies, and we took an



unprecedented decision to ask the church if we could put our pantomime on early this year, which they agreed. This was the *Wizard of Oz*, written by Julie Hobson and directed by Katie and Tracy Legg. This was a huge success with sterling performances from all and the largest children's cast we have ever had. This has prompted us to start a youth theatre which will be overseen by Tracy and Katie Legg and will be commencing in the next few months.

Throughout this year we have been supported by the South Cleveland Heart Fund and continue to receive support from NODA. We're looking for a new charity to sponsor.

We have also purchased some new sound equipment which will hugely benefit future productions and other church users. I would like to take a moment to thank Gordon Pargeter who is standing down and retiring from being our treasurer after nearly 15 years. We wish him and his wife Diane, who has been on the stage and helping with costumes over the years, well and hope to see them watching future productions.

We are grateful for continued audience and church support particularly Liz Taylorson, Gary Cox and David Young and we look forward to new and exciting productions in the up-and-coming year.

*Julie Hobson (Chair)*