

St Mary the Virgin
Ringmer



**ANNUAL
PAROCHIAL
CHURCH
MEETING**

12th May 2025
7.30pm

Prayers

Annual Vestry Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of Annual Vestry Meeting 2024 (*in italics*)
3. Election of Churchwardens

Annual General Meeting

1. Minutes of the APCM 12th May 2024 (*in italics*)
2. Electoral Roll Report
3. Vicar's / Churchwardens' Report
4. Finance
5. 5.1 Treasurer's Report
5.2 Appointment of Independent Examiner
6. Safeguarding
7. Fabric & Facilities Report
8. Presentation of Inventory
9. Deanery Synod Report
10. Other Reports
11. Elections to the Parochial Church Council - 2 for 3 years
12. Announcement of Sidespersons for 2025/6

Mr H Bailey
Mrs M Bailey
Mr M Brickell
Mr G Clark
Mrs J Clark
Mr C Gebbie

Mrs S Howes
Mr K Humm
Mrs E Humm
Dr C Kingswood
Mr D Lambird
Mrs T Lambird
Mrs J Linehan
Mrs C Smith
Mrs C Speed
Mr P Speed

13. Any Other Business

Minutes of the ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING held on Sunday 12th May 2024 in St Mary's Church Room with Revd David Bouskill in the chair.

34 people attended.

1. *Apologies for absence*

David Booth, Margaret & Bryan Constable, Kay Fitzgerald, Joanna Harper, Corrine Hodge, Ian & Jenny Loughborough, Gill Macadam, John & Jenny Payne, John & Anne Stamper, Wendy Vaughan.

2. *Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held on Monday 15th May 2023*

These had been circulated in advance by email and hard copy and the Minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting and then signed by the Chairperson.

. *Election of Churchwardens*

There were two nominations only, both for the existing Churchwardens.

Andrew Edgar was proposed by Meriel Vincent and seconded by Hugh Bailey

Anne Franklin was proposed by Shirley Squires and seconded by Peter Speed

There were no objections, so Andrew and Anne were duly elected to serve until the next Annual Vestry Meeting.

Revd David thanked them for all they had done during the past year, and they were applauded by those present.

Minutes of the ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING held on Sunday 12th May 2024 in St Mary's Church Room with Revd David Bouskill in the chair.

34 members of the Electoral Roll attended.

Apologies for absence were the same as for the Annual Vestry Meeting.

1. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Monday 15th May 2023 had been circulated in by email prior to the meeting and hard copy. They were agreed and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record.

2. Electoral Roll Report

The Electoral Roll Officer, Chris Kingswood reported that the number on the Roll stood at 125 including 12 new members in the past year.

3. Vicar's and Churchwardens' Report for 2023

The Vicar's and Churchwardens' report for 2023 was contained in the Annual Report, which had been approved by the External Examiner, and had been circulated by email and was available as a hard copy. The main achievements had been to provide an accessible space for personal prayer and contemplation; conducting relevant public worship open to all; conducting 3 baptisms, 3 weddings and 15 funerals; teaching about Christian doctrine and practice; promoting understanding of the faith

through events, meetings, literature and electronic media; maintaining care of the fabric of the church and its grounds; advancing the church's mission to those of all ages in the community; providing practical and spiritual care across the village; maintaining facilities for church and community use; linking with the community by concerts, the summer Garden Party and the Christmas Fair; giving financial support to those in need locally and further afield; protecting all who use the church facilities by maintaining safeguarding and health and safety standards; maintaining good governance in fabric and financial matters; and by maximising our efforts to reduce climate change through the A Rocha award scheme.

Revd David thanked the members for all they had done to towards these aims through the year, as well as those who arrange the flowers, provide coffee, clean the church, act as sacristans and all who work behind the scenes. He also thanked his family for their support, as well as the Churchwardens and the PCC.

4. Finance

4.1. Presentation of the 2023 Financial Statement and Treasurer's Report

Detailed accounts had been made available before the meeting and were presented by Richard Vincent (RV) as Honorary Treasurer. He reported that the Annual Report and Financial Statement for 2023 had been approved by our new Independent Examiner, Nathan Coker, and that these also fulfilled the requirements of the Charity Commission.

The total of St Mary's receipts in 2023 was £120,556 compared with £173,983 in 2022. This substantial difference resulted from legacies given of £50,722 in 2022 whereas none were given in 2023. Our income came from the Parish Giving Scheme used by 44

parishioners (£46,315); service collections (£4,598); contactless giving (£2,745); charitable activities (£16,445); other smaller donations (£15,811), and Gift Aid recovery (£16,575). The remainder (£18,067) was provided by a variety of smaller donations, earnings from the Parish Magazine, claiming VAT on major projects, and investment interest.

The main components of our overall expenditure (£185,402) were meeting our Parish Ministry Costs (£78,795) and servicing major repairs to the church (£35,728). Other outgoings supported production of the Parish magazine (£11,233), the upkeep of the church & new churchyard, and administration costs. Our giving to charities amounted to £13,602.

At the end of 2023 our total funds stood at £285,356, a reduction of £73,256 from the sum carried forward from 2022.

RV drew attention again to the fall of St Mary's total funds year-on-year. A careful review of our annual expenditure was now underway together with increasing the awareness of our financial position across all members of the church. Re-establishing the Friends of St Mary also had a high priority.

Questions from the floor were answered:

- i. The £50,000 legacy received during the year went into the General Fund. The Vicar reminded those present that legacies were most useful when given for general rather than specific use. The PCC would then be free to decide on the priorities.*
- ii. The Art Group donations were gratefully acknowledged as a contribution to the General Fund.*

- iii. *St Mary's was continuing to use the services of Data Developments which were useful and compliant with GDPR.*

4.2 Appointment of the Independent Examiner of Accounts

Anne Franklin proposed that Nathan Coker of Price & Company Chartered Accountants, 30/32 Gildredge Road, Eastbourne BN21 4SH be appointed as the Independent Examiner for the coming year. This was seconded by Chris Gebbie and agreed unanimously.

5. Safeguarding Report

Deirdre Booth, the Safeguarding Officer, reported that there had been no safeguarding incidents to date, and that everyone who required them had received DBS checks.

Revd David thanked Deirdre for her work.

6. Fabric & Facilities Report

Ken Humm reported an upgrade of the electrical system before the installation of electrically heated pew cushion, overhead heaters for the choir, a storage heater below the organ and storage heaters in the Church Room. He thanked all who daily cleared up water from the Church Room floor after lead was stolen from the roof. A temporary fix was made at the end of the year (and a final one in 2024 after the time-period of this report). Malicious damage to two church windows had resulted in expenditure on repairs and security cameras had been installed on the north aspects of the church. Repair of the guttering to the left of the south porch appeared to have resolved the flooding of the porch during heavy rain. The Vicar, Churchwardens and Sidespersons had received basic Fire Training. The cracked roof lights in the Church Room corridor had

been replaced; the new churchyard shed had been replaced and several other minor repairs to the estate had been made.

Two questions from the floor related to work completed which would be covered by the report for 2024 at the next APCM.

Revd David thanked the Fabric & Facilities group for their hard work throughout the year.

7. Presentation of the Inventory for 2023

Anne Franklin reported that the Inventory was now kept electronically. During 2023, acquisitions had comprised: two new Gopak tables, four cushions for the 'library' chairs, two security cameras, one slow cooker and a plastic paddling pool for collecting water from the leaking Church Room roof.

No items had been added to or removed from the archives during 2023.

8. Deanery Synod Report

Shirley Squires reported that she, Margaret Sweatman and Revd David had attended four meetings since the last APCM. In June, Lewes Prison Chaplain had asked parishes to support the work in prisons through prayer and by being a contact for prayer requests; by supporting the Sycamore Tree Prison Fellowship which is a volunteer-led programme teaching prisoners about restorative justice; and by supporting the Upper Room charity working with ex-offenders.

September's meeting focussed on the £1m deficit for the Diocese following the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. In October Trevor Christian, the Diocesan Director of Education, spoke about new resources: 'Growing Partnerships' to encourage links between schools and churches; February's meeting brought news of the 23% shortfall in promised Parish Share contributions to the Diocese, necessitating the

unpopular suspension of Lay Reader training for at least the next 2 years.

There were no comments or questions. Revd David thanked the Deanery Synod Representatives.

9. *Other Reports*

Reports from groups for church members and for the village community were available online and in a separate printed booklet. Revd David mentioned each report individually and was encouraged that new writers' names appeared on several of the reports. He thanked past and present leaders and volunteers for all their work.

In response to a request for more information on Family Support Work, Martine Bailey assured those present that this was in hand.

10. *Election of Members to the PCC*

There were four vacancies: two for 3 years and two for 1 year. There had been only two nominations in advance: Deirdre Booth and Rosemary Colebourn who were available for re-election. All those present were in favour of their re-election for three years.

12. *Announcement of Sidespersons for 2024/2025*
Sidespersons were now to be appointed by the PCC. The list of 17 people had been circulated in the APCM booklet, and these were accepted and thanked by all those present.

13. *Any Other Business: none*

The meeting ended at 12.35pm with The Grace.

PCC WORKING GROUPS

Pastoral Care

Co-ordinator - Sue Howes

The Pastoral Working Group supports the Vicar in his pastoral work in the parish. All have done appropriate safeguarding training and look to develop our skills and knowledge together. We offer Sunday afternoon teas and winter warmer lunches to the bereaved and isolated people we are in contact with. We offer a monthly Communion service in our local care homes as well as to parishioners unable to attend church services.

We support the intercessory prayer ministry of St Mary's by reading Morning Prayer in church six days a week, providing a monthly Prayer for All, maintaining the prayer board and offering prayer ministry once a month during the morning service.

Children, Families and Youth

Co-ordinator – Marisa Hayes

The CFY group met throughout the year and extended its membership to welcome Sara Hardie, Elizabeth Humm, Revd Pat and Ray Brenton. The First Sundays at 10 have been embraced by the congregation and continue to evolve towards an activity / discussion-based form of church. The three Parade services welcomed Scouts, Beavers, Cubs, Brownies, St Johns during the year.

St Mary's Toddlers continues to thrive, and we are grateful for the support of the PCC and the MU members and friends for giving up their time. This group clearly has an impact supporting parents and grandparents throughout the year and building connections.

Outreach to the schools continued through Eco-connections and offers of support for Duke of Edinburgh awards at KAR, primary school visits and tea and tissues for new parents. The KAR school choir once again sang carols at Coffee Break and the primary school came for the Evergreen Carol Service.

Spring Fun Time attracted a fantastic group of families ranging from babies to teens and was supported financially by the parish council. Our group continues to seek new ways in doing church from walks and picnics to pop nativity and Easter story-telling in actions and music around the church.

Finally, after a lot of work, prayer and careful consideration, an application for funding from the Diocese to kick start a project to employ a youth work in the parish was not pursued in the autumn.

OTHER CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Music and Choir

Rosemary Colebourn and John Howes

Our committed and much appreciated choir continued to sing a varied range of hymns, anthems and chants at each weekly Eucharist and monthly evensong service. In September new members began an introduction to singing the services and by the end of the year 4 more men had joined the choir. The balanced SATB choir varies from 12-16 most weeks. Special services provided opportunities and challenges for us all including an evening Eastertide Service of hymns and readings in April and a well-received Local Deanery Festal Evensong in June. This latter enabled over 30 singers who enjoy singing Evensong to gather together over an afternoon, with a tea provided by our congregation before the service. Our own John Stamper arranged a performance in the church, including himself, Rosemary Colebourn and John Howes on piano in Lent of his remarkable setting of poems for SATB by Malcolm Guite based on the Stations of the Cross. The music group of piano, guitar, keyboard and violin, continued to play for the First Sunday@10 services, enhanced by our flautist.

Our busy Advent season heard us singing carols again in December in the local pub at their Christmas Fair, singing in two Ringmer Care homes, singing at the annual Coffee and Carols evening in the Village Hall and finally the evening Christmas Carol Service. For the first time for a while all members of the enlarged choir were from our own congregation. The welcome and friendship offered in our Friday evening rehearsals has been enhanced by the occasional social gathering including at Christmas at Deirdre's invitation.

Our 102-year-old organ continues to provide solid support for all our services in church. It receives regular attention from our tuners and has stood up fairly well to the rigours of a cold winter

Bellringers

Jonathan Franklin

We are lucky here at Ringmer to have such a keen and friendly group of bellringers. Apart from a couple of occasions during the summer, we have been able to ring for all the Sunday services as well as disturbing the peace of the Vicarage on Wednesday evenings.

And it is not just ringing in Ringmer:

- we support Barcombe by organising bi-monthly practices and coordinating ringing there for weddings
- our outing was to Eastbourne – the bells were interesting and the sun shone on us.
- the annual tower lunch.

- the local Cubs and Beavers have descended on us (chaotic but most enjoyable)
- we have run the tombola at the Church Christmas Fair
- and provided some excellent (!) handbell entertainment at the Coffee and Carols evening.

We have welcomed Jacqui, Pete, Roland and Aiden to our numbers – they are all making excellent progress (as are we all in our different ways) and we are very appreciative of the non-ringing support we have from John Stamper, Sue Donbroski and Liz Clifford.

If you want to find out more (or have a go), please contact me.

St Mary's Toddler Group

Shirley Squires

This continues with a loyal group of supporters from Mothers' Union and others, alongside Coffee Break on most Wednesdays in the Symons Room at the Village Hall. We are grateful to Tiddlers & Toddlers for regular use of their toys for which St Mary's pays a small contribution. If you would like to help on the occasional Wednesday morning, please let Shirley know. There are more comments in the Children, Families & Youth report.

Floodlighting

Shirley Squires

The floodlit church is a wonderful way of remembering loved ones or marking a special occasion. Do contact me (01273 752167) if you would like the church floodlit at any time. A donation of £15 is requested.

St Mary's Website

Andrew Edgar

In September 2024, we launched our new website, <https://www.ringmerparishchurch.org.uk/>. The site has a fresh new design, with lots of information, that we hope is easily navigable. The intention is that the site will be of use both to the members of St Mary's and to potential visitors, and to those who are simply curious as to who we are, and what we believe and do. The website has information about all our activities, including services, study groups, and special events, as well as pages for our musical activities and our commitment as an eco-church. Even recordings of Sunday sermons are available through the site. In addition, there is information about the Church Room, and how to book it, and information for couples considering St Mary's as the right church for their wedding (and we have already had several wedding inquiries directed through these pages). The new website is attracting attention and 'hits' from all over the world, so

hopefully helping make people near and far aware of our presence and witness. If you have ideas about how the website can be further developed, or material that you would like to see on it, do contact Andrew Edgar - andrewRedgar@gmail.com.

Church Flowers

Deirdre Booth

We now have 22 people on the Church Flower Rota, each person takes responsibility for the flowers for a 2-week period, which means it comes around once a year. We are careful to adhere to our eco church standard, so no oasis etc is used, yet the church is decorated beautifully thanks to our team. Thank you to those who gave donations for the Easter lilies, which were much appreciated by the congregation. If anyone would like to join our happy team you would be very welcome.

PRAYER AND STUDY

Bible Studies

John Howes

During the year we have continued to meet in the Church Room on most Thursday afternoons for tea, cake, Bible study and discussion. We read through the prophecies of Micah and Amos from the Old Testament and the first letter of Peter in the New. Last summer we took some first steps with *Christianity Explored*. During Advent and Lent we have followed seasonal courses provided by Sheffield and Chichester Dioceses. More recently it has been particularly valuable to take the time to think through both the Lord's Prayer and the Nicene Creed - shedding new light on familiar words and inspiring a series of sermons on Sunday mornings.

The Ringmer Christian Book Club

Margaret Sweatman

Our book club meets six times a year in members' homes usually on the third Thursday of alternate months. It's a lovely group of eight ladies who discuss the chosen book for about an hour and then chat over coffee and homemade biscuits. We all contribute towards choosing our next book to read.

We have covered an interesting range of books this year which includes "Raising Hare," by Chloe Dalton. Burnt out by the London rat race, the writer retreats to the countryside where a chance encounter with a helpless leveret changes her life. "A Dutiful Boy" by Mohsin Zaidi tells the story of a devout Muslim boy who knew he was gay. This was taboo in his culture. "I, Julian," by Claire Gilbert tells the story of the medieval anchoress Julian of Norwich who was a mother, a mystic and the first woman to write a book whilst bricked up in a cell by a church. "A

Chance to Die" by Elizabeth Elliot is about the missionary Amy Carmichael who dedicated herself to serving God and the people of India. "Lighting the Beacons" by Gill Duff is written to encourage our faith, using examples from scripture, the saints and contemporary culture.

Since joining this book club, I have been introduced so many authors and books that I would not have read otherwise, and I have enjoyed discussing the books and listening to different people's opinions. There would be space for one or two more people to join us. If you are interested, contact Margaret on 079693 86605 or email mam.sweatman@btinternet.com

St Mary's Prayer Rugs

Christine Harding

In September 2024, during a Sunday Service, the Prayer Rug Ministry was relaunched to remind people that a number of rugs had been created and were ready for distribution. This led to eight rugs being blessed and distributed between 29.9.24 and 3.11.24. All were well received.

One of the recipients was Corinne Hodge who, before her sad passing, was our most prolific supplier of knitted squares.

It will be necessary, later this year, to appeal for more volunteers willing to knit squares, so that Shirley Squires and I can continue to produce the finished product.

There are currently five completed rugs, each of which is adorned with a small knitted heart motif which was introduced this year.

Bible Reading Fellowship notes

Shirley Squires

Would you like some notes to help with your daily Bible reading? The BRF Notes come out 3 times a year and cost £14.96 for the year. There is a choice of two different books - *New Daylight* gives a daily Bible reading accompanied by a commentary and *Guidelines* suggests a passage for you to look up, also with a commentary.

13 members of our congregation take these Notes. There are some back-dated copies of *New Daylight* at the back of the church for you to look at. Large print copies can also be available. If anyone else is interested in having these useful notes of *New Daylight* or *Guidelines* do contact me on 01273 752167.

OTHER

The Friends of St Mary's

Richard Vincent

The Friends of St Mary's was originally established by the Revd Will Pratt. Its object was to invite Ringmer residents who valued our Church, to give financial help in the upkeep of this historic building. The outreach was successful but after the Covid pandemic, the activity of the Friends diminished.

Last October, several members of the previous Friends Committee joined together with new faces to reinvigorate the life of the Friends. As a result, a launch event on 15th March in St Mary's drew 117 people, filling the church. Donations that evening amounted £1700. The money from the Friends account has already contributed to the cost of works as required by the PCC.

Further events are being planned for the rest of the year.

Mothers' Union

Christine Smith

The MU was founded in 1876 by Mary Sumner, a Rector's wife in Old Alresford, near Winchester, who wanted to bring mothers of all social classes together to provide support for each other, especially in times of adversity. It is testament to that vision and the strength of the organisation, that it has since spread across 84 countries around the world with some 4 million members and has been described as "The heart and love of the Church"

The Ringmer Branch can't claim to go back quite that far but we do have a thriving, active and very loyal group with around 25 members. And we were particularly delighted last year to be joined by three members from the former East Hoathly Branch. We meet once a month in the Church Room and have enjoyed listening to speakers and learning about a range of different subjects. From Ian Jackson's role as Company Manager of the Glyndebourne Opera and the history of music there, the issue of Modern-Day Slavery, the day-to-day work of a Hospital Chaplain and, in complete contrast, the rescue and rehabilitation of hedgehogs. We support the AFIA (Away From It All) caravans scheme, allowing needy families the chance to have a much needed few days away together at the seaside and regularly send funds to aid MU projects both at home and abroad. Additionally, we were pleased to support a Coffee Morning in September to help raise funds to support the training of an auxiliary midwife in a remote area of India.

Throughout the year, we continued to represent the MU by providing and serving refreshments following the Citizenship Ceremonies at

Southover Grange in Lewes, our members help with the Church Toddler Group in the Village Hall, we have served refreshments at both the Church Summer and Christmas Fairs and regularly provide a Hamper for the Grand Christmas Draw. MU members gave the Bible Reading and led the Intercessions at the Mothering Sunday Service and are also responsible for sending cards to families on the Anniversary of a child's Baptism.

New members are always welcome- the organisation is open to all, men and women, grandparents and carers. Just let us know. Sophie, HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh has recently been appointed Patron of the MU (following in the footsteps of her late mother-in-law, Queen Elizabeth II) and exciting times lie ahead with the 150th Anniversary looming in 2026.

Caring and Sharing East Sussex

David and Tina Lambird

The two projects we support here in Ringmer are :

Amara House - Marius Istrate and his wonderful team have continued upgrading the house with the help of the six remaining boys - they like to involve them in as much as possible. The loss of Fanel nearly two years ago is still felt by them all. The purchase of medicines and medical equipment, as well as building projects in the house, are always ongoing - all of which help the boys lead as normal a life as possible. They also camp, go shopping and have day trips out like boys would have in a normal loving family.

Hamlin Fistula Hospital - Training of nurses in midwifery continues. Their skills are taken to rural, as well as local, communities, to treat those patients with obstetric fistula and other birth injuries, restoring their health and dignity through surgery, rehabilitation and compassionate care. At the hospital, these patients also participate in an education programme, focusing on business skills and women's empowerment. Over 3,000 surgeries were carried out in 2024. Your kind donations have also helped purchase medicines and medical equipment.

Your very generous support in these uncertain times has been such a great help to both charities. Thank you.

Coffee Break

Christine Smith

Coffee Break continues to be held in the Alan West Room at the Village Hall every Wednesday morning from 10-12 noon. It seems to be a firm fixture in the diary for a number of regulars, who welcome the chance for a good catch up with each other and to generally "put the world to

rights ". Others drop in from time to time as other commitments allow and during the past year we have also welcomed visitors from Willingdon (here to see family graves in the churchyard) and others from Lewes visiting friends in the village.

We also take great delight in providing refreshments to the Mums and carers who have brought babies and toddlers to the St Mary's Toddler group in the adjoining Symons Hall and watching the little ones grow and develop. Christmas saw us joined once again by a number of students from the Academy, along with their music teacher. They entertained us royally with Christmas carols and festive songs and we all enjoyed chatting with each other afterwards. Additionally, we regularly play host to representatives from Ovesco, a locally based organisation, who are keen to promote community owned renewable energy in East Sussex and who are on hand to offer help and share energy saving advice.

As ever, I am hugely grateful to the loyal team of volunteers who help set up and serve the refreshments on a rota basis. As with so many groups, it simply could not function without them. All the proceeds (after running costs) go to the St Peter and St James Hospice, clearly a very worthy cause and an invaluable resource.

If you have never been to Coffee Break before, do drop by sometime and say hello. We will be very welcome.

Family Support Work

Martine and Hugh Bailey

FSW has been as busy as ever this year. This includes taking families to residential week ends at Dalesdown – including a grandmother caring for 2 grandchildren, who appreciated being looked-after for a change.

Phillipa, one of the support workers, has 20 cases on her books and 6 on her waiting list.

2 new members of staff have been appointed, one to cover the Hastings area, and a new Digital Fundraising and Communications executive.

In March alone, FWS made 278 individual visits and 681 calls, supporting 266 adults and 193 children. Plus 49 supported meetings with other agencies, 79 group sessions supporting 626 parents and 681 children, and 99 food deliveries.

The financial situation is difficult, with lots more pressure on staff pay and contributions, more families needing help and less money available. The diocese contribution has plummeted this year. Our contribution is not large, but it is valuable and much appreciated. There are events like

the Easter Walk (May 15th) and the Seaford Open Garden Trail on June 22nd and July 13th for anyone interested.

We will have another collection before the summer holiday, to help with feeding the children. The shop in Eastbourne is quite low on summer clothes for children, if any of you are going through cupboards.

With thanks for your contributions

HOMELINK

Pauline Porter

2024 was the 25th anniversary of the start of Homelink, a story of prayerful hard work and generosity behind the tragedy of homelessness in the Lewes area.

Homelink is the *Churches Together in Lewes* response to local homelessness, and gratitude is due to all who pray, donate and volunteer.

Homelink makes loans for deposits on rented accommodation available to suitable applicants facing homelessness, with the added help of small grants towards white goods and furniture, and emergency food and energy vouchers.

With three new trustees, the hard work of the two Client Managers assessing applications, the volunteers, and the further development of the longstanding partnership between Lewes District Council and Homelink, more clients are being referred and more loans awarded.

This work is funded by individual donors, fund-raising activities, grants from larger benefactors, and Lewes District Council.

This year the fund-raising activities included a Summer Garden Party, and a magnificent Gala Concert hosted by Trinity Church, who adopted the charity as its Mission Partner for the year. Christmas was celebrated with a carol concert given by the Ashdown Singers, which included Britten's "Ceremony of Carols". A Winter Appeal towards the provision of small grants was very generously supported. Homelink would like to thank all who were in any way involved.

If you would like to know more, or become a supporter, the AGM is a very informative event, and will be held on Saturday, 14th June at 5.30pm. Please pick up a leaflet at the back of the church giving full details of this charity and the AGM, or speak to Pauline Porter.

Ringmer Church and Village News

Rosemary Colebourn

The parish has celebrated a further year of our attractive monthly magazines, edited by Deb Lancaster, with cover photographs by Margaret Sweatman and contributions from the churches and community organisations. Rising printing costs were largely met by additional adverts successfully sought by Paul Dench of the 'Magazine Team'. An invaluable team of nearly 40 volunteers, organised by Mary Greenwood, continue to deliver the magazines across the parish and treasurer Sue Tibbenham keeps immaculate track of the finances. A Christmas Tea party was arranged in the Church Room to thank our deliverers, but in particular to thank Mary Greenwood who stepped down at the end of the year after superbly running the Magazine delivery for decades!

Eco Church

Rosemary Colebourn

We celebrated in January 2024 achieving the Silver Eco Church Award and set out a further Action Plan for PCC approval. The Eco Church Team expanded to 8 members across all the working groups. Within the worship category, an Eco themed FirstSunday@10 service in May, led by the team, involved a successful toilet twining project for our 3 church toilets, planting veg and using local and Freetrade flowers in our displays. A speaker from Operational Noah came in September during a special Creationtide service and considered the PCC and personal ethical and sustainable investments. Monthly Eco tips continued in the Parish magazine as did the great team of churchyard gardeners encouraging more wildflowers and the first hedgehog box. We are represented on the Parish Environmental Sustainability Network and we continued to monitor our use of electricity to reduce our CO2 footprint. Our Eco Church priorities were embedded in our offer to the local schools and in the community as members of our congregation led the Ringmer Repair Cafe Steering Group developments.