

ST MARY'S PCC NEWS - NOVEMBER 2025

Topics discussed at the PCC meeting on November 10th include the following:

Finance - The church accounts from January to the end of September 2025 show a 13% decrease in the deficit of income, largely due to increased donations from groups using the Church Room. But there is still likely to be a deficit of over £2,300. We need to remain prudent in every area of church life. Our recent Generous Giving Campaign resulted in a few one-off gifts, a modest increase in Parish Giving and volunteers for the tea rota and a possible Treasurer and Safeguarding Officer. The PCC agreed that we would run this event annually to encourage financial and practical contributions from more church members.

Electoral Roll update - The number stands at 84. Anyone who attends church regularly should consider joining the Roll. Application forms are available at the back of the church and a copy of the current Roll is available on request.

Deanery Synod report - The Diocese is planning the development of more Children, Youth and Family workers and making grants available to church outreach missions. The Diocese is hoping their application for £12 million from central Church of England funds will be successful. Average giving per person in the Chichester Diocese is £18.04 per week - lower than many dioceses.

Friends of St Mary's - Thank you to Deirdre Booth for suggesting the recent successful Jazz Evening and to Deborah Bedford who has suggested a film night. "Mrs Harris Goes to Paris" will be shown on a large screen in church on January 17th.

Parish Magazine - The cost of the magazine will rise to £1 per copy or £7.50 for a year's subscription to provide a reasonable "cushion" annually. Hopefully, profits can be donated to the church once the magazine's financial state is secure. Team members will distribute free magazines to new housing roads in January.

Communications and Technology - It is hoped to provide a wireless audio-visual streaming to the Church Room to give people the option to sit in the warmth whilst taking part in the services. There are plans to refurbish the church audio-visual system and to consider installing security cameras covering the porch and all sides of the churchyard as a deterrent to theft or vandalism.

Reports from Working Groups

- Children, Families and Youth - Links have been maintained with both Ringmer schools by inviting them to sing at the Coffee Break and Evergreen Carol Service and involvement with other Christmas activities. King's Academy have contributed towards the Repair Cafe. Ringmer Primary School and St Mary's members generously responded to the Family Social Work appeal for food items. Our Mission Plan should reflect current outreach activities nurturing young families through St Mary's Toddlers and reflect our ambition to find funding for a youth worker from 2027.
- Worship - All services are planned up to February 1st 2026 and a combined Deanery Evensong at Newick is arranged for July 19th. John Howes hosted organists to play Handel's Largo on November 22nd as part of a national event. Four Advent study groups in November, looking at Paula Gooder's book "Women of the Nativity," were very popular.
- Welcome and Events - 300 Christmas cards will be distributed at events over the Christmas period.
- Fabric & Facilities - A new outside light has been installed above the Church Room entrance. The blower house entrance stonework urgently needs to be repaired and quotes have been obtained for the work. The "Lights of Love" Christmas tree has been moved inside this year as the outside Christmas tree is now too tall to drape names around it and be able to read them.

- Eco Church - The Eco Team is successfully working towards the gold A Rocha award with a Creation Tide evensong, series of Eco talks, wild-flower management in both churchyards and involvement in the Repair Cafe etc. Rosemary will report back on the results of the Lifestyle carbon tracker project. Ethical banking was discussed and consideration given to installing a wildlife camera in the churchyard. There are plans to record the Land Management Planning and ensure the Environmental Policy is embedded in PCC policy and church life. Rosemary will provide training on Carbon Literacy for the Eco Team and PCC.

Notes compiled by Margaret Sweatman