



STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH
[St Mary's in the Marketplace]

ANNUAL REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE RECTOR, CHURCHWARDENS AND PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST MARY'S STOCKPORT
for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 19th April 2015

By Susan M Heap FCIS MBCS

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1. Introduction to the Annual Report

The past year has been another momentous one in the history of this ancient Parish Church. It has been said that there will always be work needing to be done on a building as old as this. This is true, and there are years of hard and costly work ahead which will need to be undertaken by the congregation. So much has already been achieved. So much remains to be done.

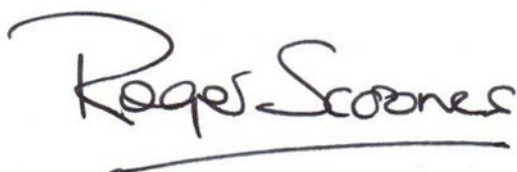
However, few congregations have had to face up to the amount of work which has been undertaken at St.Mary's over a period of ten years, which is longer than some of our most committed members have actually been attending the Parish Church. The Community has much to be thankful for that the church at its historic heart is so attractively and positively engaged with its town centre and wider community. Its growing membership and attendances reflect this unique feature of the life of St. Mary's Parish Church.

This report on the activities of the Parish Church will reflect the considerable efforts of a number of people , who have worked hard to ensure that this year, and Phase 6 in particular, has progressed satisfactorily, both spiritually , socially and financially.

Without a team of competent and committed volunteers a church such as ours could not remain open five days a week. It is to their credit that those who have given so much time to the church have won the right for the Parish Church to be so substantially supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, without whose financial backing the current phase of work would not have been possible.

This report conveys a factual account of what has been achieved in the past year, for which we thank God. His provision for all our needs has meant that once again we can say to the Community of Stockport that we are open and welcoming and pro-actively involved in the life of the Community, week by week, year by year.

This has been a year of positive developments and creative achievements. This report is intended to give the very fullest account of all that is best about the Parish Church, now known as St. Mary's in the Marketplace. This is where we are, and this is where you will find us, with our doors open, living out the Christian Gospel in word and deed to the glory of God, and making Jesus Christ known in our Community for the good of all the people.



Rev. Roger Scoones – Rector (April 2015)

2. Administrative information:

Stockport Parish Church, St Mary's in the Marketplace
Churchgate, Stockport, SK1 1YG.

Correspondence address:

The Rectory Office, St Mary's Rectory, 24 Gorse Mount Street, Stockport, SK1 4DU.

Telephone contact numbers: Church Office: 0161 480 1815
St Mary's Rectory: 0161 429 6564
Revd Roger Scoones [07821 878678]

Email: st.marysstockport@gmail.com

web: stmarysinthemarketplace.com

Personal Administrator to the Rector: Sue Heap FCIS MBCS [07969 101335]

3. Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The PCC is an "exempted" charity subject to all relevant legislation and requirements of Church Representation Rules.

Membership for 2014:

Incumbent: Revd. Roger Scoones Chair

Wardens: Isobel Clarkson
Gabrielle Baker

Representatives of Deanery Synod Adam Pinder [Deputy Treasurer]
Rita Waters

PCC Secretary Catriona Smith

PCC Treasurer Sue Heap

Elected [for 2014/15&16] Margaret Forster [Electoral Roll Officer]

Yvonne Ingham

Carol Taylor [Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator]

Co-opted (for one year) Ann West

4. Structure, Governance and Management

4.1 The PCC is legally identified as a body corporate having perpetual succession. Members are classified as being “Charity Trustees”. A Charity Trustee must NOT receive any payment from the Church (including fees but not expenses) without the express permission of the Charity Commission. It should be noted that membership of the PCC is prohibited to anyone who is involved in any Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVA’s) under the Charities Act 2011.

4.2 It is the duty of the Rector and the Parochial Church Council to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish. The PCC generally meets on a monthly basis – taking a break over summer and Christmas. Additional meetings are called as necessary.

4.3 As required meetings are held between the Rector and Wardens and/or Rector, Wardens, PCC Treasurer /Deputy Treasurer and PCC Secretary [or other interested parties].

4.4 An independent Project Management Group exists for the purpose of planning and progressing the various phases of Restoration, Conservation and Re-ordering of the Church.

4.5 The Rector, has since 2011, the benefit of administrative assistance/support following the volunteer appointment of a Personal Administrator.

5. Deanery Synod

St Mary’s is entitled to TWO laity representatives on the Stockport Deanery Synod who hold office for a period of three years (there is no election in 2015). Regular feedback is given to the Parochial Church Council by the Rector and elected representatives (Adam Pinder and Rita Waters).

6. The Electoral Roll

6.1 The number on the electoral roll for 2014 was 61.

6.2 Those attending St Mary's and eligible to apply for entry to the Roll were again encouraged to complete an application form this year (2015), the roll increasing to 62 members. Two new names added and one sadly removed following the death of our good friend Audrey Nasarow.

7. Protecting and Safeguarding

7.1 The Diocese of Chester Safeguarding and Vulnerability Policy & Procedures "Safe in our Care":

"The Diocese of Chester understands safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church. We recognise and respect the dignity of all vulnerable of people and we will strive to take all appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment for all and practice God's ministry to respond sensitively to their needs in order to keep them safe from harm. We intend to ensure that all parishes and groups have the confidence to enable vulnerable people to know they will be cared for and respected by their Christian community in our Diocese. This document contains the guidance to enable parishes to be proactive in safeguarding and have confidence in responding effectively to all safeguarding matters that arise. We would recommend that this policy is adopted by parishes within the Diocese. It is intended to be read alongside the national policies and procedures produced by the Church of England"

7.2 Although ultimate responsibility for safeguarding in a parish remains with the incumbent, the success of the safeguarding strategy within the Diocese is very much dependent on the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator having a clear understanding of their role and to ensure the tasks required are being carried through at parish level. The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator is responsible to (a) the Incumbent (b) the PCC and (c) to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer in ensuring policy is implemented and any issues are appropriately referred.

8. Financial Issues

- 8.1 St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) is an "exempted" charity (not at this time registered with the Charities Commission) and as such is required to report clearly and fully on all money received and spent.
- 8.2 Our year end accounts are completed using the "Accruals" method where all financially valuable resources and their movements are shown.
- 8.3 Our accounts remain subject to external scrutiny and we continue to have the services of Haskell Woolfe, Accountants.
- 8.4 VAT registration. The income from those areas which would normally be subject to VAT remain below the VAT threshold for 2014
- 8.5 A full copy of our accounts are held electronically with a shorter version available on hand copy format. Areas showing personal details will always be deleted before general viewing is allowed for the purposes of confidentiality and data protection.

9. Treasurers Report

- 9.1 A separate report has been issued by the Treasurer and is available for inspection and for interested persons to retain a copy.
- 9.2 The main account documents are copied in this report at Appendices 1 - 5

10. Independent Examiners

- 10.1 It is a requirement of the Church Representation Rules that an independent examiner or auditor is appointed at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. Our chosen external examiner being Haskell Woolfe, Accountants of Monton Road, Eccles, Manchester.
- 10.2 The Accountants Report is produced taking into consideration Regulation 3 (3) of the Church Accounting Regulations 1997, Section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 and Charities (Accounting and Reporting) Regulations 1995.

11. Restoration and Conservation Projects

Phase 6



Restoration and conservation work on the older part of the Church, restoring two historic rooms, the Medieval 14th century Chapel, converted into a vestry for the Rector long ago, and the Victorian vestry created for the choir in 1884. Major funding from the Heritage

Lottery Fund of £200,800.00 was awarded (subject to certain conditions) in June 2013. Actual work commenced November 2014 (for completion 25th April 2015). Although unable to raise the contract price for the full refurbishment, some items have been deleted from the original plans, Phase 6 has been a magnificent achievement and one that St Mary's should be proud of.

Architect: John Prichard (Lloyd Evans Prichard of Manchester)

Major contractors: Lambert Walker Conservation and Restoration Ltd

Structural Engineer: Fred Tandy

Quantity Surveyor: Alison Kendal (Sumner Smith Ltd)

St Mary's Project Team: Project Director: Rev Canon John Briggs Rector: Rev Roger Scoones
Isobel Clarkson [Churchwarden/Phase 6 Appeal Treasurer] Sue Heap [Administrator]

12. St Mary's Building Report

There is no doubt that a considerable amount of work has been achieved during the last financial year, however there remain a number of outstanding issues following the Quinquennial Inspection Report as issued by our Architects (Lloyd Evans Prichard) in January 2013. Some of these are now being more urgent than others, in particular the roof to the south porch (also noting that the roof to the south "porch" – area over the new toilets – is only a temporary one). Perhaps more worrying that some of the electrics are now causing us problems and it is recommended by our Architect that this should be the next area of work (along with the provision of new "fit for purpose" lighting (especially in the Chancel area) as soon as funding can be secured. Required as a matter of urgency is a full electrical inspection report.

Reminder of the Quinquennial Inspection Report – January 2013 (elements of)

- Requiring urgent attention: Detailed assessment of masonry and roofs to the Vestries and Oratory [Phase 6] majority of works completed - some items removed due to funding issues
- Renewal of electrical installation
- Other items identified as requiring urgent attention:
 - Leaning finial to Chancel gable
 - Leaning pinnacle to Nave gable
 - Loose merlon to Nave gable
 - Eroded finials to south Aisle
 - Detailed investigation of all parapets, pinnacles and finials to the main body of the church (which may lead to a further programme of urgent remedial works)
 - Detailed assessment of cracked plaster ribs to Nave/Aisle ceilings.
 - Renewal of asphalt roofs to the north and south Porches
 - Movement monitoring to crack to Chancel arch
- Items which should have be completed by July 2014
 - Detailed investigation of water saturation to north east Chancel walls
 - Checking and unblocking of all rain water outlets and gutters
 - Reappraisal of rainwater run off
 - Repair of stone guarding to disabled ramp
- Repairs which should be carried out during the Quinquennium
 - Re-pointing and associated repairs to boundary walls
 - Upgrading of window guards
 - Detailed assessment of the rainwater drainage system with replacement of defective pipe work.
 - Making good of damaged plaster and decorations.
- Desirable repairs but which could be postponed to a future quinquennium
 - Replacement of damaged glazing

Building maintenance issues that are presently OUTSTANDING due to funding pressures:

Identified in the Insurance Report – May 2014

- **The ringing chamber plasterwork to be repaired (deadline August 2014)**
- **An overall electrical survey to be undertaken to establish a clear picture of the condition of the installation and which elements require urgent work (deadline November 2014)**
- **A survey from a small cherry picker of all the masonry that remains to be repaired so that a more accurate assessment of the risk can be tabled (deadline November 2014)**
- **An overall asbestos survey of the church that would identify the extent of any problem (deadline November 2014)**
- Specific Risk Improvements:
 - * **Tower access – consideration to be given to the installation of a handrail within the tower coupled with the provision of bulkhead lighting** in order to reduce the potential for injury posed by the exposed lamp holders presently in place. Also **attention to uneven steps** which pose a tripping hazard.
 - * **Boiler Room access – steps leading down to the boiler room require treatment to minimise the slipping risk. In addition, consideration should be given to re-siting the lock position to improve access.**
 - * **Gutters – a system of routine clearance should be implemented at intervals not exceeding twelve months.**

13. Insurance Provision

13.1 Both St Mary's and St Andrew's continue to benefit from the services of the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group plc.

13.2 An inspection of St Mary's was undertaken by John Cain FCII, ACILA (Insurance Consultant & Surveyor) in May 2014 resulting in the production of a "Risk Management Report" (see Section 12 above).

A response to this report is now outstanding.

14. Health & Safety

14.1 The responsibility for the safety of persons in a church or churchyard lies with the incumbent and Parochial Church Council. Churches and churchyards - particularly those of a historic nature - can present particular risks to church people and visitors alike, which in extreme cases could lead to injury or even death. PCCs must therefore ensure that they undertake appropriate risk assessments and then eradicate or manage those risks responsibly.

14.2 The present Health & Safety Policy was adopted in August 2013 (as amended) and remains a “work in progress”. Risk Assessments are updated as and when required, all external event holders are required to have the relevant documentation available for inspection and all events are “Risk Assessed”.




14.3 Areas of particular concern for further work – “fire safety” and “electrical safety” in view of the condition of the wiring. See also Section 12 above Risk Management Report from Ecclesiastical Insurance.

15. Copyright and Performing Rights

































Appropriate approvals are incorporated into the fees paid to the CCLI to cover present activities.

16. Business Planning/ Growth Action Planning (GAP)

16.1 Review of St Mary's Business Plan 2013

-  No or insufficient progress
-  Work in progress/ongoing
-  Completed or on target

2014 Review [A copy of the 2013 Business Plan is still available for inspection if further clarity is needed]

- 16.1.1 Restoration of the Rector's Vestry/Choir Vestry and Oratory [Phase 6] 
- 16.1.2 The Nave Café – development of  
- 16.1.3 Increase use of the premises for church use and as an income stream  
- 16.1.4 Volunteers  
- 16.1.5 Church Use (Ministry and Ministry)  
- 16.1.6 Stockport Heritage Trust 
- 16.1.7 Shop Area  
- 16.1.8 Provision of loop system  [revised quotations/funding pending]
- 16.1.9 Provision of improved audio/visual facilities 
- 16.1.10 Provision of additional/improved lighting  [pending future Phase]  [Phase 6]
- 16.1.11 Re-wiring and additional electrical sockets  [pending future phase]  [Phase 6]
- 16.1.12 Improved WEB-site  [although remaining on Vista Site at present time]
- 16.1.13 WI-fi  [Broadband installed]
- 16.1.14 Provision of glossy information sheet(s) 
- 16.1.15 Provision of glossy "Church Guide"   [due Spring 2015]
- 16.1.16 Other priorities for 2013
 - (a) Review and updating of Church Log   [updated for Archdeacons Inspection – next due 2016]
 - (b) Completion of H&S Risk Assessments  
 - (c) Inventory Register  
 - (d) Review of Quinquennial Inspection Report   

16.2 Growth Action Plan (GAP)

Subject to separate report from the GAP Team [Adam Pinder/Catriona Smith & Rita Waters]



The primary aim of Growth Action Planning is to help each church in the Diocese to focus on what God longs for it to be like in 5 years time. The church will then decide on its priorities in the coming year. The aim of this is to ensure that each church uses its energy and talents wisely. It follows from this that the most important thing in GAP is to discern God's calling for our church meaning that prayer is central to all that we do in GAP.

Anyone wishing to support or join the GAP Team are welcome to do so.

17. The Nave Café

17.1 The Nave Café was registered with Environmental Health (Stockport Council) at the beginning of July 2013 and later awarded (January 2014) Food Standards Agency - Food Hygiene Rating: Grade 5

17.2 The agreement with Pure Innovations remains in place whereby:

Pure Innovations will: Staff the café on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday each week between the hours of 9am and 3pm; Leave the café each day in a clean tidy and hygienic condition and adhere to safe and hygienic standards of working at all time; Note food sold each day and supply the designated church staff with a food shopping list when required; Have no financial interest in the café; Report any faults or hazards relating to the café to designated church staff; Have the right to control access to the kitchen on the days Pure Innovations is staffing it in order to adhere to Health and Safety standards; Follow any locking up procedures specified by designated church staff.

St Mary' Church will: Take full responsibility for financial management. All income will go to the Church; Take full responsibility for purchasing food for sale; Take responsibility for fixing any faults in the kitchen; Register with Environmental Health and take responsibility for adhering to the standards required; Test electrical equipment (PAC) within relevant time periods; Wash laundry; have ultimate responsibility for the locking up of the Church

The running of the café of Saturday (and other times for private events etc.) will rest with St Mary's. ALL volunteers handling and preparing good to have received appropriate training and to have successfully completed Level 2 Food Hygiene. All systems and procedures put in place by Pure Innovations / St Mary's Café Manager to be observed at all times.

Full review to be undertaken during 2015

18. Stockport Heritage Trust

18.1 SHT have occupied a newly refurbished area of St Mary's since the completion of the Re-ordering to the north aisle and former Church Office area. The two rooms used have provided adequate accommodation (including provision of a lift between floor levels) and have included the provision of a "Church Shop" although with limited space.

18.2 Upon the completion of Phase 6 and availability of the Choir Vestry for SHT and/or joint use, further discussions will take place for the future development of this area of church activity [Spring/Summer 2015].

19. Performance and Achievements

19.1. Register of Services

Average number attending on a “Usual Sunday” where there is a service – Adults (over 16 years of age) 21 Children and Young People (under 10 years of age) 1. Total of 22 persons (A “Usual Sunday” being one where there is no “special” service or a service that includes a Baptism)

Average number attending on a Tuesday: Holy Communion 10
Lunch-time 43

Analysis of records shown at Appendix 6

Total Number of Adults attending: 7826

Total Number of Children attending: 673

Total number of adults and children attending 8499

Recorded number of Baptisms

| | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Infants (under 1 year) | 6 | |
| Children (1 – 4 years) | 6 | |
| Children(5 – 12) | 0 | |
| Youth / Adults (13+) | 1 | Total number of Baptisms 13 |

Number of couples married in church 1

Number of funeral services held by or on behalf of the church

Number of deceased for whom a funeral service was held in church 4

Number of deceased for whom a full funeral was conducted at a crematorium or cemetery 12

19.2 Special Events/Occasions 2014

| | |
|-----------|--|
| January | Burns Night at the Nave Cafe |
| February | MASHAV Exhibition [Sharing Knowledge for a Shared Future] Italian Evening at the Nave Cafe |
| March | Acting as Host to the World Day of Prayer Stockport Youth Orchestra Concert Pancake Party at St Mary's Rectory Christian Aid "Souper Soup" Lunch St Mary's Spring Fayre |
| April | Christian Aid "Souper Soup" Lunch Rev 320 Good Friday/Easter Day Sunrise Service |
| May | Afternoon Tea at St Mary's Rectory Stockport Creative Festival - Making Headway – The Catwalk Show Archdeacons Visitation Service at St Mary's St Mary's Plant Sale & Social Evening at the Nave Cafe |
| June | Civic Service |
| July | Penny Lane Photographic Exhibition |
| August | Civic Service WW1 Afternoon Tea / Outdoor Service & BBQ at St Mary's Rectory Stockport Fringe Festival |
| September | Heritage Open Day(s) Stockport Great War Experience Light Orchestra GB Concert Harvest at St Mary's Coffee Morning for MacMillian Cancer Support |
| October | GLO – LIFT Viking Weekend Concerts & Events featuring "Leafblade" & "Serpentyne" |
| November | GLO – Lift We'll Meet Again – Guernsey Evacuees Swiss Evening at the Nave Café Gorton Voice Concert with Elyse and Sunshine Steel |
| December | See Christmas Programme |

Christmas Programme at St Mary's

| Day | Date | Event | Time |
|-----------|---------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Sunday | 30 th November | First Sunday in Advent: "A Choral Celebration" in words and music by candlelight with the Maia Singers in preparation for Advent and Christmas | 6.30PM |
| Monday | 1 st December | CLOSED | |
| Tuesday | 2 nd December | HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME SERVICE | 10.00AM 12.15PM |
| Wednesday | 3 rd December | CLOSED | 7.00 PM |
| Thursday | 4 th December | Stockport Secondary Schools Carol Festival | 7.00PM |
| Friday | 5 th December | OPEN AS USUAL | |
| Saturday | 6 th December | St Mary's Christmas Fayre Ladybrook Singers Christmas Concert | 10.30AM 7.30PM |

| | | | |
|-----------|--|---|------------------------------------|
| Sunday | 7 th December | Ex-Services Associations Carol Service | 3PM |
| Monday | 8 th December | Stockport MENCAP Christmas Celebration with Stockport Special Schools | 1PM |
| Tuesday | 9 th December | HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME SERVICE | 10.00AM 12.15PM |
| Wednesday | 10 th December | The Light Orchestra GB Christmas Concert | 7.30PM |
| Thursday | 11 th December | "Marketing Stockport" Carol Service | 6.00PM |
| Friday | 12 th December | AGE UK Stockport Carol Service with Warren Wood Primary School & Cheadle Hulme Singing Group | 1.30PM |
| Saturday | 13 th December | Affinity Show Choir Christmas Concert | 7.30PM |
| Sunday | 14 th December | Advent Morning Prayer "Toy Service" | 10.30AM |
| Monday | 15 th December | Beechwood Cancer Care "Tree of Light" Service/Dedication | 7.00PM |
| | | | |
| Tuesday | 16 th December | HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME CAROL SERVICE | 10.00AM 12.15PM |
| Tuesday | 16 th December | Banks Lane Junior School Carol Service | 7.00PM |
| Wednesday | 17 th December | Mayor's Carol Service with Warren Wood Primary School | 12.30PM |
| Thursday | 18 th December | Vernon Park Primary School Carol Service | 2.00PM |
| Friday | 19 th December | Shopmobility Stockport Christmas Celebration with Offerton Methodist Choir Silent Night Carol Service with the Sapphire Blue Choir | 1.00PM |
| Friday | 19 th December | | 7.30PM |
| Saturday | 20 th December | "Sing Christmas" Concert with the Maia Singers | 7.30PM |
| Sunday | 21 st December | "Remembering Christmas in the absence of a loved one" | 3.00PM |
| Monday | 22 nd December | Wellspring Christmas | 1.30PM |
| Tuesday | 23 rd December | HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME CAROL SERVICE AT ST MARYS | 10.00AM 12.15PM |
| Wednesday | 24 th December CHRISTMAS EVE | CAROLS FOR ALL FAMILY CAROL SERVICE HOLY COMMUNION WITH CAROLS | 12.00 noon 6.00PM 11.00PM |
| Thursday | 25 th December CHRISTMAS DAY | FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS | 10.00AM |
| Friday | 26 th December | Closed | |
| Saturday | 27 th December | Closed | |
| Sunday | 28 th December | HOLY COMMUNION | 10.30AM |
| Monday | 29 th December | Closed | |
| Tuesday | 30 th December | Closed (No services) | |
| Wednesday | 31 st December NEW YEARS EVE | Watch Night Service | 11.30PM |
| Thursday | 1 st January 2015 | Closed | |
| Friday | 2 nd January 2015 | Closed | |
| Saturday | 3 rd January 2015 | Closed | |
| Sunday | 4 th January 2015 | HOLY COMMUNION | 10.30AM |
| Monday | 5 th January 2015 | Closed | |
| Tuesday | 6 th January 2015 | HOLY COMMUNION LUNCHTIME SERVICE | 10.00AM 12.15PM |

20. St Andrews Community Hall

20.1 St Andrews continues to have an established list of regular users covering most days of the week and is used as a place of worship on Sunday morning (with some additional weekday services from time to time)

20.2 There has been an overall excess of income over expenditure to the benefit of the overall business accounts, although the PCC are aware that profits made should be retained for ongoing maintenance, the development of St Andrews and to restore funds previously spent in the Ada Hallworth banking account.

20.3 There are some maintenance issues outstanding, health & safety work that is required and some items of furniture/fittings and fixtures that are in need of replacement. Some external decorating has been done during 2014, some interior decoration required.

20.4 St Andrews is presently used by:

Stockport Operatic Society

Manchester Bach Choir

Stockport Evangelical Church

Stockport Central Children's Services

Stockport RC Drift Club

Pure Insight

Slimming World

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (for Polling Station use)

Stockport Field Club

Individual "one-off" hire – for parties, meeting etc.

Appendix 1

St Mary's in the Market Place Balance Sheet at 31st December 2014

| | ----- £ | 2014 £ | ----- £ |
|----------------------------|------------|------------------|-----------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| 2014 Debtors Accruals | | 390.00 | |
| Cash at bank | | 13,552.47 | |
| 2013 invoices written off | | - | |
| | | <hr/> | |
| Total current assets | | 13,942.47 | |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| 2014 Creditors Accruals | | 8,204.95 | |
| | | <hr/> | |
| Total current liabilities | | 8,204.95 | |
| | | | <hr/> |
| NET ASSETS | | | 5,737.52 |
| PARISH FUNDS | | | |
| Unrestricted | | | 5,737.52 |
| Restricted | | | - |
| Endowment | | | - |
| | | | <hr/> |
| | | | 5,737.52 |

Note: Excludes Investments held and accounts specific to the Conservation and Restoration of St Mary's or other Restricted Funds (see separate statements)

Appendix 2

St Mary's in the Market Place

Statement of Financial Activity

for year ended 31st December 2014

note this excludes all restricted funds.

| | 2014 | 2013 |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Planned Giving | £ 13,023.50 | £ 12,464.45 |
| Donations | £ 14,102.01 | £ 18,120.94 |
| Church Plate Collection | £ 3,880.70 | £ 4,221.06 |
| Commercial | £ 7,235.92 | £ 9,192.11 |
| Nave Café Income | £ 19,953.97 | £ 9,127.40 |
| Fees | £ 4,200.60 | £ 3,162.50 |
| Bequests & Donations | £ - | £ 1,400.00 |
| St Andrews Income | £ 7,465.00 | £ 9,812.00 |
| | £ 69,861.70 | £ 67,500.46 |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Donations to other organisations | £ 2,212.00 | £ 1,002.30 |
| Payments Outside the Parish | £ 23,730.73 | £ 22,199.29 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | £ 26,222.26 | £ 20,317.08 |
| Nave Café Costs | £ 12,316.73 | £ 5,936.81 |
| St Andrews Costs | £ 4,351.46 | £ 7,477.01 |
| Ordinary Payments | £ 2,970.36 | £ 1,553.04 |
| Appeal | £ 2,262.41 | £ 2,030.81 |
| | £ 74,065.95 | £ 60,516.34 |
| NET GAINS / (LOSSES) | £ (4,204.25) | £ 6,984.12 |
| BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD 1 JANUARY | £ 9,941.77 | £ 2,957.65 |
| BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD 31 DECEMBER | £ 5,737.52 | £ 9,941.77 |
| Opening Balance | £ 11,613.37 | |
| Reversals | £ 1,685.10 | |
| 2014 Receipts | £ 86,093.10 | |
| 2015 Payments | -£ 72,540.63 | |
| Accruals | -£ 7,814.95 | |
| Write Offs | £ - | |
| Final Balance @ 30/12/2013 | £ 7,422.62 | |

Appendix 3
St Mary's in the Market Place
2014 Annual Accounts

Ministry

| Income | | |
|-------------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Planned Giving | | £ 13,023.50 |
| Church Plate Collection | General | £ 2,904.70 |
| Church Plate Collection | Specific | £ 976.00 |
| Fees | Assigned | £ 3,095.00 |
| | | £ 19,999.20 |

| Expenditure | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Payments Outside the Parish | Diocesan Quota | £ 18,000.00 |
| Payments Outside the Parish | Assigned Fees | £ 2,664.00 |
| Payments Outside the Parish | Deanery Exp | £ 50.00 |
| Payments Outside the Parish | Audit Fees | £ 240.00 |
| Payments Outside the Parish | Fees & Charges | £ 1,427.54 |
| Payments Outside the Parish | Rectory - Council Tax | £ 1,271.25 |
| Payments Outside the Parish | Rectory - Water Services | £ 77.94 |
| | | £ 23,730.73 |

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| GAINS / (LOSSES) | £ (3,731.53) |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|

| Income | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Donations | | £ 14,102.01 |
| Commercial | Candles | £ 897.96 |
| Commercial | Cards/Mags/Calendars | £ 382.41 |
| Commercial | Events | £ 3,875.55 |
| Commercial | Heritage Rent | £ 2,080.00 |
| Commercial | Refreshments | £ - |
| Commercial | Sale of Pews | £ - |
| Nave Café Income | | £ 19,953.97 |
| Bequests & Donations | | £ - |
| Fees | Insurance Claims | £ 1,105.60 |
| | | £ 42,397.50 |

| Expenditure | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Gas | £ 11,015.04 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Electricity | £ 2,578.64 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Water | £ 415.55 |

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Insurance | £ 6,115.27 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Telephone | £ 474.09 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Contracted Services | £ 444.29 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Furniture, Fittings & Equipment | £ 1,312.80 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Repairs & Maintenance | £ 2,325.76 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Boiler Maintenance | £ 1,540.82 |
| St Mary's Parish Church (premises and associated costs) | Caretaking Supplies | £ - |
| Donations to other organisations | Children's Society | £ 227.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Kalma Foundation | £ - |
| Donations to other organisations | Shopmobility | £ 68.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Mayor of Stockport Charity | £ 89.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Age UK | £ 65.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Leprosy Mission | £ 120.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Christian Aid | £ 40.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Wellspring | £ 68.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Mary's Meals | £ 40.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | National Churches Archdeacons | £ 25.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Visitation | £ 976.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Stockport Without Abuse | £ 50.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Royal Manchester Childrens Hospital | £ 322.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | MENCAP | £ 35.00 |
| Donations to other organisations | Banks Lane | £ 87.00 |
| Nave Café Costs | | £ 12,316.73 |
| Ordinary Payments | Stationery (inc postage) | £ 1,921.08 |
| Ordinary Payments | Photocopier | £ 219.60 |
| Ordinary Payments | Printing - external supplier | £ 150.00 |
| Ordinary Payments | Chester Diocesan News | £ 85.35 |
| Ordinary Payments | Candles | -£ 257.80 |
| Ordinary Payments | CARDS etc for resale | £ 122.05 |
| Ordinary Payments | Flowers & Wreaths | £ 424.74 |
| Ordinary Payments | Heritage Centre for resale | £ 305.34 |
| Appeal | | £ 2,262.41 |
| | | £ 45,983.76 |

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| GAINS / (LOSSES) | £ (3,586.26) |
|-------------------------|---------------------|

St Andrews**Income**

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| St Andrews Income | £ 7,465.00 |
| | £ 7,465.00 |

Expenditure

| | | |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| St Andrews Costs | Gas | £ 1,632.00 |
| St Andrews Costs | Electricity | £ 437.00 |
| St Andrews Costs | Water | £ 516.80 |
| St Andrews Costs | Insurance | £ 792.71 |
| St Andrews Costs | Grounds Maint | £ 251.60 |
| St Andrews Costs | Servicing Contracts | £ 663.58 |
| St Andrews Costs | Cleaning | £ 57.77 |
| | | £ 4,351.46 |

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | £ |
| GAINS / (LOSSES) | 3,113.54 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| | £ |
| GRAND TOTAL - GAINS / (LOSSES) | (4,204.25) |

Appendix 4

Conservation and Restoration

NatWest Account (Phase 6)

| | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2014 | Opening Balance | | | £19,832.72 |
| 28/01/2014 | Lloyds Evans Prichard | £13,349.26 | | £6,483.46 |
| 07/02/2014 | T Sumner Smith | £3,222.23 | | £3,261.23 |
| 26/02/2014 | Donation | | £25.00 | £3,286.23 |
| 12/03/2014 | Events income | | £785.78 | £4,072.01 |
| 18/03/2014 | Heritage Lottery Fund | | £8,480.00 | £12,552.01 |
| 14/04/2014 | Donation | | £1,000.00 | £13,552.01 |
| 16/05/2014 | Lloyds Evans Prichard | £6,337.36 | | £7,214.65 |
| 29/05/2014 | T Sumner Smith | £805.56 | | £6,409.09 |
| 23/06/2014 | Events income | | £832.44 | £7,241.53 |
| 27/06/2014 | Heritage Lottery Fund | | £2,120.00 | £9,361.53 |
| 15/07/2014 | National churches | £50.00 | | £9,311.53 |
| 08/10/2014 | cheque 119 | £5,937.96 | | £3,373.57 |
| 14/10/2014 | | | £13,000.00 | £16,373.57 |
| 28/10/2014 | | | £11,627.00 | £28,000.57 |
| 13/11/2014 | Lottery Funding | | £89,800.00 | £117,800.57 |
| 18/11/2014 | Donation | | £57.50 | £117,858.07 |
| 25/11/2014 | Donation | | £3,000.00 | £120,858.07 |
| 15/12/2014 | DCMS Scheme | | £989.66 | £121,847.73 |
| 23/12/2014 | DCMS Scheme | | £989.66 | £122,837.39 |
| 15/12/2014 | Donations | | £50.00 | £122,887.39 |
| 29/12/2014 | Donations | | £130.00 | £123,017.39 |
| BACS | Donation | | £1,000.00 | £124,017.39 |
| | | | | £124,017.39 Year End Closing Balance |

NatWest Account (Interior)

| | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| 2014 | Opening Balance | | | £5,929.03 |
| | Transfer Business A/C | | £500.00 | £6,429.03 |
| | Lambert Walker | £6,304.27 | | £124.76 |

The retention sum was due for payment to Lambert Walker 12 months after completion of the work to the interior. The sum of £500 was transferred from the business account to ensure sufficient funds held to pay this amount and to ensure a balance was left to keep the account open and ready for the next phase of work involving the interior of the church.

Appendix 5

Other:

Nat West Appeal Account (Business Reserve) £125.65 Appeal Account

CCLA Investment Management

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| St Marys Appeal | £663.67 | Restricted |
| Ada Hallworth | £1,716.78 | Restricted |
| Stipend Fund | £2,700.00 | Restricted |

Lloyds /TSB

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| Curacy Fund | £2,539.53 | Restricted |
| Service Account | £952.00 | obsolete account (to update) |
| 60 Day Notice | £365.24 | obsolete account (to update) |

Stocks and Shares - valuation

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| CBF (4761) | £7,800.00 | SALE PENDING |
| 4% Consolidated Stock (1650) | £1,650.00 | redemption February 2015 |
| 3.5 War Stock (1100) | £1,100.00 | redemption March 2015 |

£19,612.87

NB: Sale of assets agreed by the Parochial Church Council for use towards: Conservation and Restoration Project (Phase 6)

Appendix 6 – Attendance at Church Services

2014

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------------|----|---|
| Sunday | 5th January | Holy Communion | 17 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 7th January | Holy Communion | 8 | |
| Tuesday | 7th January | Lunchtime Service | 46 | |
| Sunday | 12th Jan | Morning Prayer | 18 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 14th Jan | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 50 | |
| Sunday | 19th Jan | Morning Prayer | 26 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 21st Jan | Holy Communion | 13 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 44 | |
| Sunday | 26th Jan | Morning Prayer | 14 | |
| Tuesday | 28th Jan | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 38 | |
| Sunday | 2nd Feb | HB & Baptism | 62 | 6 |
| Tuesday | 4th Feb | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 50 | |
| Sunday | 9th Feb | Morning Prayer | 20 | 3 |
| Tuesday | 11th Feb | Holy Communion | 12 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 37 | |
| Sunday | 16th Feb | Holy Communion | 19 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 18th Feb | Holy Communion | 12 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 43 | 1 |
| Sunday | 23rd Feb | Morning Prayer | 21 | 3 |
| Tuesday | 25th Feb | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 50 | |
| Sunday | 2nd March | Holy Communion | 20 | 2 |
| Tuesday | 4th March | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 44 | |
| Wednesday | 5th March | Holy Communion | 4 | |
| Friday | 7th March | Womens WD Prayer | 91 | |
| Sunday | 9th March | Morning Prayer | 28 | 2 |
| Tuesday | 11th March | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 40 | |
| Sunday | 16th March | Holy Communion | 18 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 18th March | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 41 | |
| Sunday | 23rd March | Morning Prayer | 23 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 25th March | Holy Communion | 12 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 45 | |

| | | | | |
|-----------|------------|---------------------------|-----|----|
| Sunday | 30th March | Special Service | 25 | 2 |
| Tuesday | 1st April | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 39 | |
| Sunday | 6th April | Holy Communion | 25 | |
| Tuesday | 8th April | Holy Communion | 12 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 42 | |
| Wednesday | 9th April | Funeral Baby Henry Fox | 110 | |
| Sunday | 13th April | Holy Communion | 23 | 2 |
| Tuesday | 15th April | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 39 | |
| Thursday | 17th April | Holy Communion | 65 | |
| Friday | 18th April | Family Service | 18 | |
| | | Ecu. Service | 36 | |
| Sunday | 20th April | Dawn Service | 17 | |
| | | Holy Communion | 44 | 3 |
| Tuesday | 22nd April | Holy Communion | 8 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 42 | |
| Sunday | 27th April | Morning Prayer | 35 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 29th April | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 44 | |
| Sunday | 4th May | Holy Communion | 21 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 6th May | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 42 | |
| | | Funeral of Peter Atkinson | 118 | |
| Sunday | 11th May | Morning Prayer | 27 | 3 |
| Tuesday | 13th May | Holy Communion | 8 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 48 | |
| Sunday | 18th May | Holy Communion | 29 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 20th May | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 43 | |
| Sunday | 25th May | Morning Prayer | 25 | 1 |
| | | Baptism | 50 | 12 |
| Tuesday | 27th May | Holy Communion | 7 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 46 | |
| | | Archdeacons Visitation | 235 | |
| Sunday | 1st June | Holy Communion | 26 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 3rd June | Holy Communion | 7 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 34 | 1 |
| Sunday | 8th June | Holy Communion | 15 | 2 |

| | | | | |
|---------|-------------|------------------------------|-----|----|
| Monday | 9th June | Funeral of Jim Clare | 284 | |
| Tuesday | 10th June | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 48 | |
| Sunday | 15th June | Civic Sunday | 76 | 3 |
| Tuesday | 19th June | Holy Communion | 13 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 40 | |
| Sunday | 22nd June | Holy Communion | 20 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 24th June | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 43 | |
| Sunday | 29th June | Holy Communion | 25 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 1st July | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Special Service Rem Audrey N | 56 | 1 |
| Sunday | 6th July | Holy Communion | 26 | 2 |
| Tuesday | 8th July | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 41 | |
| Sunday | 13th July | Morning Prayer | 16 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 15th July | Holy Communion | 12 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 37 | |
| Sunday | 20th July | Holy Communion | 20 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 22nd July | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 42 | |
| Sunday | 27th July | Morning Prayer | 22 | |
| Tuesday | 29th July | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 35 | 3 |
| Sunday | 3rd August | Holy Communion & Baptism | 60 | 9 |
| | | Civic Service WWI | 253 | 32 |
| Tuesday | 5th August | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 39 | |
| Sunday | 10th August | Morning Prayer & Baptism | 74 | 25 |
| Tuesday | 12th August | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 52 | 2 |
| Sunday | 17th August | Holy Communion & Baptism | 63 | 17 |
| Tuesday | 19th August | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 41 | |
| | | Funeral Joyce Rawbotham | 56 | |
| Sunday | 24th August | Morning Prayer | 20 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 26th August | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 53 | 1 |
| Sunday | 31st August | Morning Prayer | 16 | |

| | | | | |
|----------|----------------|----------------------------|----|----|
| Tuesday | 2nd September | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 44 | 1 |
| Sunday | 7th September | Holy Communion | 23 | 2 |
| | | Wedding | 73 | 7 |
| Tuesday | 9th September | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 38 | |
| Sunday | 14th September | Morning Prayer | 22 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 16th September | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 46 | |
| Sunday | 21st September | Holy Communion & Baptism | 59 | 11 |
| Tuesday | 23rd September | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 33 | |
| Sunday | 28th September | Harvest Fest & Baptism | 36 | 4 |
| Tuesday | 30th September | Holy Communion | 13 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 43 | |
| Saturday | 4th October | GLO | 50 | |
| Sunday | 5th October | Morning Prayer | 15 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 7th October | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 33 | |
| Sunday | 12th October | Holy Communion | 19 | |
| Tuesday | 14th October | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 29 | |
| Sunday | 19th October | Morning Prayer | 19 | 2 |
| Tuesday | 21st October | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 29 | |
| Sunday | 26th October | Holy Communion | 22 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 28th October | Holy Communion | 12 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 44 | 1 |
| Sunday | 2nd November | Holy Communion & Baptism | 54 | 6 |
| Tuesday | 4th November | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 35 | |
| Friday | | Memorial Service Ballenine | 24 | |
| Sunday | 9th November | Remembrance MP | 25 | |
| Tuesday | 11th November | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 46 | |
| Sunday | 16th November | Holy Communion | 18 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 18th November | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 47 | |
| Sunday | 23rd November | Morning Prayer / Shoe Box | 67 | 7 |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|--|-----|-----|
| Tuesday | 25th November | Holy Communion | 8 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 53 | |
| Saturday | 29th November | Gorton Voice Community Choir | 75 | |
| Sunday | 30th November | Holy Communion | 21 | 1 |
| | | Advent Carol Service with the Maia Choir | 68 | |
| Tuesday | 2nd December | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 49 | |
| Thursday | 4th December | Senior Schools Concert - cancelled | | |
| Saturday | 6th December | Ladybrook Singers | 87 | |
| Sunday | 7th December | Holy Communion | 23 | |
| | | Ex-Services Carol Service | 38 | |
| Monday | 8th December | MENCAP Carol Service | 127 | 50 |
| Tuesday | 9th December | Holy Communion | 10 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 40 | |
| Wednesday | 10th December | Light Orchestra Concert | 64 | 2 |
| Thursday | 11th December | Marketing Stockport | 38 | 2 |
| Friday | 12th December | AGE UK Carol Service | 150 | 49 |
| Saturday | 13th December | Affinity Show Choir | 86 | |
| Sunday | 14th December | Toy Service | 23 | 1 |
| Monday | 15th December | Beechwood CancerCare | 138 | 3 |
| Tuesday | 16th December | Holy Communion | 11 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service | 49 | |
| | | Banks Lane Carol Service | 297 | 113 |
| Wednesday | 17th December | Mayors Carol Service | 97 | 42 |
| Thursday | 18th December | Vernon Park Primary School | 137 | 124 |
| Friday | 19th December | Shopmobility Stockport | 161 | |
| | | Silent Night Carol Service | 23 | |
| Saturday | 20th December | Sing Christmas / Maia Choir & Laurel Ln | 148 | 27 |
| Sunday | 21st December | Holy Communion | 23 | |
| | | Remembering a Loved One | 21 | 2 |
| Monday | 22nd December | Wellspring Carol Service | 45 | 1 |
| Tuesday | 23rd December | Holy Communion | 9 | |
| | | Lunchtime Service with St Marys Singers | 94 | 6 |
| Wednesday | 24th December | Carol Service | 112 | 20 |
| | | Family Carols | 79 | 30 |
| | | Midnight Communion | 57 | 1 |
| Thursday | 25th December | Festival of Carols | 35 | 1 |
| Sunday | 28th December | Holy Communion | 17 | |
| Wednesday | 31st December | Watchnight Service | 6 | |

Total Number of Adults attending: 7826

Total Number of Children attending: 673 Total number of adults and children attending 8499

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Appendix 7 The Rector's Annual Report

I once had a Churchwarden who had a couple of pet phrases. One of them was "Roger you have to do the Vicary things" gently encouraging me to tackle those things vicars just have to do. The other phrase was "Nice to have Roger", meaning dream on!

During the past year I have found that doing " the Vicary things " has come very easily to me after 18 years in the job, here in Stockport, and 33 years as an ordained man. Having said that I am not finding the task any easier; in fact I'll be honest and say it is becoming increasingly more challenging and demanding. I warn anyone considering the ordained ministry that they shouldn't look at me as a model or a way ahead. There is a great need for men and women to offer themselves for full time ministry but we know from experience in this Parish that there just isn't the money to pay for all the full time clergy that people would like. I cannot predict what the Diocese will say to the Parish representatives one day , here in this parish, but when they look at the track record, I fear that they will not be too confident about providing another full time priest, to this ancient parish which has known full time ministers, Rectors and curates for over 700 years. Of course there will be work to do; there will always be work to do in a town centre like this one, for those with faith and conviction, and energy and drive, and imagination. I was once told by someone who should have been an encouragement to me, that this was "a quiet parish". Well its not now, dear! And I want to begin by paying tribute to all those of you who have given your time and energy, your faith and enthusiasm, your time and your money, your talents and your goodwill, as volunteers to help to make this place what it is, The Welcoming Church.

12 years ago a couple started coming to the Tuesday Lunchtime service. They sat on the right hand side, a few rows back. Then suddenly the husband died, on a Tuesday, after the service. He was Isobel's husband. Isobel came to see me shortly afterwards and, not looking for sympathy, but at her for something useful to do in the church, saying I'll never see you without an organist. And from that day onwards Isobel has played a leading role in the life of this church, both as organist and as Churchwarden, a role she relinquishes today, after 10 long years.

I think we all know what a good job Isobel has done as Churchwarden , but we may not know either how much time she has actually given to the task, behind the scenes or how much pleasure and pride she has gained from being so intimately involved in the life of the church in these past 10 years. Since 2006 Isobel has presided over the decision making and expenditure for 6 phases of work of monumental and historic proportions. The plaque on the wall says, or will say, that this work has cost £1.3 million which is quite extraordinary. When that Churchwarden said "Nice to have, Roger" to me years ago in another parish, neither I nor Isobel, nor any of us more

intimately concerned with the future of the church could have imagined that what we dreamed of and hoped for, would one day come true.

Of course I am sad and discomforted by the hard fact that the Parish Share hasn't been met in full for years, but on the other hand I am immensely grateful to all those who have contributed financially to a greater and lesser extent, to make all this that we see about us come true. Isobel has not only seen it, she has worked for it, week after week, month after month, year after year! And now it is time for her to hand over the reigns to others .

Her name is inscribed on the plaque in the Tower, just as the Churchwardens of the 1884 restoration and reordering are inscribed on the brass opposite. Her name will be forever associated with these amazing years of change and development in this fine old Parish Church. Let us show our appreciation to Isobel in the normal way.

There are two other people who have played an invaluable part in this extraordinary journey with me, bring "Nice to have" from being a dream to a reality . The first is Sue Heap, my personal Administrator, who is in reality far more than that. Without her I could not face up to many of "the Vicary things " I have to do, things like bringing the Baptism Register up to date; facing up to sorting through and clearing out 25 years of my predecessor's PCC minutes and other papers; dealing with my annual tax return by the deadline, to avoid me being fined; sorting out all the books and files which had lain undisturbed in the big green safe in the Rector's Vestry for years and years, and which now reside safely in the Chester Record Office for eternity; getting the Christmas programme and participants sorted and on queue; organising concerts and celebration dinners in the church; craft groups and craft fairs; not to mention the Nave Cafe, which I may have dreamt of, but never imagined would ever come into being. Besides all this, she has been a friend and confidante, a shoulder to cry on, a wall to shout at, and someone to help through life, when she is feeling down, and in need of some practical help from a friend in return .

She and Isobel have worked very closely on the Project Management Team, and Sue's administrative expertise was essential to our success in securing funding from English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund, allowing us to proceed with the interior reordering and refurbishment of the church." Nice to have " became a reality thanks in no small part to Sue. And her administrative experience has also given Sue the insights and abilities she has needed to set up and run the Nave Cafe, which, as we have heard again this year, is an essential part of our financial planning.

Sue gives her time exclusively and totally free, in other words she is a volunteer. We now ensure that her expenses are met, but otherwise, you could say that her's is a labour of love. And it's tough at times. So Sue is someone we should acknowledge and thank warmly today, as we tie up the ends of phase 6 and move on into the future. Please once again, show your appreciation to Sue in the usual manner.

The third person I wish to highlight this afternoon, and I have to say hurriedly that the list of those I should thank is very long, is Canon John Briggs. You may not know John very well, but he has come to know this church better than he could ever have imagined over the past 10 years. I first came across John in my former parish, when he was Rector of St. Michael's Macclesfield. We

needed toilets and a kitchen in our town centre church in Congleton. I had heard of this man who had done great things in Macc. So I went to see him. John and Katie entertained me to lunch, and I'm sure John dropped words of wisdom into my ear. Nothing came of that encounter, because we had no money! "Nice to have Roger," I heard the Churchwarden say, in other words, "Dream on!" They did, and now that church too has a kitchen, toilets and a new roof, and new windows on the way, so I believe!

John had known this church and my predecessor, Canon Fairhurst well for many years and had a heart for town centre ministry. He could see the potential for the church, and the role it could play if only...

John retired at just the right time, because it was just at that time that we were beginning to put things together, with the help of our then energetic and enthusiastic new architect John Prichard (and he still is, energetic) and John offered his help. I can honestly say that without John Briggs on board to lead this very small but dedicated team, this project, these five phases of work could not have been accomplished. Time and again he has taken our breath away with his wisdom and his courage, and his dogged determination to get each job done. His attention to detail, matched only by that of Isobel and Sue, has created a formidable team, the mention of which at Heritage Lottery Fund HQ makes them shudder. Oh not THEM again!

John is still very active in ministry in his local parish church, in Poynton, as is his lovely wife Katie who is a Churchwarden. He too will be hoping, I'm sure, that we will say, thank you John and now have rest, because he really has put life and soul into this church, and we couldn't have asked for more from him. Personally speaking he has been the greatest support and friend to me, in this momentous time, I owe him so much, as we all do, for what he has helped us to achieve over these past ten years. Please show your appreciation in the usual way.

And so I should say something about the work. After all, what we set out to do, to make St. Mary's safe and fit for purpose for the 21st century we have achieved. It is quite remarkable, and I am glad to say that apart from the very rare and needlessly uncomfortable moment or confrontation, which usually begins with the barbed (well you can tell by the tone) "What have you DONE with the pews?" the response to the changes we have brought about have been totally overwhelmingly positive.

I am so glad we chose the Theo chair. I watched the Service in Leicester Cathedral for the Burial of King Richard Third and I noticed that they had the chair we nearly bought, the Howe chair, and I thought, poor vergers! Ours not only look nice but they are so so easy to move around.

The work that has just been completed on the vestries was not only something that was urgently required to be done, but it has also hugely enhanced the future use of the building, besides making it a much more attractive and memorable part of the church. Its panelled Rector's vestry is quite outstanding and possibly unique, and now looks and feels much better than it ever did before. It has also wonderfully revealed some of its medieval secrets, which the Victorians uncovered and then bricked up. The archeological survey will, I hope go some way to explaining what the room was like centuries ago, but today in 2015 we can now claim to have two excellent, heated, watertight, well lit rooms, to add to the church's facilities.

I would like to pay tribute to the skill of the craftsmen who have come to us from Lambert Walker of Oldham , and their associates, whose work will live on now for centuries to come. So much of the stonemasons's work, and the detailed work of the pointers and the fitters, the electricians and the plumbers ; not forgetting the roofers , who have made the two vestry roofs secure and lead free for generations to come, will never been seen by you and I . It is all hidden away, often high up and out of sight. I have been privileged to have watch this work at close quarters and on a regular basis, the work being undertaken in all weathers, and with a cheerfulness and commitment which I can honestly say is second to none in my experience.

Throughout the whole project , our Architect John Prichard has given us information and advice which we have accepted and valued, and he has maintained a keen and personal interest in the work, together with his team, the Structural Engineer, Fred Tandy, the Quantity surveyor, who recently retired, and his own assistant, whose name escapes me! But who left his mark on the planning process and what we see today!

It goes without saying, but I shall say it nevertheless, that there is still much work to do on this building, both inside and out. Let's be absolutely straightforward about this. You are members of a congregation which closes to worship in a Grade One listed building in dire need of years of tlc! For example on the inside, the electrics need completely rewiring and relighting in a 21 st century, labour saving, power saving energy saving way, ie led lighting , a major undertaking. The whole of the upstairs, including the ceiling needs remedial work on it and redecoration. The Chancel is crying out for a complete refurbishment and when it is relit in a modern style, it will look quite wonderful . If our Architect can transform a church's all, which he has done to great effect at St.Michael's in Bramhall, he can transform our venerable old chancel.

Then there is the outside. Thanks to work done under my predecessor that roofs are in good order, so I believe . But the Architect will tell you that there is years of work still to be done on the Nave stonework, some of which is obvious to the unpractised eye, by just looking up. Last winter a finial was blown off the Chancel, from a corner buttress. If that had hit someone passing by, be it a homeless person, or a passing shopper, what a calamity that would have been, and I would have been in the papers for all the wrong reasons! Essential work needs still to be done, I'm afraid.

More essential still, and the reason for our being here is the work of the Gospel.

We are meeting today, on a Sunday, because it is traditional to do so. After all there was a time when there was only one congregation and that met on a Sunday. Now , in the 21 st century, times and patterns of life have changed, almost beyond recognition ,certainly in my lifetime and in my ministry. And even dare I say, in my time here as Rector, which is now more than 18 years. The ministry of women has now been fully recognised and we have a woman Bishop, not just in the church , but as our very own Bishop of Stockport , Libby Lane. This is a remarkable and wonderful thing, and I am only sorry that we shall not be welcoming Bishop Libby to St. Mary's for her very first Civic Service this year, as I had hoped and planned. The Bishop will come one day soon I hope, but don't hold your breath as she is a very busy and booked up lady, as you can imagine

I have been heartened by the arrival of new members joining our congregation this year, but I am concerned that the Sunday congregation, whilst not dying, is not growing numerically, and we really need to ask ourselves why this should be, since the doors are open, and there are plenty of people around, both living in the town centre and visiting the town centre on a Sunday for recreation and shopping of course.

By contrast the Tuesday Lunchtime Service seems to be attracting more and more people, week by week, month by month, and I'm still not sure why! The fact is that spiritually there is obviously a need. And that need is obviously being met, or people wouldn't come to such a short service in the middle of the week. The Tuesday Service of Holy Communion is also very regularly attended by a group of people who obviously value it highly as a spiritual watering hole during the week.

The GAP initiative, which is being so well handled by Adam, Catriona and Rita seeks to address all these questions, like why are we here? And hopefully, their work and the willingness of the church to change with the times and move on and develop new ideas and ways of "doing church", will bear fruit. In the meantime I have reason to be positive and hopeful that St. Mary's has an exciting and an assured future.

We do not know what the future holds. Some months ago, Rita Waters our reader, whom we appreciate having with us, was told that her eldest son Mark had a brain tumour. We cannot imagine what that has meant to Rita and her family, but we hold Mark and Rita and the family in our prayers for the future. Rita, meanwhile helps when she can and when she feels up to it, and she enjoys leading a pastoral study group on Tuesdays which is much appreciated by the regulars who attend.

On reflection, I conclude as I look around, that this congregation has survived the disruption and changes that have come about over the past 10 years extremely well. I am sad that some of those who were with us in the early years have not lived to see the remarkable developments which have come about. They would have been thrilled to have seen them, as we are privileged to do today. We remember them all with great affection and thanks to God for their love and friendship and for their support and encouragement along the way.

Someone said to me not so long ago, as they stood in church, that they thought it was wonderful what we have achieved here at St. Mary's and how marvellous the church looks now. They were obviously not looking up into the gallery, or at the roof of the porch as they came in! But that's the point isn't it? Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and many many people are seeing this venerable old church, the Parish Church, as something really rather beautiful, both inside and outside. Those of us who live here and who worship here week by week perhaps don't see it in quite the same way as a visitor, or someone who lived in Stockport a long time ago and has come back to revisit their roots. People are greatly impressed with what you have done here, and I know that our Diocesan Bishop Peter feels that too, because he has said so to me more than once.

I am delighted to be able to say that Bishop Peter has arranged his busy schedule to come and join us for what I hope will be a great service of celebration and thanksgiving to God in June. I

hope that bit will be an occasion at which many of those who have played a key and active part in the great work of Restoration, Conservation and Reordering the church in these past 10 years will be present. We can only ask them, which we have, this week.

Some weeks ago I made a statement to the Parochial Church Council regarding the Civic Service, which has been held here in the Parish Church for many years, perhaps since records began. Sadly for reasons totally beyond my control or power to influence in any way, and without warning, advice, or prior consultation, those at the Town Hall who are responsible for such things, advised us that the Civic Service would not be held here this year. Instead the Mayor Elect had chosen to have his service at St. Elisabeth's Church in Reddish.

Despite my protestations in the mildest form, the Council simply stated that the choice of venue is the right of the Mayor Elect to choose and there would therefore be no need for any further discussion.

My personal views on the matter are well known to the Bishop's office, as well as in the Town Hall. I am naturally very sorry indeed to witness this turn of events, and the loss of what was once considered to be the most dignified and honouring Service to our new Mayor at the outset of his or her year of office. I have worked diligently for 18 years to maintain and develop a good, and creative working relationship with the Town Hall, and with the Mayor's office in particular. It all seemed to count for nothing, and I am left wondering what the future holds. No one knows.

We will still continue to invite the Mayor to services at St. Mary's, but for this particular Mayor elect at least, St. Mary's will not play that significant part in the Mayoral Year, which previous Mayors of Stockport have enjoyed since time immemorial. The Mayor has of course been invited to the V.E. Day Anniversary Service as well as to the service in June. I feel certain there will be a Civic presence on each occasion, and we will welcome the Mayor accordingly. Enough said.

Returning briefly to the state of the building and the future direction of the church's life, there is still a long way to go. Already there is talk of "new schemes" "the next phase" and of "how such vast sums of money may be found". I think we've been there before! And yet here we are today.

To end I would like to say that for me, speaking personally, however much one comes to love a parish church such as this, in the end it's not about buildings at all, it's about people. And I am humbled and privileged to be preparing two adult members of our congregation, Razieh and Alex for Confirmation this week, and to be presenting them to our new Bishop Libby, who will first baptise Razieh, before confirming her, alongside numerous others in the Deanery, at St. George's Church.

Christianity is a living faith, an attractive faith, a historic faith, and a true faith, a faith for all ages and for all nations, for all tongues, for all colours and for all generations.

This faith has been practised and proclaimed here on this very spot, within this very building, at least the part of the building that remains, for over 700 years! And we are a part of that history, and part of that tradition, and part of that faithful witness to the Life and Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ on that first Easter Day.

This is why we are here.

And this is what we believe.

This is our Past and Present and Future!

I hope that in the months and years to come St. Mary's will not be so weighed down or distracted by the material aspects of church life and the maintenance of a Grade One listed building, that it's good folk forget the reason why we are here in the first place.

Let me finish with some of the words of our GAP Mission statement for this church family.

"We long to make this place a more vibrant church full of the Holy Spirit. Here we are, offering ourselves to the community as an amenity, as a haven from the world and as a beacon for Christ!"

God bless you and God bless St. Mary's in the year ahead.

Rev. Roger Scoones – Rector