

St Marys Scottish Episcopal Church

St Mary's Episcopal Church

Dalkeith Country Park

Dalkeith

EH22 2NA

Charity Number : SC001677



REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2024 - 25

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Reference and Administrative Information :
Registered Charity No SC001677

Principle Address St Mary's Church
Dalkeith Country Park
Dalkeith
EH22 2NA
Internet : www.stmarysdalkeith.co.uk

**Charity Trustees
(Vestry Members)** The Revd.. P Harris, Rector and Chairman

Office Bearers

Ms V Ross, Secretary (appointed January 2024)
Ms A Mackay, Treasurer (appointed November 2019)
Mrs M McMeekin, Peoples Warden (appointed December 2023)
Mr A Keiller, Rectors Warden (appointed December 2024)
Ms A Mackay, Lay Rep (elected November 2022)

Elected and Voting Members

Ms V Ross (elected November 2022)
Mrs R Brouwers-Harries (elected November 2022)
Ms R Adams (elected November 2022)
Mrs P Jones (elected December 2023)
Ms E Johnson (elected December 2023)
Ms A Mackay (elected December 2023)
Mr S Somerfield (elected December 2024)
Ms A Ainsworth (elected December 2024)

Bankers Reliance Bank
Faith House
23 – 24 Lovat Lane
London
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Independent Examiner Mr I B Wilson
Bonnyrigg
EH19 2AA

Annual Report of the Members of the Vestry
Prepared - On behalf of the Trustees by:-

Ms A Mackay
Vestry Treasurer
31 December 2025

Introduction

The Vestry, as Charity Trustees of St Mary's Church, is pleased to present its annual report and accounts for the year ending 30th September 2025.

We are a small, friendly congregation who welcome both families and individuals into our church. We enjoy getting together with people as a church community, meeting socially whenever we can and not just on Sundays, and pursuing our mission of developing and enhancing Christian Worship. We welcome families in all shapes and sizes - children, large and small, teenagers, parents, grandparents, singles, divorcees, widows and widowers. The challenge is finding ways to cater for them all.

The mission of our church, we feel, can be described within the two Greats of scripture "The Great Commandments" and "The Great Commission".

The Great Commandments: In Matthew Chapter 22 Jesus said "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself."

The Great Commission: In Matthew Chapter 28 Jesus tells his disciples "To go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Our vision is our church will always be a place of welcome where our worship is meaningful and relevant. In addition we continue to search for ways in which to put God's law of "love your neighbour" into practice. We don't currently have a church hall, but this achieved our vision of a church building open throughout the week and engaging with the community, supporting both our regular community and encouraging visitors.

Linked Charge

St Mary's is a linked charge, linked with St Leonard's of Lasswade, with whom we share a Rector and the Rectory. St Mary's is therefore responsible for 50% of the Rectors salary (called the stipend) and 50% of the costs of the Rectory (maintenance, heat & light, etc.).

We also have joint activities with St Leonard's, as well as the formal financial links.

Clergy

We are very blessed as a church to have a Clergy Team comprising of our Rector, Rev Peter Harris, an Assistant Priest Non Stipended, Rev Jacqui du Rocher, and five Retired Assistant Priests, Rev Elizabeth Jones, Rev Jennie Godfrey, Rev Mike Jones, and Rev Bill Elliot. We welcomed Rev Janice Aiton into this team this year. They have a mix of skills, talents and approaches to worship and have supported the church and Rector to offer regular Sunday Worship. It is our prayer that they will know God stirring up the flame of love within them, to equip them for ministry within the congregations as we seek to grow and deepen our faith together.

All the following activities reflect St Mary's activities for 1st October 2024 to 30th September 2025.

Church Life and Activities

Worship at St Mary's

A Communion Service each Sunday at 10am. The first, second, third and fourth Sunday we use the Scottish Episcopal Liturgy and hope to offer additional services to children where possible. In months where we have a fifth Sunday (four times each year), we have less formal and more participative service we call Cafe Church. Numerically we are a stable church with a regular Sunday congregation of around 25 to 35 people on a Sunday morning. Each of these services is followed by "coffee at the back of church". This helps to promote fellowship and friendship, a key element of being part of St Mary's.

In addition to our weekly service at St Mary's on a Sunday, there is weekly communion service on a Wednesday morning. This service is held at our sister church of St Leonard's or at the Rectory but is open to and attended by members of both congregations both in person and virtually.

In 2016 St Mary's introduced a "Messy Church" service, once a month during term time i.e. September to June, on the final Saturday of the month, between 4pm and 6pm. This continues to be very successful with regular attendees of 25 and 30 people (additional attendees of parents and children new to St Mary's). It has been a delight to build up our relationship with those who have been coming along over the last few years and to be part of their families lives as we watch the children grow. It is encouraging to welcome in new families, some of whom have never been to church before and leave feeling well fed and blessed and looking forward to our next meeting. As a direct result of this, marriages and baptisms have taken place. Messy Church now augments our existing alternative Services for Families like Christingle and Easter Fun Services, which continue to be very successful. Changes to the PVG scheme meant we need to register all our volunteers so the Autumn term was put on hold.

A weekly order of service is used which is more like a weekly magazine and includes notices/news items. This is called Connect, and is sent electronically to members of St Mary's and St Leonard's. Paper copies are available at the church service.

Fellowship

Our Fellowship Group meets every two weeks during term time in St Mary's Church from 7.30pm-9pm and is entertained by local speakers from the congregation and the local community.

There are two Bible study groups. A Home Group that meets every second Monday and another Home Group that meets every second Tuesday, both groups meeting weekly during Lent. These are an opportunity to meet in a smaller group to study the Bible, pray for one another, and get to know one another, in a way that isn't always possible on a Sunday morning. Both groups include members of St Mary's and our sister church St Leonard's congregations.

A Reflections Group meets monthly on a Wednesday afternoon. They have concluded their reflections on the book 'Ascent -The Pattern of Faithfulness' by Daniel Ralph. This book covers the Songs of Ascent (Psalms 120-134) and the group are finding the psalms very relevant. They celebrated the end of their pilgrimage by having Peter celebrate communion with them. They have now selected their next book 'Good News at Rock Bottom' by Ray Ortlund. This book focuses on Isaiah 57-15 and encourages us to use this for support.

"Coffee at Mary's" takes place every month usually on the first Saturday morning of the month. This is an open coffee morning is held in the social area at the back of church at St Mary's. The Swap Shop during the coffee morning continued to be held with themes of Kitchen equipment, Soft Furnishings, Garden things and plants, Fashion Accessories and Summer Tops, Neck Attire and Puzzles and Board Games. The Coffee at Mary's banner which is displayed the week before, continues to bring in a number of people from the community and passers by in the Country Park.

Recognising the need to support families with pets, we started our Pet Food Bank in the winter of 2022. We work in partnership with Edinburgh Cat and Dog Home who provide the food items as well as other pet accessories. We provide the venue, a cuppa and friendship. This reduces the attendees pet food bill for the month. They are given enough food for a week and may give them the help to keep their pet in these expensive times. On average 18-20 dogs are helped and 9-10 cats each month but recently catered for 45 dogs and 38 cats - a record number.

There are also many members from both our congregation and from St Leonard's who are following the Cursillo Way. This is a method of discipleship rooted in ancient Christian practice which helps to keep us alive to Christ's mission for the 21st Century.

There is a knitting group that meets monthly at Newbyres Care Home where they enjoy meeting with some of the residents and care staff. All are welcome to join in to knit or crochet with friendly chatter and a cup of tea or coffee.

The Book Club meets bi-monthly, on a Friday evening. We meet in the back of the Church. As well as reviewing books, the highlight of getting together includes coffee and biscuits. In 2024-25 we enjoyed -The Dictionary People by Sarah Ogilvie, Clear by Carys Davis, True Biz by Sara Novic, Mister God this is Anna by Fynn and The Fellowship of Puzzlemakers by Samuel Burr.

Regular donations for the Storehouse Foodbank are collected and passed on to those in need who have been referred there.

The lead ministers from the various churches in our area regularly meet up for prayer, discussion and mutual support. We once again organised and delivered a successful BBQ Outreach for Dalkeith, Our main activities together often revolve around supporting the Storehouse or planning Holy Week and Easter services.

The Eco-Congregation group have been working away taking responsibility for different aspects of caring for our environment and working towards reducing our carbon output to be Net Zero by 2030 - to match The Scottish Episcopal Church commitment. Both churches have therefore moved their electrical supply over to a Green Tariff as a first step in reducing our carbon footprint. At St Mary's we have engaged with the Heathack program to look at the current use of St Mary's church and how some initial savings could be made. Pipes have been lagged and a new Hive smart thermostat was installed. This has given us better control of the heating system. They are currently in the process of appointing a Heating Consultant to guide the next stage of replacing and improving the heating system. We have now invested in an electric car for the use of the Rector to further reduce our carbon output. We are leasing a vehicle as a shared cost with St Leonard's. Solar panels at the Rectory, donated by a church member, is the source for most of the power used to charge this vehicle.

At the start of 2023 a social committee was formed following a Joint Vestry meeting as part of the visioning process. They meet regularly to plan social and fundraising events and endeavour to foster positive relations between us and our sister church of St Leonard's. We have enjoyed several events throughout the year – Bluebell walk followed by lunch, Strawberry Tea, Harvest Supper, Quiz Night, Mens Night, Summer and Christmas Fairs.

The church building is providing meeting premises during weekdays for three Volunteer/Connect groups from the local community.

- Digital Connect provides support for any digital query on any device. The aim of this group is to help prevent digital and social isolation due to lack of skills using technology.
- Volunteer Gardening Group organised by Volunteer Midlothian. The group have won awards, Three Summit Awards going to young people, The Mentors Award for the Team and the Climate Action Team of the Year Award.
- Mindfulness in Nature organised by Thistle Trust provides outdoor activity under the green prescription initiative.

Church Life

St Mary's website continues to attract much attention including wedding enquiries from abroad. Why not have a look at :- www.stmarysdalkeith.org.uk .

Safeguarding/PVG is fully integrated into all vestry meetings and groups in the church. Information posters and helplines are displayed on the church noticeboard.

We have continued with our Pastoral Group. This continues to keep in touch with church members who are not able to attend our services and continues to care for our church members and maintain contact with those who have been drawn to us through life events. Periodic meetings are held to achieve these aims and to set up programmes of appropriate care, including greeting cards, hospital visiting and personal visits. The Pastoral Group has a key role in keeping in touch, by telephone or visits, on a regular basis with each and every member of the congregation and their families, and offering support where required.

Church Life continues to include Messy Church, Fellowship meetings, Book Group, Bible Study Groups, Reflections Group, Coffee at Mary's and Pet Food Bank too. A loyal band

of volunteers also continues to clean, polish, decorate the church with flowers and provide refreshments after Sunday services. All these events need organisers and volunteers and the Church is deeply grateful for the amount of time and effort that people give.

We again supported several local and international charities during the year. This year we supported the Bishops Lent Appeal, Blythwood Shoe Box appeal, Scripture Union and Mission Aviation Fellowship. In addition the congregation makes food donations for Dalkeith Storehouse Project.

Within the ecclesiastical boundary of our charge is a large new housing development known as Shawfair. We have been working together with other churches in the area to provide a variety of activities to help foster good community cohesion and support the community to enable good relationships to develop between the church and community. We endeavoured to organise a monthly worship service and although there was a good beginning there was not the critical mass to continue. With the aid of a grant we restructured our outreach and now provide a variety of events for families – Holiday Club, pop up activities and a Light Party. These events have helped us raise the profile of the churches that border the Shawfair community. We are applying to Diocese to allocate some of the Investment in the Future Fund to advance things in this area.

Church and Community Hall

At St Mary's AGM in October 2017 it was agreed to research the possibility of building a Church Hall adjacent to the main church building. This would be for both practical and ecumenical purposes.

The current congregation average age is 70 and likely to increase. This is obviously a worry for our long term future. Congregational Giving provides just 35% of our regular income. Therefore without some radical thinking St Mary's may not be financially sustainable in 10 years time.

To exist long term St Mary's needs to reach out for additional forms of income (like renting out a church hall) and reach out for new people (creating a new Christian based community centre). This in addition to enhancing St Mary's as a place of Worship.

During 2018/19 we employed an Architect to produce Outline Plans and Drawings and are now at the stage of employing a Quantity Surveyor to produce outline costings for the project.

It is fully recognized that St Mary's cannot afford to fund such a project on its own, which may cost over £500k. We will therefore need to seek and secure grants and gifts from appropriate benefactors if the project is to go ahead.

At the point of Covid lock-down in March 2020 we had agreed appointing a Quantity Surveyor. Since then matters have gone quiet and no further progress can be reported. Other than receiving and returning a signed agreement with the Quantity Surveyor over three years ago now, we have not progressed at all with this. This project is now on hold.

Income (Receipts) 2024-25

St Mary's relies on the generosity of its congregation for a large part of its Church Income. Our second major source is Tolbooth Hall rental income from our "MYPAS tenants".

Comparing this years Income, 2024-25, with last year, 2023-24 :-

	2024-25	2023-24
Income for Quota Receipts	59,820.74	58,684.03
Income for Other Receipts	8,855.14	5,619.35
Exceptional Income from Legacy	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
	<u>68,675.88</u>	<u>64,303.38</u>

Quota Receipts

Church Giving (standing order, envelope scheme and open plate with Gift Aid) at £32,163 (£29,482 in 2023-24) is £2,681 up on last year. The Gift Aid received was £11,768. Church giving increased by 9% on last year.

Annual Rental Receipts from our Tenants in the Tolbooth Hall of £11,000 per year from January 2024 (£11,000 in 2023-24) is a significant element of St Mary's Receipts and remains a major element of how St Mary's "breaks even" each year. Added to this is £4624 income from the Tolbooth Trust and £3052 interest from Investments, mainly dividends from Scottish Episcopal Unit Trust Fund.

Other Receipts

Our Tenants in the Tolbooth Hall MYPAS made payment of 75% of the buildings insurance as per our lease. Payment of £717 was received.

Total collected for other charities £1,771 - the Diocesan Bishops Lent Appeal and Leprosy Mission.

Restoration Event Fund Raising raised £5,526 over the year. All these events were held jointly with our sister church so the proceeds were split with St Leonard's.

No legacy payment/donation was received in 2024-25, 2023-24 or 2022-23.

Expenditure (Payments) 2024-25

Showing the year-on-year expenditure comparison, similar to income :

	2024-25	2023-24
Expenditure for <u>Quota</u> Payments	56,086.51	67,389.80
Expenditure for <u>Other</u> Payments	<u>6,561.31</u>	<u>5,298.24</u>
	<u>62,647.82</u>	<u>72,688.04</u>

Expenditure for Quota Payments at £58,426 is reduced on the previous year for the second time in a row. Although there were increases in the stipend, pension, car and other shared costs, insurance, quota, worship costs, and miscellaneous expenses, there was a reduction in the fuel costs and amount of repairs and maintenance to the church buildings and church equipment and Tolbooth Hall..

In the Other Payments although the charity giving was significantly increased, the Rectory repairs and maintenance was also significantly reduced.. Also reflected here is the payment of half of fund-raising events we shared jointly with our sister church of St Leonard's.

Reserves

St Mary's reserves are held in four different accounts. These are :

- Vestry** – Unrestricted covering day to day running expenses.
- Rectory** – Which is shared with St Leonard's, and is mainly used for "capital" expenditure on the Rectory.
- Restoration** – A restricted fund only available for church renovation / improvement projects.
- Tolbooth** – Used for maintaining Tolbooth Hall. In addition there is annual Tolbooth Trust Endowment Income, of which part can be used for "Vestry" activities, after any Tolbooth Hall requirements have been met.

The Vestry policy is to maintain a level of Unrestricted reserves such that, in the event of a significant drop in income, the church would be able to maintain its current level of activities for a reasonable period until replacement funding was obtained. (A particular risk would be loss of Annual Tolbooth Rental Income.)

Investments

SEC Investment Fund

Monies which are not needed to fund day to day activities are invested in the Scottish Episcopal Church Unit Trust Pool (SEC UTP), administered by Baillie Gifford. The Unit Trust Pool value in September 2024 was £172k This has increased to £188k (9% increase).

We need to keep in mind that the Unit Trust Pool valuation reflects “Stock Market” conditions and the valuation can go down as well as up. Within this £188k, £45k has been “ring fenced” for the Church Hall Project.

The annual total dividends from the SEC UTP totalled £5,596 in 2024/25, is an increase on dividends from previous years.

The balance in the Reliance Bank Accounts stands at £41,759 at 30 September 2025.

Church Management and Constitution

St Mary’s is an unincorporated association, with a constitution which originated in 1958, when the church building was gifted to the congregation by the Duke of Buccleuch. The constitution has been amended many times since 1958, the latest amendment, to the Secretary and Treasurer being appointed by the Vestry rather than elected at the AGM, being agreed November 2022. As a member congregation of the SEC Diocese of Edinburgh, St Mary’s is also governed by Canon Law of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

The Management Team of the Church is known as the Vestry. For the purposes of charities law, the members of the Vestry are the Charity Trustees of the Church.

Details of the current Vestry members are given on page 1.

Vestry Responsibilities

The Vestry is responsible for managing and safeguarding the assets of the church and assisting the Rector in matters affecting the spiritual welfare of the congregation. They are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records and ensuring the accounts are prepared in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

Annual Accounts have to be submitted to the “Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator” (OSCR) who regulate all Charity Financial Reporting in Scotland. A copy must also be sent to the Edinburgh Diocese Office of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

The Vestry holds regular meetings (usually 9 or 10 each year) to review all church activities, Spiritual, Financial, Operational, Property, Charity Support, and Risk Management within a structured and agreed Agenda. The Vestry can also appoint sub committees, including members of the congregation, if required.

Relationship with Diocese and Province

St Mary’s is supported by the Diocese and the Province through the pastoral oversight of the Bishop of Edinburgh, including the Diocesan Office support functions. St Mary’s is part of the Diocese of Edinburgh, which is one of the seven Dioceses which make up the Province of Scotland.

The church is represented at Diocesan level by the Rector and church’s Lay Representative. Additionally the Rector and the Lay Representative represent St Mary’s on the Diocesan Mid and

East Lothian Area Council. (Area Councils are one hierarchical level below the central diocesan level. Edinburgh Diocese has six Area Councils.)

As a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) St Mary's has an obligation to contribute to the costs of the Diocese and the Province through payment of an annual "quota". This amount is based on the relative level of income of St Mary's compared with that of other churches in the Diocese and Province. In 2024-25 St Mary's payment quota was £3987.96.

Conclusion

The members of the Vestry would like to thank all those who contribute their time, energy and money so generously to ensure the continuation and development of St Mary's as a centre of worship and a focus for the local community.

Authors Signature
St Mary's Treasurer

_____ *Anne Mackay* _____

Date

___ 31 December 2025 _____

Independent Examiners Report to the Vestry Members of St Mary's Episcopal Church - Charity Number SC001677

I report on the accounts of the charity for the period ended 30 September 2025 which are set out on the following pages as follows :-

1. Receipts and Payments Accounts
- 2-3. Balance Sheet
- 4 - 12. Accounting Policies and Notes to the Accounts.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charities trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts with these records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

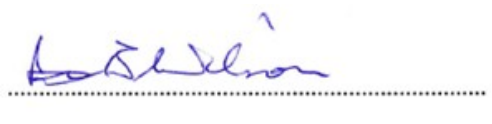
Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention :

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - * to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
 - * to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, have not been met, or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mr Ian B Wilson
For Ian B Wilson Ltd

Signature



4A High Street
Bonnyrigg EH19 2AA

Date 17 August 2026