

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, HAMILTON

ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 30 September 2025

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STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

In terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006, the trustees report to the congregation as follows:

1. St Mary the Virgin, Hamilton is a registered Scottish Charity (SC005876).
2. It is a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church, within the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway, and is in full communion with the Anglican Church worldwide.
3. The superior authority is the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway.
4. The Vestry, who are the Trustees, governs all its affairs.

THE VESTRY

Vestry members are elected by Annual General Meeting established by constitution and under Canon Law of the Scottish Episcopal Church or appointed by elected Vestry members. There is no formal induction programme, but ongoing guidance is given to ensure that Vestry members are familiar with the responsibilities of designated trustees of a charity. The Vestry met 7 times during the year, approximately every 6 weeks.

The Vestry has the responsibility of co-operating with the Rector to promote the charge, the whole mission of the Church - pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical. It also has responsibility for the financial affairs of the charge and for the maintenance of the Church and Rectory.

The Vestry is the only committee required under the Constitution and has power to transact the business of the Church. *Ad hoc* committees and working groups may be formed from time to time for specific purposes and some may be entailed with powers delegated by the Vestry.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

As part of the Vestry's responsibility as Trustees for the church this report highlights the main activities of the year below.

RECTOR'S REPORT: REV. CANON MATTHEW LITTLE

As I look back over this past liturgical year, 2024–2025, I do so with a deep sense of gratitude and encouragement. It has been a year of growth, of faithful service, and of shared ministry here at St Mary's. In so many ways, we have seen God's presence at work in our worship, in our community life, and in the countless small acts of kindness and service that make up the life of this congregation.

Worship and Prayer

Our Sunday morning Eucharist remains the heart of our life together. Around the altar we continue to be shaped and nourished as God's people, and I am encouraged that attendance has been steady and, at times, increasing. Alongside our Sunday worship, the monthly **Choral Evensong** on the first Sunday and the **Taizé Service** on the third Sunday have continued to enrich our rhythm of prayer. Both have been better attended this year, which tells me they are meeting a spiritual need — a space of quiet, beauty, and reflection in what can so often be a busy world.

Our **Wednesday Morning Eucharist** continues to draw a faithful group from both St Mary's and St Andrew's. This service, followed by coffee, bacon rolls, and cake in the Café, has become a lovely time of fellowship. It is, I think, a little mid-week oasis of prayer and friendship, and I am very grateful to all who make it such a warm and welcoming space. We had hoped to purchase banners for Evensong and Taizé to display in the church grounds, but that remains on the "to-do" list for the coming year. They will help to make these services more visible to the wider community.

At the Eucharist, we continue to offer **Communion under both kinds**, and I am pleased that more people are once again receiving from the chalice. However, I understand that some still feel cautious because of lingering concerns around Covid-19. The diocese discourages the practice of intinction (dipping the bread into the wine), yet I personally find it difficult to forbid this entirely. It is a delicate balance between pastoral sensitivity and diocesan guidance, and I remain mindful of both.

Lay Ministry and Worship Leadership

Our worship would not be possible without the faithful service of so many. My thanks go to **Jill Cunningham** for continuing as Eucharistic Assistant and for her ministry as **Lay Worship Leader**. Jill recently completed another Worship Leaders Course and has ably led several Wednesday services in my absence. I know how much those who attend appreciate her calm, prayerful leadership, and I am very grateful to her for her ongoing commitment. I am also delighted that **Christine Harrison** from St Andrew's has joined the Wednesday ministry team as Worship Leader and Eucharistic Assistant. Christine too has completed her Worship Leaders training and has led services with great warmth and confidence. Thanks also go to **Roger Levie**, **Jo Moon**, and **Amelie Charlotte** who serve so faithfully at the altar — and to all our **readers and intercessors** who contribute to the richness of our liturgy each week. We are always looking for new people to take part in these ministries; if you feel God might be prompting you to serve in this way, please do come and speak to me.

Technology and Outreach

We continue to livestream all our services on **Zoom**, which allows those unable to attend in person to remain part of our worshipping community. **Alison Plummer** deserves huge thanks for managing the Zoom on Sundays. She ensures that the technology runs as smoothly as possible — and although the occasional “gremlin” still appears, the online connection remains a real blessing to many. Wednesday, Evensong, and Taizé services are also streamed and regularly attended by a faithful online congregation.

Vestry, Finance, and Maintenance

I am deeply grateful to **Heather Kirk**, our Vestry Secretary, who somehow manages to juggle her demanding job with the many responsibilities of church administration. Her efficiency, calm, and sense of humour are invaluable. Likewise, my sincere thanks go to **Sue Levie**, our Treasurer, for her diligent and detailed work throughout the year, and to **John Hinton** for overseeing Gift Aid and stipend arrangements.

To all members of the Vestry — thank you for your commitment, your wisdom, and your love for St Mary's. I want to make special mention of **Alan Hart** for his tireless work in maintaining our buildings and grounds. Thanks to Alan's hard work, our last **Quinquennial Report** was very positive, though, as always, there are ongoing works identified.

Our **boundary wall** and **notice board** continue to give us headaches! Reversing cars have caused several bouts of damage over the years, and repairs have been costly. The car park entrance has now been widened to prevent further accidents. Eventually, when finances allow, we must move the notice board to a better position.

Building Works and Grants

Earlier this year, our stonemason inspected the church and grounds and identified several necessary repairs costing around £26,000. Thanks to **Suzie McCheyne**, Development Worker for *St Mary's for All*, we 'successfully' applied to the **National Churches Trust** for funding and were awarded £13,280, with a further £2,100 from another funder. There was some hiccups with the grant payment, however, Suzie worked tirelessly to resolve the issue, and the final agreed grant was £11,428, supplemented again by the £2,100 Benefact Trust grant. The remainder of the cost was covered by a generous donation of £1,500 from St Mary's for All and our thanks go to the Trustees for their generosity. The work, overseen by **Rebecca Caddie**, our diocesan architect, was completed in September. My heartfelt thanks go to Suzie for her patience and determination — without her, this vital work would not have been possible.

We also continue to explore ways to reduce our **carbon footprint** in line with the SEC's **Net Zero goals**. I am delighted that, again with Suzie's help, we secured £43,500 to install **solar panels** on the hall roof. The project will reduce both our environmental impact and electricity costs for St Mary's and St Mary's for All. The planning application has been submitted, and we await the council's response.

Safeguarding and Health & Safety

Linda Moir, our **PVG Coordinator**, continues to keep us compliant with all safeguarding requirements. I am grateful for her thoroughness and the peace of mind she provides. There are major national changes coming to the PVG system, and Linda has attended training sessions to stay ahead of developments.

My thanks also go to **Roger Levie**, who wears several hats — Health & Safety Officer, Rector's Warden, and, more personally, a great friend and encourager. His steady support over my five and a half years here has been a real gift.

Music and Choir

Our music continues to be one of the great treasures of St Mary's. Under **David Hamilton's** direction, the choir has offered a rich contribution to our worship — from weekly Eucharists to Choral Evensong and special seasonal services. Music at St Mary's concerts also continue to bless our community. It was a joy to welcome **Prince** as a new member of the choir this year. My heartfelt thanks to David and every chorister for their devotion and artistry.

Children, Families, and Fellowship

We are blessed with a small but vibrant children's ministry. **Kirsty Buchan** co-ordinates our **Kidz Klub**, supported by **Liz Cunningham, John Hinton, Callum Buchan and Alison Plummer**. Their commitment and creativity are deeply appreciated.

The **Social Group**, meeting on the first Thursday of the month, continues to bring people together from St Mary's and St Andrew's. Their **Charity Table** raises funds for good causes locally and beyond, and their **Christmas Table** has been a great success.

Our **Cinema Club** continues to meet whenever there's something worth seeing at the Vue in Hamilton — always preceded by coffee or lunch together at *SMfA*. These small fellowship activities really do strengthen the bonds of friendship among us.

I am grateful to **Linda Blake** who, until recently, led line-dancing sessions that brought fun and laughter to those who joined. Sadly, health issues mean these have had to stop for now. We also hope to start a **Walking Group** when the weather improves — another opportunity to share fellowship and fresh air together.

Pastoral Care

Although our **Pastoral Group** has not met formally for some time (for which I take responsibility), those involved have continued to provide wonderful informal care to members of the congregation. They keep in touch with those who can't attend and let me know if anyone needs a visit or prayer. This quiet ministry of compassion is one of the hidden strengths of St Mary's. We were blessed this year by the ministry of **Fr Lee Johnston**, who joined us as Assistant Priest. Lee quickly became a valued part of our worship and community life. Sadly, for us, he and his wife, the **Revd Harriet Johnston** and family will soon be moving east as Harriet takes up her new post as Rector of Dunbar. We assure them all of our love and prayers for the next stage of their life and ministry.

I also wish to thank **Fr Alan Wylie** and **Fr Stephen Abbott** for their continued presence and assistance. They have each, in their own way, offered pastoral care and liturgical support whenever needed, and we are truly blessed by their ministry among us.

Flowers, Cleaning, and Practical Service

Our thanks to **Alison Plummer, Krissi Cheyne, Linda Blake, and Sarah Burn-Murdoch** for the beautiful floral arrangements that grace our church each week — and to all who contribute financially to this ministry. The church is always enhanced by your creativity and care.

Gratitude too to **Jill Cunningham, Jo Moon, Amelie Charlotte, and Tina Millar** for their practical work in the sanctuary — cleaning brass, scraping candle wax, washing linens, and keeping everything ready for worship. A new cleaning company has been engaged through *SMfA*, and their work has improved the overall cleanliness of the church, gathering space, and facilities.

Our **Bible Study Group**, meeting weekly in the Sycamore Room, continues to be a faithful source of prayer and reflection. I thank all who attend and lead.

St Mary's for All

It is now over a decade since St Mary's for All came into being, realising the congregation's 2010 vision to make our premises fit for 21st-century mission — a place of welcome, inclusion, and partnership. The result has been extraordinary. Week by week, our buildings are filled with life, community, and hospitality. As one local taxi driver recently told me, "I'm well impressed with all that goes on there!"

I want to thank the **Board of Trustees**, and **volunteer receptionists**, who, with the support of **Suzie McCheyne**, show great commitment and energy and enable this ministry to thrive. If you are ever free to volunteer at reception, please do speak to **Alison Plummer**, Chairperson — extra hands are always needed.

We also celebrate the success of **Mandy and Dawn** in *D & M at the Beechtree Café*, which recently marked its third anniversary. Their café has become a true hub of warmth and welcome. Please continue to support them — and do try their Christmas menu!

Community Life and Giving

To those who have found a spiritual home at St Mary's this past year — a very warm welcome to each and every one of you. I hope you have found us to be a friendly and inclusive community. Please know that your presence and participation are valued, and I would love to help you find ways to get more involved.

This ongoing **cost-of-living crisis** has been hard for many, and I know that generosity comes at a cost. Yet I have been humbled by the continued faithfulness of your giving — through weekly and monthly offerings, and through Gift Aid. These gifts keep our ministry alive and allow us to reach out to others. If you haven't yet signed up for Gift Aid and are eligible, please consider it; it really does make a difference.

Life Events and Loss

It has been a joy to celebrate several **weddings** this year: **Lorna Leslie and Drew Cantley**, **Michael Grant and David Anderson**, and **Stephanie Reid and Martin Moore** from the Isle of Man. Each was a joyful celebration of love and faith. Martin and Stephanie recently let me know that they welcomed their son, **Freddie**, in October — we send them our warmest congratulations.

At the same time, our community has shared in sorrow. We remember with love **Marie Wadham**, **Ian Poad**, **Issie Smallwood**, and **Maria Chambers**. We give thanks for their lives and pray for those who mourn them, trusting that all the faithful departed rest in the peace and light of Christ.

Diocesan and Personal Milestones

A highlight this year was the **Consecration of the Rt Revd Dr Nicholas Bundock** as the 16th Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway on 3rd May 2025. It was a joyous occasion at the Cathedral, and I am honoured that Bishop Nick asked me to continue as his **Chaplain**. It has been a privilege to work with him, and we look forward to welcoming him to St Mary's in December.

In June, I celebrated **25 years of priestly ministry** — a milestone made even more special by the presence of Bishop Nick, clergy colleagues, and friends from across the diocese. It was wonderful to have **Canon Michael McMahon** from St Conval's RC Church preach; he also preached at my first Mass in 2000, so it was deeply moving to share that moment again.

In September, I was honoured to be **elected as a Canon of the Cathedral Chapter** — a humbling expression of confidence from my colleagues in the diocese. I was installed at Choral Evensong in the Cathedral in November, and I am grateful to those who were able to be there.

Looking Ahead

As I often say, we are a **diverse and lively congregation**, united by our love of Christ and our desire to serve. Inevitably, with such diversity come different opinions and ideas, but I believe we handle these differences with grace, mutual respect, and good humour. That, too, is part of our witness.

Above all, our shared life is rooted in God's **unconditional love** — a love that gathers us, sustains us, and sends us out in service. As we look to the future, let us hold fast to that love and continue to be a blessing to others: a welcoming, outward-looking, Eucharistic community expressing our faith in action.

Finally, I want to thank each and every one of you — for your prayers, your encouragement, and your care for me in my ministry among you. It is a privilege to serve as your Rector. May we continue, together, to walk in faith, hope, and love, trusting that God who has begun this good work in us will bring it to completion.

With every blessing,

Matthew

PROPERTY MATTERS: ALAN HART

The Church Buildings

The next Quinquennial Review is not due until October 2029.

Cleaning

The church cleaning continues to be carried out by Lavender Contracts of Baillieston (For cost see Treasurer's Report).

Drainage/Sewerage / water

On 26th January 2025 we had another blocked sewage pipe event which caused flooding to the basement. The pipe was jetted and cleared at a cost of £174. There was no impact on the central heating system as the twin boilers were relocated to the upstairs utility room (out of harm's way) in December 2023.

Heating

The twin boilers have worked perfectly since the relocation and were serviced on 23rd December 2024 at a cost of £324. The underfloor heating system has again worked as intended but may require attention in the future.

Building Maintenance

Numerous items have had to be repaired or replaced throughout the year, mostly due to general wear and tear. These included replacement door handles to the downstairs toilet £13.58 and lever door handles fitted to the side entrance, vestry and church internal entrance to improve disabled access at a cost of £36.76.

In December 2024 a large number of slates were replaced on the church roof and the box gutter above the Gathering Space was resealed at a cost of £400. Roof repairs to the church hall were also carried out at a cost of £100 (SMfA). Further repairs to the church roof and porch were carried out at a cost of £50.

2 x replacement extractor fans were purchased for the downstairs toilets at a cost of £37.96

The burglar alarm in the church was upgraded for additional security and to satisfy insurance company recommendations at a cost of £516. The rotted roof and doors of the church gas meter were stripped out and replaced at a cost of £436.

Major repairs to the exterior chancel wall were carried out in September 2025 at a cost of £14,505, the cost of which was mostly met by grant funding.

There are still areas of the church perimeter walls which require attention.

As you are no doubt aware the church intends to install solar panels early next year after receiving a substantive grant of £43500. It is anticipated that this installation will significantly reduce our overall electricity bill.

Annual fire extinguisher maintenance/PAT testing was carried out on 25th February 2025.

Unfortunately some of the fire extinguishers had to be replaced due to new regulations. The total cost was £403 (SMEC portion was £70).

Lighting and Electrical

As previously mentioned, PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) was carried out at the same time as the fire extinguisher maintenance. The fire alarm system within the buildings is tested on a weekly basis and the emergency lighting is tested monthly to ensure that they are in good working order. In addition, there is a legal requirement that the fire alarm system is professionally tested and re-certificated every 6 months and that the emergency lighting is tested and re-certificated annually. The cost of this is met by SMFA

Utilities

Gas and electricity supplies are negotiated for us by Utility Aid. Our new contracts began on 1st May 2025 for electricity (fixed until 2027) and 1st April 2025 for gas (fixed until 2028).

Building and Contents Insurance

The building and contents insurance policy for the church, hall and offices was renewed in March 2025, the premium being £4535.60 – our 3-year deal expires in March 2027.

Note:

Gas, electricity, telephone / broadband and most other costs are shared with or entirely met by SMfA. (See Treasurers Report)

The Rectory

Building Insurance - The Rectory building insurance was renewed in April 2025 with Ecclesiastical Insurance at a cost of £842.57.

Other Works - In June 2025 the Rectory Velux roof window surround had to be repaired and slates were replaced at a cost of £150.

The boiler in the Rectory kitchen was boxed in at a cost of £310.

A replacement floodlight for the front of the Rectory was purchased and fitted at a cost of £10.04.

The annual inspection of gas appliances was carried out on 28th April 2025 and a new Safety Certificate was issued. The Rectory gutters are cleaned annually.

CHURCH LIFE:

Bible Study Group: Sue Levie

Our small group is still active and meets every week. For the past period we have been discussing the Gospel for the coming Sunday. This gives rise to some lively, interesting discussions. We meet on Thursdays at 10am. Everyone is welcome. Please drop in even if you can't come every time.

Choir & Concerts: David Hamilton

2025 has seen a change in the choir that is both big and small. One regular member moved on to pastures new and, within a couple of weeks, another member joined us. In a choir of 20, this would not be newsworthy, but in a choir of six, it is. Grace has moved out of the area and into full-time education, so while she makes occasional return visits (and very welcome they are) she is unable to sing at St Mary's with any regularity. Meanwhile, Prince has joined us and has settled in very quickly. He has already had his arm twisted ie he sang a solo in the October Evensong, and we're delighted to have him in the choir.

We featured two composers (Palestrina and Gibbons) with significant anniversaries in 2025; in 2026, you can expect to hear a lot of Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623) and Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-76). Both composers have enriched the Anglican choral repertory and we look forward to learning and re-learning some of their works that are in our library.

The Choirs of St Mary's (our augmented 'festival' choir) put on a wonderful concert in June, featuring music by Palestrina, Gibbons and Louis Vierne. At the time of writing, we're looking forward to a concert that the violinist Mark Wilson (Sally's son) will give on 22 November, St Cecilia's Day. Next summer, we plan a choir concert that will include music by Percy Grainger. We were delighted to be asked to sing at a concert hosted by the Glasgow Recorder Consort (in which Eileen plays) and – again, at the time of writing – are looking forward to performing at the St Mary's for All 10th Anniversary Celebration.

Concerts aside, the choir's main role at St Mary's is to sing at 44 out of 52 Sunday morning services, plus monthly Evensongs and additional evening services. It rehearses every Thursday evening in order to meet these demands, and I am profoundly grateful to the members for their time, talents and commitment. Many thanks too to Matthew for his patience, guidance and support, and to those other individuals who offer me technical support, timely advice and general encouragement.

Servers: Roger Levie

During the year our servers have attended all services.

The Servers team is comprised of Roger Levie, Jo Moon, & Amelie Charlotte. When the three of us are present, we have an established routine of processing in with Cross and Candles. Jo also leads the choir in at our Evensong services.

We have been encouraged to have some younger members of the congregation who have expressed an interest in joining the team and we will look forward to welcome them and establish a rota to have them involved.

Kidz Klub: Kirsty Buchan

St Mary's Sunday School continues to offer a regular programme of activities for the youngest members of our congregation. Although we are small in number we were delighted to welcome new members throughout the year.

Last year's nativity saw us present The Christmas Story through video. This allowed us to include friends of St Mary's who could not be with us on the nativity day. This was very well received and the children did so well taking on a whole variety of roles.

This year we have been continued to use The Animated Stories from the Bible materials. These have a DVD and associated materials which are well received by our wide age range of children. We have focused on the stories of Moses and Joseph.

As always I must extend a huge thank you to Liz, John, Alison & Callum who have helped lead the Sunday School this year as well as the families of all of the children who come along. We could not run our activities without your support. I am also so grateful for the continued support and encouragement which the wider congregation give to both our team and the young people – in prayer, checking in with them, small gifts during the year etc. It makes them feel so valued and is not taken for granted – thank you!

Social Group: Roger Levie

The social group meet monthly on the first Thursday of each month. We have a mix of folk from St. Mary's and St. Andrew's, and it takes the form of an informal get together and a chat over a cup of tea or coffee.

Prior to Covid we had occasional speakers giving talks on a range of topics and we hope to arrange one or two in the coming year.

The social group take on the running of the very successful sales table, which runs all year long in the gathering space and again we have raised funds to support various charities as well as supporting the running of St.Mary's.

By far the biggest fundraising effort goes into arranging the Christmas themed table, along with raffles, prize hampers, and other competitions. This runs from early November right through to Christmas. All proceeds from the Christmas fundraising go to church funds and are vitally important to our general finances. I would encourage everyone to support the Christmas effort to make it a success again.

Many thanks to the initiatives of Barbara Stobie and June Ferns who get the table stocked and produce the excellent hampers. Also to our crafters who make cards, chutneys etc to sell on the table. Last year we raised an amazing £1,989.06 through sales along with donations of £480.00, giving a grand total of £2369.06 from the Christmas fundraiser.

Other charities we have supported during the year are; St Andrew's hospice = £450; Christian aid = £160 and Refuweegees (the Diocesan lent appeal) = £132.

The social group have also arranged the summer BBQ with the help and support of members of St. Andrew's. This is becoming an annual event which we have instead of church outings, and is enjoyed by all attending. Special mention to the expert cheffing of Jordon Kirk who didn't incinerate a single burger!

It is worth mentioning other social activities which take place throughout the year. They are open to everyone, and are publicised in the weekly pew sheet.

The book club meet monthly and choose a fiction, non-fiction or classic to discuss. It is well supported and has been running for a number of years. (contact Sue Levie, June Ferns, Lionel Chambers or Tina Millar if you are interested).

The cinema club have been to see a number of films throughout the year (organised by Matthew who buys discounted tickets).

Knit and knatter also meet monthly. The pulpit fall on display on Remembrance Sunday was made as a result of their efforts as well as decorated pulpit falls at Easter and Christmas. Previously they have knitted hats to give to premature babies (contact Sue Levie or Tina Millar).

As you can see there is something happening every week and so please continue to join and support our social activities.

OTHER ISSUES:

Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults: Linda Moir

At present we still have 18 people on the PVG Register, 15 are in Regulated Work Positions and 3 are in Position of Trust, and with all having completed their respective checks. This year the legal requirements for PVG checks took effect on 1 July 2025 when it became a criminal offence if the correct PVG membership was not in place. Everyone at St Mary's have all completed the relevant checks. PVG Matters is still an item on the Agenda at each Vestry Meeting held throughout the year. There will be various changes implemented in the coming years, which still needs finalised and I will keep everyone updated as soon as I have been informed. Lastly, we welcome any volunteers who would like to assist in church duties, especially at Sunday School. If you would like to provide assistance please speak to Kirsty Buchan or Liz Cunningham.

Lanarkshire Regional Council: Liz Cunningham

The past year started off well with a Nine Lessons and Carols Service being hosted by LRC, for the first time, at St Andrew's, Uddingston on 8 December 2024 This was quite well attended with representation from most churches in the Region and refreshments being enjoyed by all after the service.

We held our February meeting on zoom and then met in Christ Church, Lanark in May. Kim Schmullian, Diocesan Administrator, attended as guest and explained about the work of the Diocesan Office & the importance of risk assessment and governance in church life.

In September we had a frank discussion about the challenges that some Congregations face in being able to actively support LRC. A motion to disband LRC will be discussed after our AGM on 19 November. It is not a decision to be taken lightly, especially with new clergy in Cambuslang and East Kilbride and the future of the churches in Motherwell and Wishaw looking a bit brighter.

Whatever the future of LRC, we are preparing for the 9 Lessons and Carols Service which is being hosted, this year, by St Mary's, Hamilton. The service will take place on Sunday 14 December at 7.30pm, with refreshments and an opportunity for fellowship afterwards.

I am stepping down as Convenor at the AGM and have been grateful for the tremendous support I have received from Matthew and the lay reps at St Mary's & St Andrew's over the past 4 years.

Flower Rota and Fund: Alison Plummer

Many thanks to all those who have volunteered and who arrange the flowers each Sunday over the past year. Special thanks must go to Krissi Cheyne & Linda Blake, who help me week in, week out, to make the church look so beautiful.

We are always looking for other enthusiastic amateurs who would like to give a hand. If you are interested, please speak to me. I'm also very grateful to everyone who has donated money and been responsible for the cost of the Church flowers on a particular Sunday. There are still some spaces in the weeks/months to come and for 2026, so please add your name to the rota. The flowers will be purchased and arranged in the Church from your donation or you can arrange them yourself.

We are also looking for donations towards the Christmas flowers and for willing volunteers to decorate our beautiful church.

The church will be decorated on Saturday 6th December at 10am and the Christmas flowers will be done on Saturday 20th December at 10am. All welcome on both these dates. The more the merrier!!

For more information please speak to Alison Plummer (07889 013820) or email alison.plummer@btinternet.com.

Free Will Offering: John Hinton

Over this last year regular donations and small gifts have been broadly stable compared to the year before. While there have been some very generous one-off donations, the total for this year is a bit lower because the previous year receipts were bolstered by some very generous donations towards, for example, boiler repairs. Nonetheless we are very grateful for the generosity of all donors as this is essential if we are to maintain the church and its facilities and support work with both members of the congregation and the wider community.

The donations received through weekly envelopes, planned giving (standing order mandates) and one-off donations are shown in the table below with comparisons to previous years.

Purpose	y.e 30/09/2023	y.e. 30/09/2024	y.e. 30/09/2025
Envelopes and Standing Orders	£30,337	£31,507.50	£31,548.60
Small Gifts (Open Plate)	£2,037.66	£2,513.90	£3,987.13
Other Donations	£4,186	£6,516.36	£3,994.10
Gift Aid Receipts*	£8,388.07	£10,081.00	£9,416.37
Totals	£44,948.73	£50,618.76	£48,946.20

The use of both standing orders and weekly envelopes enables Gift Aid of an extra 25% to be claimed from the Government when the donation is made by a taxpayer who has signed a Gift Aid form. This can be supplemented by a similar uplift for small gifts of £30 or less under the Small Gift Scheme. This allows the church to claim a substantial boost to the amount of funds received as can be seen from the table above.

We understand that in current times everyone's finances are under strain, but if you do not currently donate regularly or are able to increase your giving please consider doing so. John Hinton or Sue Levie can let you have bank account details for the church to enable standing order mandates to be set up. In addition, they can provide you with a Gift Aid form for completion if you are a taxpayer. Also, envelopes at the end of each pew are available for making donations.