

**St Mary's Church Temple Guiting.  
Report for the Parish Council 2023/24**

We are deeply thankful for the leadership and ministry of our clergy team. Katrina Scott, Sue Pestell and Catherine Cowie, who do so much to support our village communities.

We have also had a change of Churchwardens at St. Mary's. After many years of dedicated hard work, Ali Clifton-Barnard stepped down from her role. We are extremely grateful to Ali for her hard work and excellent hand-over to the two new Churchwardens, Sheila Woods and Ruth Waller.

The other minor change we have made is with the family communion Services. These are now a more informal service and include an interactive bible reading and one worship song which has actions and signing to encourage a bit of audience participation! Peter Foreshaw continues to play the organ regularly for services but we are also using more modern equipment (e.g. Bluetooth speakers) to support our worship.

Over the past year we have held a number of fundraising events which are always a wonderful way of getting together as a community in this beautiful church. From plays 'Forbidden Music' on 13th October and 'A Rose By Any Other Name' on 26th April, to musical performances including in March 2024, our own village duet Mansfield-Smith. We are hoping to organise one event every month which will be advertised locally and via social media. Save the date for our next event: The Bochmann String Trio performing on 31st May at 7.00pm. In June, we are hoping to do an interactive detective quiz.

The Safari Supper, Quiz and Harvest Supper were both very successful and special thanks are due to Kate Mather who co-ordinated these events, the teams of helpers and to everyone in the community who supported them. This year the Harvest Supper was held in the Church immediately following the Service and was a lovely atmosphere (and food!).

The PCC was particularly saddened by the deaths of two long-standing members of our village community during the year – Kenneth Jones and Donald Butler. Their funeral services were held in St Mary's. And this week, we have learnt of the sudden death of Victor Edgeworth. His funeral will be held at 1pm on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at St. Mary's.

We have also had weddings and baptisms at the Church which are always a pleasure to witness. We also welcomed a visiting bellringing group just before Easter and it was a delight to hear the bells ring so clearly for the quarter-peel through the village.

Temple Guiting School continue to use St Mary's for various Services and events including the popular 'ISingPop'. Carol Services for 2023 were held in St Mary's, St James' and St. Faith's.

The PCC would like to thank the Parish Council for their financial contribution towards the maintenance of the churchyard. We continue to develop areas to improve biodiversity in the churchyard with the assistance of Richard Scone.

We continue to be committed to being open in every respect to our village communities, to being an outward-looking church focused on current issues of equality, injustice, climate change and the environment and to making greater use of the churchyard for services/spiritual gatherings.

Ruth Waller and Sheila Woods  
30.04.2024