



ST MARY'S

Richmond with Hudswell, North Yorkshire



MINISTRY TEAM



In our Benefice of Richmond with Hudswell and Downholme and Marske we are blessed with a strong Ministry Team. Our retired members are Bishop John Jennifer Williamson, Martin Clarke, Stewart Ridley and Pauline Shepherd – all of whom bring great experience to the Team whilst serving voluntarily.

George Alderson is our Licensed Lay Minister who is also retired and a volunteer, but remains as active as ever not only in our Benefice but also in the Benefices of Lower Teesdale and Holmedale.

Paul Perry is our Occasional Preacher who also brings wide experience as a worship leader, and Ann Richardson oversees Fun-Key Church. We also have a Licensed Lay Minister in training, Sharon Digan. The only paid members of the Team are Lorna and Martin

As a Team we meet on a bi-monthly basis to encourage one another, identify any issues with the running of services, and discuss the resourcing of our service pattern along with possible improvements to it.

Personally, I consider it to be a huge privilege to be a member of this Team.

Revd Martin Fletcher

PARISH VISION TEAM

Following the PCC Away Day in May 2025 a Team was set up to formulate and recommend for PCC approval a new long-term Vision for our parish.

The team comprises Barry Higgott, Jim Jack, Katharine Perry, Steph Williamson, Stuart Rowan, Lorna and myself.

A clear long-term Vision will give us an overall sense of direction so that all shorter-term goals set can in that same direction.

The Team want to celebrate the many strengths of St Mary's (such as its Choral tradition), and to consolidate the growth of recent years. The new Vision will also need to accommodate the reality of our church being likely to evolve into a 'resourcing church' for the wider area as some smaller churches become increasingly unviable.

To date, the Team have been meeting every other month and have discerned that a clear focus on nurturing spiritual growth through worship, prayer and fellowship will enable us together to draw closer to God. In essence, the basis of our Vision will be:

Together, as followers of Christ, to develop our Spiritual Growth, our Community Engagement, and our Sustainability.

Revd Martin Fletcher



MUSIC



The music within the parish has continued to support the worship in many different ways.

The versatile singers and musicians within the church have enhanced worship over the period and are appreciated by all.

The Morning Worship band and choir goes from strength to strength and has supported many different styles of service over the period giving a very different feel to the service.

Choral Evensong continues each month with the choir forming up and singing the service after a short rehearsal on the second Sunday of each month. Our Co Music Director and Organist Andrew Christer continues to give his wonderful

talent both as a performer and accompanist to this service as he has done for the past 26 years.

The 'Song Squad' meets on a Monday and contributes to services a few times each year when they are available.

Occasional services are well supported with the Carol Service and the Good Friday devotional service being two choral highlights of the year for the singers. We look forward to another year supporting the worship musically in whatever way we can to the glory of God

Colin Hicks

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



We are continuing to build up our ministry with our Children and Young People. Our Fun-Key Church, ably led by Annette Richardson, Ann's Family, and Abby Bateman, continue to go from strength to strength with fun crafts and a biblical theme on the last Sunday of every month - "Fun Church with a Key Message"!

Our links with the schools around Richmond are also a primary source of joy for our church, with Martin and Lorna going into Trinity Academy once a week, and heading into St Francis Xavier RC and C of E school to do regular communion services and attend prayer meetings, with both schools coming into St Mary's for worship regularly. Ecumenically, we occasionally head into the Methodist School.

Once a month, we have our family services, which blend all age worship with a more relaxed church service that are more accessible to families with younger children, and our services of Christingle, the Easter Service (including the post-service egg rolling), and our many carol services being well attended by all!

Revd Lorna Heatley



LITTLE ANGELS

We've continued to meet in the Methodist Hall every Thursday morning during term time, from 9:30 to 11am. We welcome any parent/carer with a child under school age and really enjoy our time together.

The children can play, do appropriate craft activities, have a snack and story whilst the adults have time to chat and enjoy one another's company. We are a very friendly and welcoming group but would love to have just a few more children!



HOME GROUP

We have continued to meet fortnightly on a Wednesday evening at John and Wendy Pritchard's home. We study the bible together, first reading through a passage then seeing which verse 'jumps out' at each of us.

This may be because we don't understand it, because we want to find out what the rest of the group think about it or because we really like it. We discuss each person's verse and learn from one another.

We then have a short time of prayer followed by a longer time of drinks, biscuits and chat! In the past year we've studied Acts and are now working on Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians.



Wendy Pritchard



BELLS

We had another busy year in the bell tower in 2025, with regular ringing on Sundays and for other services.

We are lucky to have a dedicated band and rarely have less than 8 ringers for Sunday ringing. Alongside our regular band we are joined by Chris from Barton and Davina from Cotherstone, showing a strong commitment to ringing for worship when there is no service at their home tower.

We also practise regularly on Tuesday evenings, developing the skills of our own band and welcoming visitors from a range of towers in the area.

These both support our own ringers' performances and develop and expand their own range of ringing. Paul from Grinton achieved his first quarter peal, an important landmark for any ringer. Other achievements were a first quarter of minor (6 working bells) for Beri and a first inside on tower bells for Chris. John was joined by a group of visitors to ring a half-muffled peal for Remembrance in November and ten of us rang to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-day.

Peter continues to work hard as steeple-keeper and has arranged for a new set of muffles to help us ring for solemn occasions. My thanks go to him and everyone else who supported ringing at St Mary's this year.

Susan Welch

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S



The Friends of St Mary's aims to bring the Church and all it stands for into the community and raise funds for much needed work and other projects related to the Church building.

These have included many amazing events in partnership with others, including Catterick Army Band, the Royal Northern Sinfonia, and the Swaledale and May Festival concerts.

We have also initiated our own events, such as the Edwina Hayes concert, arranged by Bob Hill, Blues in the Pews, and Curry Nights and Quiz Nights at the Town Hall which are always sell outs. Thanks for these go to the Challis family, David Frankton, and Andy Lovell.

Our eternally successful Plant and Produce sale will return this August Bank Holiday, and last year it raised over £2000 for St Mary's and various projects.

Last year, the aim was to help raise money for the Step Free Access project, for which £18,000 came from Friends Events. This year, we hope to raise funds for church redecoration.

Thanks go to Jim Jack, Graham Barber, Andy Lovell, and all who support the Friends events.

Peter Trewby



FABRIC

We are now focussing on work arising from the Quinquennial Inspection: treatment of the timbers in the tower for wood-boring insects; repairs and replacement of defective external rendering; clearing the gutters; obtaining a Structural Survey to inspect the cracks particularly on the north wall and having a once in a generation asbestos survey. Using a ladder, our steeplejack has been able to inspect and reassure us of the fittings of the drop down screen.

We continue to battle against leakage from our central heating system. We have paid to have the whole system hydrogen tested and found a significant leak in the south east area of the church and that section of piping has been replaced. A new pressure monitor device has been installed.

We have also paid for the cable to the tower floodlights to be repaired. The main event anticipated in the coming year is lime washing those areas of the internal wall in poor repair and replacing the worst affected areas with lime plaster. We are also awaiting estimates for an upgrade to the corridor toilets and possibly making the floor of the disabled access toilet less permeable.

This year we became the very grateful recipient of a 1930s Blüthner grand piano which will have a full service later this month and is a tremendous addition to the musical life of St Mary's. Our existing piano has been welcomed to its new home in the Station.

Peter Trewby

WORSHIP AND PRAYER



Our Worship and Prayer team consists of Lorna, Martin, Margaret Clayson, Helen Rowan, Paul and Katherine Perry, Pauline Shepherd, Colin Hicks, and Isobel Short. Together, we discuss how best to improve and discuss the worship and prayer life of St Mary's.

This year, thanks to the hard work of Helen and Paul, we were able to produce a survey to find out the wants and needs of the people in reference to our worship and prayer life in St Mary's, and we are taking steps to implement our findings in the church.

After our well attended Lent Course on the Lord's Prayer, we are considering a 'back to basics' approach with future courses. We have also started to meet after the 10am Sunday service to discuss the sermon. Cafe Church will start to be tackling 'difficult topics', with our first on Assisted Dying ably led by churchwarden Dr Peter Trewby.

With more to come, including prayer ministry and more Bible Studies on the horizon, this is an exciting time for the team and the life of St Mary's.

Revd Lorna Heatley



PASTORAL CARE

Our Pastoral Care team is made up of Martin, Lorna, Jan Jack, Graham Pearson, Sharon O'Connor, and Sharon McCormack. We meet every six weeks to discuss the needs of our community, not necessarily the people we see in the congregation every week.

We offer Home Communion to anyone who is unable to make it in to church to receive Communion there, as well as prayer and other support in the homes of those that need us the most.

Every first Wednesday, we offer "After the Cards" in the Morro Lounge, which is for anyone who is bereaved and needs continued support after the funeral of their loved one has passed.

We also pray for those in special need, and this can be requested through anyone on the Pastoral Care team, or, indeed, anyone in the congregation. There is also a prayer group that meets weekly, every Tuesday at 7pm, and all are welcome to attend.

Revd Lorna

SOCIAL CLUBS



KNIT AND NATTER

Knit and Natter is a community Knitting group. We run a weekly meeting space for people to come. We offer a safe, social, and therapeutic space that combines crafting and companionship for shared skills experience. We knit for local Hospices and Care homes, as well as for local charities and hospitals, including antenatal clinics, and for families and friends. The group promotes wellbeing through our Kint and natter sessions and has been running for around 15 years.



THIRST

On the first Thursday of every month, Richmond's Town Hall Pub transforms into a hub of local camaraderie. From a cozy six to a lively twenty-plus, men of all views and beliefs gather to trade stories and perspectives. It's more than a drink; it's authentic fellowship where diverse views meet great company.



LOUNGERS

St Mary's ladies' group, Loungers, have met regularly in the Black Lion over the past year, usually on the last Friday of each month. Typically 4 to 6 of us (out of around 14 regulars), including church and non-church goers, catch up over a drink to socialise and get to know each other better. Our goal is to have fun, to deepen our friendships and to find opportunities for fellowship, recognising that there is not always time for this straight after church. We would love you to join us!