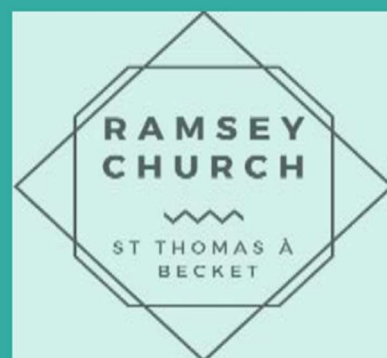


APCM REPORTS 2022



**St Thomas à Becket
Church, Ramsey**



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Front cover photo: Philippa Cadman

Rector's Report

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey – May 2022

It is quite hard to cast one's mind back to spring 2021, so much have conditions changed. A year ago, we were shell-shocked after a year of constant crisis; drained and full of grief. Having resumed regular in-church worship at Easter 2021, this has been a year of blessings, which seem to me to have substantially re-built our morale and stamina.

Perhaps the first real spirit-lifter was our summer Fête, and then the Flower Festival; many thanks to all who worked on these. Then I enjoyed encounters with Ramsey tradition on Plough Sunday, at a Drumhead service at the 1940s camp, on Heritage Sunday, at Remembrance, at the bereavement service organised by Swearers. We also resumed weddings and baptisms, a series of happy days; as well as conducting this year a lot of funerals, including some for much-loved members of our church family. The return of Sunday School has been much welcomed, and also refreshments before or after the service (thanks to all who make this possible). The stability and commitment of our choir and bell-ringers mean they continue vital to our worshipping life, as also our flower-arrangers and the people who clean and maintain the church. We were able to run Lent groups again (my thanks to those who led them). Over the year, we have seen a gradual reduction of Covid rules, to the point that church life overall now seems almost back to the friendly and relaxed atmosphere that I believe is the St Thomas' norm.

Alongside restoring tradition, the year has seen some gentle innovation. Our Morning Prayer is now permanently on Zoom, since this has enabled more people to join in. (Every day, half-a-dozen people lift Ramsey to God in prayer, and I believe this is one of the main (although to many hidden) enablers of our parish life.) Outdoor services, in August and particularly at Christmas, were widely appreciated. The pandemic has meant that grief and loss were very present in our society, and an October All Souls service was valued by those who attended, as was a service for those who have suffered the loss of a baby. I am particularly pleased that the relaxation of covid rules have allowed a bit of experimentation in our informal services, more 'audience participation', and the kind of pace and movement needed to engage young children. A new Fundraising group has constituted itself, and is doing great work. The Wednesday Night Live group

reformulated into a face-to-face group, and is developing into a really engaged space to explore issues of Christian life. The Foodbank and its sponsoring charity Revive Ramsey continue to mature organisationally, with a new management team now working to develop a longer-term strategic plan. All signs of life and hope.

Are we back to 2019? Of course not – that would be impossible and not actually desirable: people have moved away, left the church, been ‘promoted to glory’; and new people have arrived (including me!). But we do seem to have reached a new, stable position. Our typical Sunday in 2019 saw 90 people at the Sunday 10am service, plus 20 at 8am or Evensong, about 110 in total. Now we see around 50 at 10am, plus 10 at another service. But, on the other hand, around 30 people join our online worship. Overall, we seem to have levelled out about 20% smaller. But we are still a good-sized church for a town the size of Ramsey.

Naturally, we cannot expect to resume everything we did before the pandemic. We have asked everyone to consider afresh what they can give to church, both time and money. From the winter Time and Talents challenge, we have been able to re-found a pastoral visiting team, who are resuming visits to care homes. The spring Stewardship campaign has prompted 13 families (as I write) to increase their giving to church; this leaves 48 who haven’t got round to it, so I hope we may see more.

That our parish and benefice is led by a team is vital. I am extremely grateful to Glennis and Shan, to Jackie our Parish Administrator, and to our team of lay ministers, as well as to the ‘retired reverends’ who do so much: Val and Fred Kilner, Janet Humphries, Barry Pate. The ministry team has spent time together regularly this year, learning and praying, and discussing how we serve the parishes. I am excited that the coming year will see new members of the team. We will advertise again this spring for a Children and Families Missioner, and Maggie Tate-Druiff arrives as curate in July.

I look forward, therefore, to a really interesting year: of deepening, and growing, and engaging with the needs of the town God calls us to serve.

Iain Osborne

Finance Report

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Financial Facts 2021

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
1. Cash in all accounts	£ 103,558	£ 110,590
2. Cash in general account	£ 33,313	£ 35,221
3. Income from giving, fund raising, funerals per year	£ 65,493	£ 62,225
per week	£ 1,259	£ 1,197
4. Fixed costs for running church per week	£ 67,401 £ 1,296	£ 63,960 £ 1,230
5. (Deficit) per week	£ (37)	£ (33)
Deficit in general account of £ 1,908 (Deficit 2020 £ 1,736)		

6. Ministry share for 2021 £ 42,047 (2020 £ 42,021) paid in full.

7. Restorations fund £ 52,502

- £15k repaid from Re-ordering Account.
- Quinquennial repairs £9k (grant in 2020 for £ 6k)

8. Re-ordering Fund £ 26,111

- £15 k paid to Restoration Account.
- Ramp £ 4k (Total cost = £ 58k less grants £21k = Net £37k)

9. Normal giving (i.e. before any fundraising) in 2021 was £48,000 (2020=£51,000). This covered 73% (2020=80%) of the annual church costs, which were £65,000 (2020=£64,000).

10. More detailed set of accounts are available on request.

Jeremy Hyde

RAMSEY ST. THOMAS A BECKET ACCOUNT BALANCES

as at 31-Dec-21

2021

All figures rounded to nearest £1

A			B	C	D	E	F
			Opening Balance £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers to other accounts £	Closing Balance £
<u>General Funds</u>							
1	Barclays General Account	20740659	11,746	60,945	67,472	25,000	30,219
2	TSB General Account	16350260	23,475	9,454	4,835	(25,000)	3,094
3	Total General Funds		35,221	70,399	72,307		33,313
<u>Restoration Account</u>							
4	Restoration Current Account	40743089	19,243	7,292	2,704	27,000	50,832
5	CBF Restoration	614023002D	0				0
6	Restoration TSB Account	16622860	21,468	898	8,696	(12,000)	1,670
7	Total Restoration Funds		40,711	8,190	11,400	15,000	52,502
<u>Re ordering Accounts</u>							
8	Barclays Reordering Account	03299236	1,160	1,664	790	6,000	8,034
9	TSB Reordering Account	16622168	24,952		3,721	(21,000)	231
10	Total Parish Hall Funds		26,111	1,664	4,510	(15,000)	8,265
<u>Chancel Accounts</u>							
11	Chancel Deposit Fund	114001189D	3,137	159			3,296
12	Investment Fund (114001241S)	Note 1	5,409				6,182
13	Total Chancel Accounts		8,546	159			9,478
14	Total funds available to church		110,590				103,558

RAMSEY ST. THOMAS A BECKET - Year End Summary 2021

	Last Year 2020 Actual	Current Year 2021 Actual	Better / (worse) on Year	Budget 2022	
	A	B	C	D	
General Account					
	£	£	£	£	
1	Opening Balance	36,957	35,221	(1,736)	33,313
Receipts					
2	Gift Aid	35,844	34,487	(1,357)	32,753
3	Plates	3,244	3,892	648	5,135
4	Envelopes	1,594	29	(1,565)	
5	Tax Rebates	10,211	9,050	(1,161)	9,160
6	Normal Giving	50,893	47,458	(3,435)	47,048
7	Net Income from Wedding, Funeral, Baptism	6,061	3,924	(2,137)	5,171
8	Summer Fete		2,752	2,752	2,060
9	Craft Nights	180	204	24	200
10	Summer teas		77	77	950
11	Wednesday Night Live	81		(81)	
12	Flower Festival		2,723	2,723	2,500
13	HDC Covid Grant		6,000	6,000	
14	other fundraising	309	147	(162)	
15	Photocopying		66	66	
16	Heating - Hire Church	165	1,115	950	3,670
17	Special donations / collections	1,922	193	(1,728)	150
18	Camera Refund		299	299	
19	Leos Mobile	348	435	87	
20	Coffee am and after service	916		(916)	2,750
21	Toddler Church				
21	Childrens Soc - Christingle		100	100	200
22	2½% rebate Ministry Share	1,350		(1,350)	
22	TOTAL RECEIPTS	62,225	65,493	3,269	64,699
Payments					
22	Ministry share	42,021	42,047	(27)	42,670
23	Net Clergy Costs - Ramsey team ministry	89	808	(718)	1,225
24	Insurance	3,598	3,629	(31)	3,735
25	Organist, deputies	2,700	2,700		2,700
26	Secretarial work	350	2,200	(1,850)	2,430
27	Photocopying / Riso	235	232	3	300
28	Gas	5,355	4,190	1,165	6,710
29	Electricity	3,021	3,250	(228)	4,260
30	Water	72	73	(1)	80
31	Church maintenance	1,626	1,938	(312)	3,000
32	Upkeep Services	1,706	1,007	700	1,500
33	Sunday school, baptism cards	171	69	103	180
34	Fete, fair, teas exps		1,329	(1,329)	
35	Bank charges	204	386	(182)	420
36	Subscriptions	164	30	134	185
37	Stationery	168	41	127	120
38	Postage		14	(14)	30
39	Freewill Envelopes				
40	Charities / Donations	101	88	13	200
41	Licenses	680	718	(38)	739
42	Telephone / Wi-Fi	1,374	1,976	(601)	1,980
43	Advertisement				
44	Community Mission Worker leavers gift		500	(500)	
45	Miscellaneous	323	77	246	180
46	Childrens Soc - Christingle		100	(100)	200
47	TOTAL PAYMENTS	63,960	67,401	(3,441)	72,844
48	Surplus / (Deficit) in year before transfers	(1,736)	(1,908)	(173)	(8,145)
Transfers to other accounts					
49	Receipts	13,935	25,000	11,065	
50	Expenditure	13,935	25,000	11,065	
51	TOTAL AT BANK	35,221	33,313	(1,908)	25,168
55	Surplus / (Deficit) in year after transfers	(1,736)	(1,908)	6,710	
Change on year					
56	Total giving	50,893 80%	47,458 73%	(3,435)	47,048 65%
57	Net income from Wedding / Funerals	6,061 9%	3,924 6%	(2,137)	5,171 7%
58	Other fundraising	1,282 2%	10,487 16%	9,204	8,040 11%
59	Other Income	3,684 6%	1,221 2%	(2,463)	3,620 5%
60	shortfall / (surplus)	1,940 3%	2,295 4%	355	8,565 12%
61	Annual running costs	63,860	65,384	1,524	72,444

Deanery Synod Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

1. The most pressing issue for Deanery Synod was the implementation of the Diocesan Strategy Ely 2025. Accordingly, a special Deanery Synod meeting was held on 26th February at Somersham parish church with Bishop Dagmar. The purpose of the meeting was to look at how the Deanery and therefore each parish could implement the Diocesan Strategy. Bishop Dagmar opened by saying that (collectively) we needed to deal with searching questions about our direction of travel as each parish considers how it can “inhabit” the Diocesan Strategy Ely 2025 in the context of our churches emergence from the Covid pandemic and in the light of society’s looming problems (for example, uncertainties about the implications of cost of living increases and problems in Eastern Europe). Implementation of the strategy should embrace questions such as what sort of church should we be in the future in terms of services, buildings, mission, ministry and governance. A Deanery Planning Steering Group has been formed which will make recommendations to Deanery Synod by the end of the year.
2. When undertaking Deanery planning Bishop Dagmar indicated that the following principles should apply:
 - Local ownership;
 - Proposal of just (not necessarily equal) solutions;
 - Affordability;
 - Life-giving, not life-draining for our parishes;
 - Adaptability to evolving/changing situations;
 - Be frank about the challenges we face;
 - Consultation – the need to engage with and LISTEN to a wide audience using interactive processes;
 - Accountability – there must be no hidden agendas;
 - Be bold in pursuing pastoral re-organisation where current arrangements are unsustainable;

-
- Take the opportunity to promote both inherited and fresh expressions of church.
3. The right approach to stewardship would involve reducing the costs of ministry and mission.
 4. The Deanery, and parishes, may need to consider “doing less, well”, bearing in mind that “a clementine is not a failed orange”.
 5. We need to prepare for the new (changed) world, including the possible need to re-deploy stipendary posts.
 6. In the subsequent floor discussions the general view was that we need to optimise the use of available resources, maximising the opportunity to train up and deploy volunteers, be adaptable and proactively manage the transition to new ways of working.

Mike Boyles

22.04.22

Electoral Roll – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Electoral Roll Update 24th April 2022

- The roll last year was standing at 118 this year it is 113
- This year is a 'normal year' where an update only is required
- Notification of the preparation of the new roll (for this year) has been made at the church
- This began on the 11th April and ceases on the 23rd April
- The new roll is published and is in the church (at the back)
- It is subject to verification for the two weeks prior to the ACPM (8th May 2022)
- By way of reminder the last total renewal was 2019
- The next total renewal is due in 2025
- During the year to date some on the roll moved away
- Some have died and gone on to better things
- Two additional members have applied and are on the roll
- There may be additional applicants / deletions to the roll during the current 'verification period'
- St Thomas a Becket Church is following the diocese of Ely prescribed procedures for the update of the roll
- Note that all roll members are entitled to obtain a 'Parish Pass' enabling free standard access to Ely Cathedral.

Regards

IanBB

IAN BELL-BERRY

Electoral Roll Officer

ianbellberry@gmail.com

Parish Safeguarding Officer's Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

I have been in the position of Parish Safeguarding Officer/DBS Checker since June 2019 and what has become very evident is that the amount of work required by the PSOs has increased year on year. Since the pandemic what has improved is the ability to use Zoom for training purposes and meetings, which has meant less travel for everyone. The diocese uses an IT program called Parish Dashboard to monitor the progress of parish churches and STaB were recently moved from Level 2 to Level 3, which shows a vote of confidence in the PSO and the PCC's approach.

For your information the Church of England safeguarding policy statement is based on five foundations and offers six overarching policy commitments:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others. This policy applies to all Church Bodies and Church Officers. Full understanding of, and adherence to, this policy should lead to a deepening in the understanding of, and respect for, the rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults as people of faith in the life of the Church.

We continue to open up our Church and activities are starting again. It is important that all those people involved undertake the Safeguarding Training modules relevant to their roles. Free training is available through the Diocese of Ely Safeguarding website. Modules C0 (Basic Awareness) and C1 (Foundation) can be completed online, whilst Leadership (C2), Safer Recruitment (S1) and Responding to Domestic Abuse (S3) is currently carried out via Zoom and can be booked through the Ely Diocese Safeguarding website.

Our church officers are recruited safely and undertake the necessary safeguarding checks and training that is required of them. To the best of my knowledge, the PCC complies with its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

If anyone has any safeguarding concerns or wants more information about training or anything related to safeguarding, please contact me on 01487 814984 or email safeguarding@ramseysandupwood.org

Jane Cusworth
Parish Safeguarding Officer

Bell Ringers Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Although Covid-19 continued to affect social life generally, the Ramsey bell ringers were able to provide uninterrupted ringing throughout the year despite the sometimes-uncomfortable conditions due to the necessary precautions in line with CCCBR (Central Council of Church Bell Ringers) guidance.

A Quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles was rung in December to thank the donors of the new bell ropes. The ropes arrived just after the lockdown two years ago, so this has been a long-awaited event. Both donors enjoyed hearing the ringing and again received our thanks for their generosity.

A Quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung in January in thanksgiving for the life and service of Doug Linington. He was a faithful member of the band and a great teacher. The method rung was one of his favourites.

We maintained regular service ringing each Sunday, at Christmas and rang for four weddings. We also marked Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day by tolling the tenor bell.

It was with great joy that we were able to welcome Easter Day with bells before the 8am service of Holy Communion and rang twice more that day before each of the services.

We lost one of our regular ringers (Charlotte Alford) due to relocation and another (Ann Thompson) is unable to manage the stairs at the moment. We thank them both for their loyalty to the ringing in this tower. We are fortunate to have seen impressive progress by new recruits Georgina and son Jasper, the latter achieving his Duke of Edinburgh Award silver level in bell ringing.

Our steeple keeper, David, continues to ensure that our bells are maintained in full working order. Ringing master, Elspeth, deserves particular mention for her dedication and patience helping all ringers to progress during a difficult time through the illness and death of her father, Doug Linington.

In summary, we look back on another year of “business as usual” in unusual times, and the undersigned joint tower captains would like to thank all our ringers for their strong team spirit and for their unfailing service, often provided at short notice.

Paul Kneller and Cathy Moulton

20.04.2022

Cleaning team Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Currently we have 8 cleaners who volunteer.
8/25 slots covered each month.
We are doing our best!

There is, of course, an expectation that the church building be ready for use and cleaning is an essential.

It appears volunteering on a monthly basis is either unmanageable or unreasonable for most people, and that is an observation not a criticism.

We owe thanks to the commitment of the church cleaning team and the work they carry out week by week.

I also wish to acknowledge those who have had to step back for whatever reason.

As the cleaning team is small and the church the same size, the twice yearly deep clean is becoming a necessity rather than a bonus.

Is it time to rethink the current plan? If so, any ideas welcomed!

Rachel Thompson, Co-ordinator

Craft Group Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Once pandemic rules and regulations relaxed enough, we began face to face craft nights once again at the back of church using the facilities.

October we had a demonstrator to kick off regular face to face meetings. Lee from “LeeSews”.

Lee is often found on the artisan markets, so you may see what she creates using sewing, a soldering iron and lots of imagination and skill. Lee has herself joined the group now, so we often see her with her Mum Shirley who, incidentally is a proficient flower arranger having done a display at the 2021 Flower Festival!

November we got creative with string/macrame which both Judith and I led.

December was mulled wine and mincepies and we made a snowflake under the guidance of Liz Morgan and had a go at drawing a robin under guidance from Pip Cadman.

January had to be abandoned because the church was simply too cold with the boiler not functioning. However Zoom was used instead to catch up.

February - Key ring making led by Judith.

March - Decoupatch led by Val Molloy.

April – Fresh and/or paper Easter door garlands led by Judith and Rachel.

Attendees vary each month but it can be as many as 22.

Charitable Donations

Any expenses are taken out of the £5 donation we ask from each attendee.

Surplus builds up very quickly so we make charitable donations. Before Christmas we donated to Sue Ryder, Operation Christmas Child and last month to DEC for Ukraine.

As heating and lighting is getting quite costly, we will be offering £20 each month for church funds towards this.

Every month comes around quickly! It is good outreach and fellowship and enjoyed by a mix of people. Newcomers always welcomed, whether to demonstrate or to craft.

Rachel Thompson

Finance and Fabric Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

During the past year we have worked hard to ensure that the fabric of our building and all our equipment are well maintained.

One major problem has been issues with our heating system. Firstly our boiler packed up and needed a replacement part. Fortunately we were able to have this replaced free of charge, although it was suggested that the malfunction may have been caused by a leak in the system. Recently we discovered where the leak was and have been able to arrange for that to be repaired.

All the repairs from the quinquennial report have now been completed thanks to a grant we received, we have a new heater in the kitchen and we have finally been able to rectify the electrical faults identified at our last electrical inspection. We have still had some issues with the sound system but this does seem to be improving.

We have spent some time investigating the purchase of a defibrillator, ideally one that would be fixed outside the building for community use. Unfortunately, this is looking very difficult as the annual maintenance costs would be significant, we would certainly need a faculty if it was placed outside and we would not be eligible for any grants to purchase one if it was placed inside.

We have also ensured that regular maintenance takes place, with the gutters cleaned regularly: trees and shrubs that impact the building trimmed back, leaves cleared from drainpipes and, of course, a thorough spring cleaning session. Thanks go to all those who help with these tasks and to those who deal with our contractors.

Lesley Barker

Becket Flower Group Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Our year started with decorations for Easter 2021 at the very beginning of April. We were still mask wearing, social distancing and conducting our meetings over Zoom, but plans were underway for a Flower Festival at August Bank Holiday weekend. A departure from our usual June date because of Covid restrictions.

Our Haberdashery stall at the Fete in July was very well stocked thanks to the many donations of fabric, patterns, tools etc. We were busy all afternoon and raised £219 for our funds.

Flower Festival was very well attended and the theme of TV and Radio Favourites went down well. Donations left by visitors plus proceeds from the Café and Raffle brought in a total of £2723 for church funds.

Harvest and Christmas arrangements followed as life got slowly back to more normal and our fortnightly rota continued to function. Early in 2022 we started to plan our next Flower Festival, which will be on 27, 28 and 29 August. Our theme will be Monarchs and the title will be “Majesty”. We had a good list of ideas, but this one was thought to be the most appropriate choice in Jubilee Year.

Hilary Tough

Foodbank Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

In Matthew 25 Jesus says “I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me drink, naked and you clothed me ... Whatever you did for the least of these you did for me” . What a privilege it is as a church family to be able to be a part of serving the poor in our community as whatever we do for the poor it is as if we are doing it for Jesus Himself.

Changes Abreast

Many changes have taken place in the foodbank, Judith and Veronica continue to do a sterling job of overseeing the Tuesday and Thursday sessions each week. However, Lisa Williamson has now been appointed as project manager dealing with the day to running of the Foodbank, and I have been appointed as the strategic development officer. Both Lisa and myself took up our roles in February. We have had several volunteers coming to an end of their volunteering time with us, we are very grateful for the work they have done and the foundations they have built over the past years. We have also had new volunteers joining the team, with a new induction being put in place to ensure that all volunteers are properly trained and aware of our practices and procedures. A huge thank you to both everyone who has volunteered in the past and those who continue to volunteer.

Trustee Recruitment

Ramsey Revive (the charity which oversees the Foodbank) is also hoping to recruit some new trustees to oversee the running of the charity. Currently we have trustees representing various churches and charity organisations in the town. There has been an advert placed in the local newspaper to aid with recruitment. We are looking specifically for people with a business/finance background due to these skills being identified as lacking at a trustee training which was held earlier this year. Could this be you? Or do you know someone with a business and/or finance background and has a heart for helping the poor in our community?

Strategic Development Role

I'm still working half the week in Sheffield and half the week in Ramsey whilst I conclude my work with my church there, ensuring that my debt clients in the debt centre I was running are all in a good place to continue working with Christians Against Poverty, along with training my replacement in the church Foodbank. However, despite not being in Ramsey full time yet, I have already felt a very warm welcome. I'm still getting to know who is who, so please do forgive me if I don't know your names. Most of my time so far has been spent by talking to clients using the Foodbank and also to referral agencies to see what is available in the area for clients, and finding out what clients and referral agencies see as being some of the areas which the Foodbank could develop to help relieve Food poverty in the area, and lessen the need for Foodbanks from our residents.

Clarity of Vision

At the last Revive Ramsey Trustees meeting time was spent discussing the vision and values of the charity in line with the charity purposes. It was viewed that the vision of the Foodbank is to provide the people in need around us with Practical, Pastoral and Spiritual (or should that be Pneumatikotita for those who prefer to have the 3Ps!) support by creating a community with a bar for excellence. It's not just about handing out food parcels at a time of crisis, but instead about offering a wholistic care which treats every person as precious in the eyes of God and worthy of dignity.

Compliance

As a foodbank team we have continued to work to ensure that the Foodbank is compliant. Lisa has attended safeguarding training through Trussell Trust which has been cascaded down to the volunteers. She has done an amazing job of updating various policies and risk assessments. A risk assessment has been created for Slips, Trips and Falls and new signage has been placed in the Choir Vestry for Health and Safety (ladder safety, correct stacking of boxes, safe lifting and Covid measures, along with updated points of contact for the Foodbank - H&S and Safeguarding.) Monthly checks have now commenced in view of health and safety measures, including but not limited to cupboard safety, first aid boxes and pest control for both the Choir Vestry

and the Lambing Shed. The packing lists now match the shelf contents – thanks to Eilish for creating the chart.

Networking

Along with contacting various organisations in terms of strategy; both Lisa and myself have taken part in Trust Cluster meetings, Huntingdon Food Network meetings etc. so that we can network with others to develop best practice and discover more of what can benefit our users, especially in terms of local schemes which I have been previously unfamiliar with. Judith and other volunteers have also been able to continue links with other organisations such as the women’s guild and share with them about the work of the Foodbank.

Grants

We have received several grants over the past year for which we are very grateful. One in particular is 35K towards Financial Inclusion from the Trussell Trust. This grant is for the purpose of ensuring that those eligible to use the Foodbank are getting all the assistance they need so that they no longer need to use the Foodbank. This will be distributed via schemes to assist with advice to ensure people are able to get the benefits they are entitled to or know how to handle their debts etc. It may also include areas such as developing budgeting skills and support with isolation or other factors which contribute towards people locally needing the services of the Foodbank. We did have an option of employing a Citizens Advice Advisor with the money, however looking at statistics of past CAB referrals and listening to clients and referral agencies, we felt that with the amount of money available there was far more potential and benefit to the local community to go down an independent route which we can tailor specifically to the needs of Ramsey people.

Lambing Shed

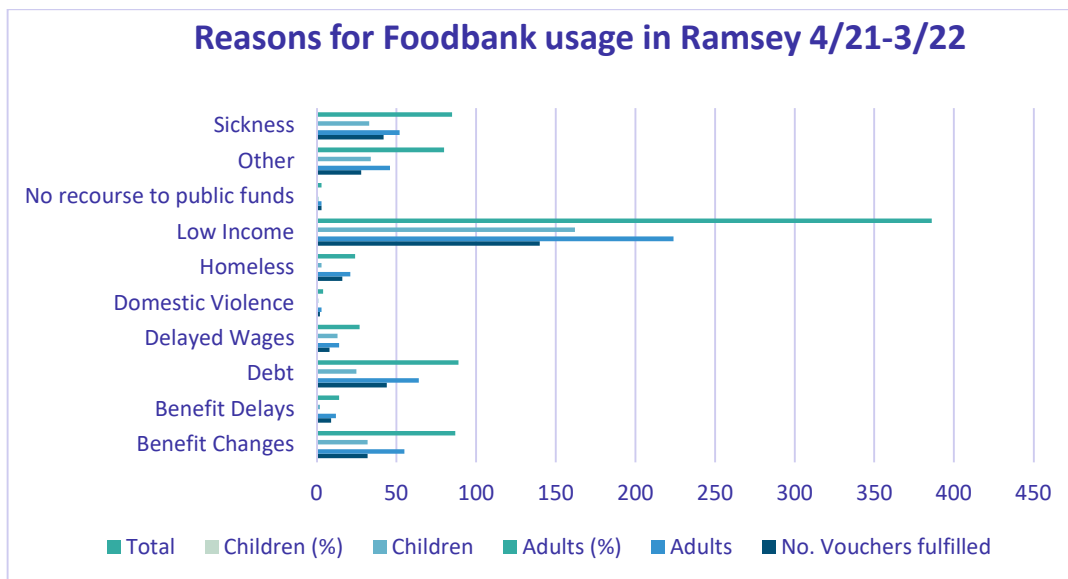
Leo mentioned in his last report that we had a grant to replace the lambing shed, however due to covid this hasn’t yet been possible. We are now looking towards getting a new place for storage of Foodbank stock, to ensure that Foodbank operations are as smooth as they can be.

Covid Restrictions

We are thankful that now Covid restrictions are reducing, we have now been able to set the tables up again so that clients can have a coffee and a chat when they come for their food parcels. For some clients this may be the only opportunity which they get to speak to someone and tell their stories too. Loneliness and exclusion from society is a huge burden that comes with poverty, with various lockdowns and distancing of some families/friends this has become even more poignant. Equally it gives us more opportunity to support clients, not just pastorally but also with signposting to other organisations who can support them in their time of need. Nevertheless, we continue to monitor the situation, and keep the Covid Risk Assessment updated in line with government guidelines and the local situation.

Foodbank usage

In the last financial year Ramsey Foodbank volunteers have handled 323 Food parcels which represents 494 adults and 305 children who would otherwise have gone hungry in our community. (Some of these are repeat referrals). Reason for Foodbank usage is below.



Foodbank usage peaked over the Christmas period as along with the emergency food parcels Veronica and others worked closely with local organisations to ensure that no family went hungry and Christmas by providing Christmas hampers to families in need.

The Foodbank team then worked extremely hard to get these hampers out to many families within Ramsey, and benefited from the use of the Methodist church to use as a base to pack and distribute the parcels from.

Since the start of this year Foodbank use has not been high, however due to the rising costs of living far outstripping any salary or benefit increases, we are sadly expecting the demand to rise. Most people will have been shocked at how much their household bills have increased over the past month, imagine how much more worrying this is for those who already have had to choose between heating their home or having a meal.

AGM

The AGM for Ramsey Revive, which everyone is cordially invited to, will be taking place at St Thomas a Becket church on Tuesday 7th June at 7pm. Please come along if you would like more detailed reports and hear more about the work of the foodbank and the new initiatives which we will be putting in place to support the poor in Ramsey.

Looking Forward

I look forward to what the next year will bring for the Foodbank and thankful for the opportunity to serve the poor in this beautiful part of England. Please do keep the Foodbank in prayers that along with various local research, we also seek God for His wisdom and direction in the strategy for the future of the Foodbank, and that as a team we serve the poor well as if we are indeed serving Jesus. Equally, on a personal level, I look forward to getting to know you all!

Sarah Thornton.

sarah@ramsey.foodbank.org.uk

Fundraising Committee Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Since the present demise of the Reordering Committee, it was decided to form this new fresh-looking committee to aid the Churches Finances following the pandemic.

Committee- Richard Hyde MBE (Chair), Janet Reed, Jane Cusworth, Jan Bowd, Bill Seegar, David Cusworth, Malcolm Bowd.

We have met on two occasions so far.

Past Events-

26th March 22' “Voices of Spring” Joint with “Rotary in Ramsey” resulting in £418.00

Future Events –

11th June 22' “Alan Norris Big Band” 7.30pm Tickets £10. (refreshments & a draw will be held, prizes welcomed)

23rd July 22' “50/50 Auction on The Green” We have arranged for storage; we will be pleased to accept items for sale refreshments will be available and a draw will be held.

10th Dec 22' “Tinsel & Brass” Somersham Town Band Tickets £10 (Draw & Refreshments).

It is hoped our congregation and the community will support these events either by purchase of tickets or donations towards the draws.

Please contact any committee member.

The committee welcomes and offers of help and ideas for Fundraising. If you would like to join this committee please contact one of the above.

Richard Hyde MBE (Chair)

Hinchingbrooke Hospital Chapel Support Team Report - May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Previous Situation

1. As reported in the autumn of 2020, few of our previous volunteers opted to undertake the DBS check and new extensive training required for ongoing participation in this service.
2. It was stated that if we wished to continue this important service to our local community then a larger pool of volunteers was required. Despite repeated requests in previous years a sustainable team of eight but preferably 10 people from the parish could not be formed. This would have provided sufficient contingency to meet the then preferred complement of 6 team members available for each chapel visit.

Present Position

3. The Covid pandemic prevented the restoration of chapel support activity until the autumn of 2021 and, because of the significantly depleted numbers of volunteers generally, individual parishes were not now expected to form parish teams and commit to certain dates. The remaining fewer volunteers were requested to offer their services individually, and be prepared to operate in smaller teams of two people more frequently. Mike and Sandy Boyles were requested to constitute one such team, operating as a sole pair, and commit to more regular attendance. From our point of view this was not sustainable and viable (because of the distances that needed to be covered in the hospital). Accordingly, we've had to withdraw.
4. The parish is no longer expected to commit a parish team; however, the Hinchingbrooke Hospital Chaplaincy Team will need many more volunteers in order to make this valuable and much appreciated service both viable and sustainable. In previous years our repeated requests for more volunteers have not been heeded, nor have they been championed from front of house, and this has contributed to the present sad situation.

Mike & Sandy Boyles

22.02.22

Mission Committee Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

We would like to begin our report with a big thank you to all those in our congregation who have been so generous with their support this year. Our Christmas hamper appeal raised sufficient funds to buy 35 hampers – a record for our parish. If you've read the latest FNKD newsletter in the porch you will see just how desperately these hampers were needed. Life here is very difficult for many but in Uganda there is no social security or foodbanks to turn to. We would also like to thank those who sponsored us on our walk from Ely to Littleport. The sponsor money, plus half the proceeds from the Peterborough Opera concert, meant we have raised £1950 towards a project at Kyabugashe School.

Our sponsored children are thriving. Annicent is at university; Moses has now left school and begun a vocational course and Johnson is thriving. It was also good to receive a report and photo of Mike, one of our first sponsored children, who has now graduated and is teaching at Kyabugashe School. The money to sponsor these children comes from a number of people in our church who donate on a regular basis. Sadly, in recent years, we have lost several of our donors. If you could help us by donating either monthly, quarterly or annually then we'd love to hear from you. The amount doesn't have to be large – the late Jim Hewison, after whom the sponsor fund was named, believed that lots of people donating a small amount soon added up.

We have regular updates from Ken and Rachel from FNKD on the situation in Uganda and it was good to see them at our fete last summer. Children there are finally back at school after more than a year of covid absence. They have been fortunate in that it has been possible to vaccinate all their workers there.

Lesley Barker

Mission Fundraising Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

Uganda appeal

The Christmas card donations continued as before the lockdown with members of the congregation posting one greeting to their church family on a card on the board and donating the saving of the cost of multiple cards to the appeal, but it was decided not to have Easter cards displayed in church but just to ask for donations.

£67 was collected for the Christmas cards - that's £43 less than last year.

There was £25 donated at Easter. There was no collection last year due to lockdown.

Shoe box appeal (Love in a Box)

£125 + 37 boxes joined those at the Methodist church, Eight boxes more than last year and the same cash donations towards transport.

Nationally 277,350 boxes were sent out from the UK - an increase on last year and an amazing total in these difficult times.

From our warehouse in St Neots, we sent out 5 loads –

The first 3 loads went to Liberia.

The last 2 loads were to Central Asia and to Albania.

There are pictures but they are not allowed to be shared as they went to Afghan refugees who need to be protected.

Thank you again for your generosity. We are part of a HUGE outpouring of love.

Cathy Moulton

Music Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

I am reading last year's report and it seems like a distant memory, now we are 'back to normal'. It's easy to forget having just one cantor to sing at services, thanks to Rachel Bell-Berry, Martin, Sheena and Adam who sang. Thanks to the choir members for their patience while we couldn't sing as a choir, but now we are back to normal, their weekly commitment to practises and services.

Thanks to Fiona who orders music, Sheena for her filing skills and especially Jackie who has to sort copyright issues. At the time of writing, we are awaiting new choir robes.

Thanks to the voluntary choir who sing at funerals.

Neville Palmer 17.04.22

Sunday School Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

I am delighted to say Sunday school has resumed! It's been a long time since we last were able to meet.

As the Sunday school teacher, I made an 'executive decision' to restart Sunday school once a month, within the Communion service on the 4th Sunday. My reasoning for a once a month gathering was to 'test the water' and see what the response would be. My other thought was that by offering Sunday school in the week after the family service on the 3rd Sunday means we can 'advertise' and encourage families to come two weeks in a month where specific provision is made for them. The response was incredible! We had 6 children come and the children and congregation were very excited and encouraging.

Val Molloy has kindly offered her assistance as a helper and is DBS current, as am I. There is the potential of encouraging extra 'assistants' should anyone like to join us, then we could have a rota.

I am continuing to use the Living Stones books as a basis for the teaching material, as they follow the lectionary, and also use a book called 'Sunday school in a tin' which is very useful for creative ideas.

We continue to have our group in the clergy vestry, which although not large is suitable at present and it does feel good that we are physically in the Church with everyone, as part of the device too. The age range is generally primary school age children.

A brief Post Script:

Something to be very hopeful about is the growth of Sunday school. As I am on the Toddler Team too, there is now a tangible link between the blossoming group of toddlers and Sunday school. Older siblings of toddler children are already coming to

Sunday school, and several families are coming to family services too. There is also a 'junior' choir in the making because of these links 😊 Thanks be to God!

Pip Cadman

Toddler Time Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

St Thomas a Becket Toddler group meets term time on Monday's from 9.30am-10.30am. We welcome children from 0-5 years, with their Parents, Grandparents, Carers and Child Minders. The Team leaders are Jayney, Judith & Pip. We also have Audrey who volunteers in making all the refreshments for the families.

We follow the Christian calendar to plan our sessions we light a candle to show that 'Jesus is the light of the world'.

During the Toddler Time we sing Christian songs and nursery rhymes and our families join in. We read stories and make a craft to support our weekly theme. We all enjoy refreshments and finish with a special song.

We set up a private facebook group about 6 years ago; this has proven invaluable, especially during the Covid pandemic. We have used this group as a contact for our families; everyone opened up on how they were feeling throughout the past year. We have been able to offer to support to each other.

We encourage our families to post their photographs of their crafts, singing, baking, colouring, it has been so uplifting for everyone.

Following on from lock down our group has grown significantly. Some of our families attend the monthly family services and Sunday school, this shows us how Toddler Church is a link to families and that everyone is welcome in the Church family.

Because of the increase in numbers, two church members have come forward to offer help and support in running the group, this was welcomed. Moving forward we would kindly ask for extra tables and chairs as we struggle to seat everyone at the moment.

Each week families can give a voluntary money contribution. This is put towards the cost of craft materials, books and refreshments for the children. Any excess money we give to a charity at the end of the year.

We feel we have helped the toddlers and their families and they know we're all here if they need us. They're part of the Church family.

Kind regards

Jayne Marsland, Pip Cadman & Judith Hyde

Worship Group Report – May 2022

St Thomas à Becket parish church, Ramsey

The smaller Worship group consists of the Revd Iain Osborne (Rector), Neville Palmer (Organist and Choir master), and three worship/music ALMs, Glennis Brown, Fiona Ward and Pip Cadman. We deal with worship in church Sunday by Sunday and the main Christian Festivals. We do not cover Fresh Expressions worship groups, like #WNL and Toddlers or discuss much of the online worship, although some of our group are involved in uploading services.

We have spent two years guiding our Sunday worship through a constantly changing landscape as the Coronavirus pandemic and attendant restrictions have ebbed and flowed. However, we now have an established pattern of Sunday services without restrictions and after a two year break we held a full programme of face-to-face services through Holy Week and Easter. It was particularly pleasing to re-start the Good Friday Walk of Witness and service on the green which involved Christians of most churches in Ramsey.

The past two years have forced us to find new ways of worship using online facilities to reach out to people. Providing this has demanded many of us gain a new, or vastly improve our, set of skills. In particular, we are grateful to Pip and Fiona who record a monthly online Family Worship service as well as leading in church, to Iain and to Revd Val Kilner who record services for other Sundays, and to Nev, Harry and the choir who record hymns and songs to be used. There have also been extra online services through Advent and Holy Week. We foresee this work continuing as the services are accessed by a number of people who cannot, for whatever reason, join us in the flesh.

The enforced changes have encouraged us to look at what we 'have always done' and think about whether we need to change to reach out to more people. Last year, our traditional Town Carol Service had to be cancelled at short notice owing to increased Covid cases, and was replaced by a shorter, outdoor version. The response was greatly encouraging as we were joined by many people, including a lot of children, who would not normally attend the in-church service. Should we keep this 'new' service as part of

our mission to reach more people with the Christmas story? If so, what happens to our traditional full service of lessons and carols? We also noticed with sadness that the traditional Midnight service of Communion was only attended by twenty people. The choir were singing carols beforehand to an empty church. Is it too late for people to come out? Should we hold the first Communion of Christmas earlier in the evening? Or on Christmas Day? Our family and pet friendly service on Christmas morning is very popular and well attended in 2021 despite Covid fears so it seems foolish to change this. However, there is a strong feeling among us the Nativity service in its present form has run its course.

These are some of the questions we face when planning services. If you have any thoughts about our Christmas services, or the best way to proclaim the Gospel to more people, please speak to one of us. The APCM is NOT the time for this discussion but let us know what you think. We cannot please everyone, but we will listen if you speak to us directly.

We will also be evaluating the response to the services through Holy Week and Easter. This is the first year Iain has seen all the ecumenical and traditional services we have usually run. We have introduced the procession to the church behind a donkey on Palm Sunday which was enjoyed by many. Will this become a new tradition? Again, if you have any thoughts about these, or any services, please speak to us.

There are other areas of worship which we could consider in the coming weeks. For example, the 8.30am Morning Prayer on Zoom Monday to Friday is increasing in numbers: should we introduce Evening Prayer in church to complement this? And there are other Christian Festivals and Saints' Days which do not fall on a Sunday which we could celebrate if there is an appetite for it.

Finally, I said earlier we have an established pattern of Sunday services. However, with the exciting news that we have a Curate joining us in July, there will inevitably be some changes to involve Maggie fully in the life of our Benefice. We look forward to welcoming her and the contribution she will bring to our worship.