

APCM REPORTS 2025



**St Thomas à Becket
Church, Ramsey**

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St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Rector's Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

At the time of this year's APCM, it will be almost exactly a year since it was announced both in Ramsey and St Helens, that we would be moving the following Summer. I want to begin this report by expressing my sincere thanks to all of you for being such a welcoming community to myself, Naomi, Isabelle and Chloe. It hasn't always been straightforward for us, we've encountered and overcome challenges, but we have also experienced great joy among you. Thanks be to God!

I will admit that the last nine months have been something of a learning curve for me personally. It takes time to embed oneself within a community, to learn about you and your history, your culture and your love for the church. I started 2025 with the view that I had been in Ramsey long enough to begin thinking about what the future might look like for us. That's not something to rush into, but to consider carefully and collectively, and we have taken the first steps along that road.

Arriving in Ramsey, I landed somewhat on my feet. Here is a church with a critical mass of willing volunteers and a people passionate about sharing the love of God with its wider community. It's an exciting place to be! You have an existing five-year plan, clearly identified values, and the beginnings of a vision for who you want to become.

In March, eight of us attended a conference called Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCiG), which is giving us a new framework to think about how we take our existing ideas and move towards growing our church in all areas. It focuses our thinking into areas like praying, sharing our faith and storytelling, enabling people to grow as disciples, increasing our hospitality and welcome, making worship accessible to more people, and achieving a balance of spiritual, numerical and missional growth. Connected with this is the desire to reorder the interior of our building, to create a dynamic facility that is accessible, and enables us to continue our trajectory of growth in all areas. My thanks to all who serve on our fabric and fundraising committees, who make huge contributions in this particular area.

The task of the new PCC will be to take this thinking forward and turn it into a plan for growth. We offer it all into God's hands and trust Him to lead us forwards in a way that brings everyone with us. Of course there are challenges, and some of those are detailed in this document, but the overall picture is positive.

Here are some specific highlights:

At the time I started my ministry, we also welcomed Revd Maggie back from maternity leave, and she has been a joy to minister alongside with Toby and Vera too. As she enters the final phase of her Curacy, her focus has shifted towards starting new projects, such as the Community Coffee morning in Upwood, using her creative gifts in leading the Encounter movement, and all the other shapes that ministry takes. We will lose Maggie briefly in June due to a placement in Sawtry as part of her Curacy, but she'll be back with us over the summer and into 2026.

Hayley has continued to develop our ministry with children and families, whilst also beginning LLM training at Ridley Hall, another amazing achievement. We have seen tangible growth with children

and families and Hayley has been instrumental in that. 3 in 1 club has become a well-established worshipping community in itself, we have visited and welcomed schools into church on numerous occasions, Fen Church is reaching an altogether new audience, and we have increased our volunteer base (though there's always room for more and we are by no means fully sustainable yet). It has also been a joy to work alongside Hayley increasingly in leading worship on Sundays as part of her LLM training.

Jackie Southwell continues to support and enable our church ministry in her role as Administrator. Jackie goes above and beyond, has a wonderful attention to detail, and manages everything extremely well, including the Rector! I am hugely grateful for her contribution to church life.

There are other key people to mention too. Our Musical Director Neville Palmer faithfully leads our musical worship on a weekly basis, his skill and dedication are an enormous gift to us. Our Safeguarding Officer Jane Cusworth keeps us all safe, delivering training, advising and serving us on a daily basis. Our ALMs in their various roles also benefit our ministry: Pip Cadman, Fiona Ward, Val Molloy, Judith Hyde, Glennis Brown and Rachael Bell-Berry. Then there are all the volunteers who make Sundays, our midweek activities and one-off events happen, not to mention those who make valuable contributions to our various committees and teams. I am so grateful for all you do.

I particularly want to pay tribute to our LLM Vicki Latter here too. This is difficult to say - as I write this in early April, Vicki is seriously unwell in hospital after a car accident. Her contribution over many years has also been extremely valuable. In Ramsey she has shown a particular commitment to our Evensong congregation, but she has also shared her ministry over the whole benefice, and was in the process of renewing her LLM license. I'm sure you'll join me in praying for Vicki and giving thanks to God for her.

Lastly, I want to thank our Churchwardens Glennis and Shan, who agreed to continue in their roles whilst I settled into Ramsey, despite expecting to step down in 2023! They have been a sure foundation for me to find my feet here; their knowledge, wisdom and ability to cope with me is exemplary! It is difficult to replace the irreplaceable, but we are moving towards having two new wardens in place by 2026. Watch this space.

To close, the big picture is a positive one, and a renewed vision and strategy for growth I believe will help us get to where we want to go with God's gentle guidance. We are not without challenges however: finances, building, volunteers, becoming a church fit for the 21st Century – common challenges in many churches, but not insurmountable. I believe this is a time to hope and anticipate what God will do among us in the coming years and months. It's a good time to be in Ramsey, and I'm looking forward to sharing the journey with you. We hope to share more details of our thinking in the coming months. For now, I leave you with these words from Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways, acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." (NRSV)

Revd Joe Magill

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Deanery Synod Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

The Deanery Synod meets four times a year. Meetings take place in different churches around the deanery. The Deanery Synod is led by the Rural Dean, Rev. Fred Kilner. Glennis Brown and I are the current Deanery Synod representatives for St Thomas a Becket.

Meetings often have time for representatives to talk about what has been happening in their parishes and to share good practice. Speakers are also invited to talk about their work. During recent meetings we have had presentations by Mary, the Anna Chaplain at Somersham and Ruth New, the Diocesan Development Officer for Children and Families.

Following our attendance at the Synod, Glennis and I inform the PCC what has been discussed and the PCC can then choose to act upon the information which was shared if it is appropriate and useful for our parish.

An important aspect of the Deanery Synod is discussing the Parish Share and financial obligations along with other members of the Synod. The views of our deanery are then taken to the Diocesan Synod, where Rev. Fred Kilner represents us along with a some lay members from the deanery.

If becoming a Deanery Synod Representative is something you are interested in, please speak to Glennis or myself and we can give you more information. It is an important role as we need to have our voice both in the deanery and the diocese.

Rachael Bell-Berry

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Electoral Roll Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

Electoral Roll Report 2025 for PCC April 2025

(2025 - This year the entire ER is renewed) (Next is due in 2031)

- The roll in year 2023 recorded 113, in 2024 it recorded 106
- The number of 106 was certified to Ely on 29th April 2024

- In short the update year of 2024 from January to the APCM began with 113 and was updated to 103, reflecting natural changes.
- New additions during the year (the normal update period) up to the APCM saw an increase of 3 to 106

- Managing the losses / reductions can be vague, there are established rules about written notifications of those people who wish to leave, but none have ever been received. Otherwise the system relies on 'informal assessment'. That seems to work OK

- In 2024 the update period began on 31st March and finished on 13th April 2024
- In 2025 the renewal period began on 16th March and closed on 14th April 2025

- 85.6% of applicants were happy to provide their email addresses this time.
- 6.7% of applications were submitted by email.
- The full new list of names (only) was provided at the back of the church on 18th April and will remain there (for any minor corrections) up to the APCM for the final number to be ratified at that meeting on 12 May 2025.
- Soon after that number will be Certified by IanBB and sent to the Diocese for their records.

- St Thomas a Becket Church is following the diocese of Ely prescribed procedures for the update of the roll.
- The process does not preclude any additional applicants to the roll during the year after the Certification. (numbers shall be updated on the next 'accounting period' ending in April / May 2026)

- Note that all roll members are entitled to obtain a 'Parish Pass' enabling free standard access to Ely Cathedral. Paper forms (pre-signed) were provided at the back of the church from 18th April 2025.
- Here is a link to the page produced on the Ely Cathedral Pages
<https://www.elycathedral.org/plan-your-visit/visitor-tickets-and-tours/free-cathedral-entry>
- I would like to thank everyone who took time to add their names to the roll using Paper ,email etc.
- AND thanks also, to Jackie & Joe for their tireless assistance.

Regards *Ian BB*

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Fabric and Finance Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

In addition to our usual tasks of maintenance, repairs and safety checks we have moved forward on several areas. In July we were delighted to be awarded 5 stars for our food hygiene and safety. Thanks go to all those who complete the necessary forms every week – we have tried to keep them as simple as possible, those who have undergone the necessary training and especially to Janey Marsland who held our hands and helped us through this.

In August we had our quinquennial inspection, something we always view with trepidation as we never know what building problems this will show up. Fortunately this one didn't throw up anything unexpected. The only urgent item, the replacement of the wooden louvers in the tower, was something we were already working on and work on this started in April. Mention was made of repairing the broken windows, again something that was in hand. We even received a letter from the Diocese congratulating us on looking after our building so well – and then reminding us to keep on doing so!

Our next big project is to re-arrange our building. Here we are looking to do 2 things. Firstly we'd like to make our inner west doors more welcoming by having clear glass doors. Secondly, we'd like to remove the pews and replace them with chairs. This would give us a building which is more suited to worship in the 21st century and also allow us to hold a number of other events. A faculty application has already been made and a small group of 4 people are working on the details of this and liaising with the architect. These projects will not be cheap and will require grants and fundraising.

Finally we'd like to thank the many people who undertake minor repairs and maintenance work on our building. We really are a community that works together to keep both our building and our parishioners safe.

Lesley Barker

Ramsey St.Thomas à Becket Church Financial Facts 2024



| | <u>2024</u> | <u>2023</u> |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Cash in all accounts | £ 206,952 | £ 211,479 |
| 2. Cash in general account | £ 36,391 | £ 38,046 |
| 3. Income from giving, fund raising, funerals per year | £ 83,532 | £ 91,252 |
| per week | £ 1,606 | £ 1,755 |
| 4. Fixed costs for running church | £ 85,188 | £ 92,797 |
| per week | £ 1,638 | £ 1,785 |
| 5. (Deficit) per week | £ (32) | £ (30) |
| 6. Deficit in general account of (£ 1,655) / (Deficit 2023 £ 1,545) | | |
| 7. Ministry share for 2024 £ 46,204 (2023 £ 44,428) paid in full. | | |
| 8. Restorations fund £ 144,540 | | |
| • £ 7k Improve sound system | | |
| • \$ 4k Fees to Architects front door / pews | | |
| • £ 5k Insurance income for window damage | | |
| 9. Re-ordering Fund £ 15,768 | | |
| • £ 3k increase from various concerts. | | |
| 10. Normal giving (i.e. before any fundraising) in 2024 was £61,000 (2023=£63,000). This covered 71% (2023=69%) of the annual church costs, which were £85,000 (2023=£91,000). | | |
| 11. More detailed set of accounts are available on request. | | |

RAMSEY ST. THOMAS A BECKET ACCOUNT BALANCES

as at 31-Dec-24

2024

All figures rounded to nearest £1

| A | | B | C | D | E | F |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | Opening Balance £ | Income £ | Expenditure £ | Transfers to other accounts £ | Closing Balance £ |
| General Funds | | | | | | |
| 1 | Barclays General Account 20740659 | 37,602 | 86,778 | 87,189 | (1,500) | 35,691 |
| 2 | TSB General Account 16350260 | 444 | | 1,244 | 1,500 | 700 |
| 3 | Total General Funds | 38,046 | 86,778 | 88,433 | | 36,391 |
| Restoration Account | | | | | | |
| 4 | Restoration Current Account 40743089 | 149,673 | 7,730 | 14,354 | | 143,049 |
| 5 | CBF Restoration 614023002D | 0 | | | | 0 |
| 6 | Restoration TSB Account 16622860 | 1,552 | | 60 | | 1,492 |
| 7 | Total Restoration Funds | 151,224 | 7,730 | 14,414 | | 144,540 |
| Re ordering Accounts | | | | | | |
| 8 | Barclays Reordering Account 03299236 | 12,297 | 3,759 | 341 | | 15,715 |
| 9 | TSB Reordering Account 16622168 | 113 | | 60 | | 53 |
| 10 | Total Parish Hall Funds | 12,410 | 3,759 | 401 | | 15,768 |
| Chancel Accounts | | | | | | |
| 11 | Chancel Deposit Fund 114001189D | 3,830 | 318 | | | 4,148 |
| 12 | Investment Fund (114001241S) Note 1 | 5,968 | | | | 6,104 |
| 13 | Total Chancel Accounts | 9,798 | 318 | | | 10,252 |
| 14 | Total funds available to church | 211,479 | | | | 206,952 |

RAMSEY ST THOMAS A BECKET - Year End Summary 2024

| | Last Year 2023 Actual | Current Year 2024 Actual | Better / (worse) on Year | Budget 2025 | Last Year 2023 Per week | Current Year 2024 Per week | Better / (worse) on Year Per week |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
| General Account | | | | | | | |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 1 Opening Balance | 39,591 | 38,046 | (1,545) | 36,391 | | | |
| Receipts | | | | | | | |
| 2 Gift Aid | 46,692 | 42,766 | (3,926) | 43,294 | 898 | 822 | (76) |
| 3 Plates | 5,831 | 4,954 | (877) | 5,220 | 112 | 95 | (17) |
| 4 Envelopes | | | | | | | |
| 5 Tax Rebates | 10,339 | 12,847 | 2,508 | 11,800 | 199 | 247 | 48 |
| 6 Normal Giving | 62,863 | 60,567 | (2,296) | 60,314 | 1,209 | 1,165 | (44) |
| 7 Net income from Wedding, Funeral, Baptism | 4,653 | 3,244 | (1,409) | 4,023 | 89 | 62 | (27) |
| 8 Summer Fete | 1,726 | 1,992 | 266 | 1,950 | 33 | 38 | 5 |
| 9 Craft Nights | 879 | 545 | (334) | 400 | 17 | 10 | (6) |
| 10 Summer teas | 1,321 | 2,082 | 761 | 2,000 | 25 | 40 | 15 |
| 11 Flower Festival | 3,070 | 3,401 | 331 | 3,400 | 59 | 65 | 6 |
| 12 Insurance Claim | | 1,571 | 1,571 | | | 30 | 30 |
| 13 other fundraising | 3,367 | 179 | (3,187) | 600 | 65 | 3 | (61) |
| 14 Coffee sales after service | 582 | 749 | 167 | 660 | 11 | 14 | 3 |
| 15 Heating - Hire Church | 6,440 | 610 | (5,830) | 600 | 124 | 12 | (112) |
| 16 Special donations / collections | 2,123 | 2,659 | 536 | 2,400 | 41 | 51 | 10 |
| 17 Scout Hut Hire | | 408 | 408 | 600 | | 8 | 8 |
| 18 Childrens worker Events + Grant | 1,831 | 4,129 | 2,297 | 780 | 35 | 79 | 44 |
| 19 Coffee Mornings | 1,388 | 776 | (612) | 1,000 | 27 | 15 | (12) |
| 20 Senior lunches | 307 | 364 | 57 | 400 | 6 | 7 | 1 |
| 21 2.5% rebate Ministry Share | 702 | 256 | (446) | | 14 | 5 | (9) |
| 22 TOTAL RECEIPTS | 91,252 | 83,532 | (7,720) | 79,127 | 1,755 | 1,606 | (148) |
| Payments | | | | | | | |
| 23 Ministry share | 44,428 | 46,204 | (1,777) | 48,337 | 854 | 889 | (34) |
| 24 Net Clergy Costs - Ramsey team ministry | 2,526 | (81) | 2,608 | 2,125 | 49 | (2) | 50 |
| 25 Insurance | 4,112 | 4,236 | (124) | 4,406 | 79 | 81 | (2) |
| 26 Organist, deputies | 2,700 | 2,700 | | 2,700 | 52 | 52 | |
| 27 Secretarial work | 3,095 | 3,356 | (261) | 3,605 | 60 | 65 | (5) |
| 28 Gas | 15,159 | 9,585 | 5,574 | 4,177 | 292 | 184 | 107 |
| 29 Electricity | 5,749 | 2,721 | 3,029 | 3,085 | 111 | 52 | 58 |
| 30 Water | 30 | 44 | (15) | 46 | 1 | 1 | (0) |
| 31 Church maintenance | 3,497 | 3,835 | (338) | 3,600 | 67 | 74 | (6) |
| 32 Upkeep Services | 1,936 | 1,036 | 900 | 1,200 | 37 | 20 | 17 |
| 33 Toddlers, baptism cards | 399 | 117 | 282 | 60 | 8 | 2 | 5 |
| 34 Fete, fair, teas exps | 227 | 46 | 181 | | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| 35 Bank charges | 589 | 579 | 9 | 600 | 11 | 11 | 0 |
| 36 Subscriptions | 165 | 137 | 28 | 20 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| 37 Stationery | 1,221 | 890 | 331 | 660 | 23 | 17 | 6 |
| 38 Postage | 24 | 56 | (32) | 96 | 0 | 1 | (1) |
| 39 Children and Families Missioner | 2,450 | 2,792 | (341) | 2,700 | 47 | 54 | (7) |
| 40 Charities / Donations | 449 | 518 | (69) | 400 | 9 | 10 | (1) |
| 41 Licenses | 1,126 | 1,106 | 20 | 1,150 | 22 | 21 | 0 |
| 42 Telephone / Wi-Fi | 2,120 | 2,377 | (257) | 2,400 | 41 | 46 | (5) |
| 43 Hire Scout hut | | 1,482 | (1,482) | 2,200 | | 29 | (29) |
| 44 Community Mission Worker leavers gift | 358 | 114 | 244 | | 7 | 2 | 5 |
| 45 Miscellaneous | 439 | 1,337 | (898) | 520 | 8 | 26 | (17) |
| 46 TOTAL PAYMENTS | 92,797 | 85,188 | 7,609 | 84,087 | 1,785 | 1,638 | 146 |
| 47 Surplus / (Deficit) in year before transfers | (1,545) | (1,655) | (110) | (4,960) | (30) | (32) | (2) |
| Transfers to other accounts | | | | | | | |
| 48 Receipts | 500 | 7,223 | 6,723 | | 10 | 139 | 129 |
| 49 Expenditure | 500 | 7,223 | 6,723 | | 10 | 139 | 129 |
| 50 TOTAL AT BANK | 38,046 | 36,391 | (1,655) | 31,431 | (30) | (32) | (2) |
| 51 Surplus / (Deficit) in year after transfers | (1,545) | (1,655) | (15,329) | | | | |
| | | | Change on year | | | | |
| Total giving | 62,863 68% | 60,567 71% | (2,296) | 60,314 72% | | | |
| Net income from Wedding / Funerals | 4,653 5% | 3,244 4% | (1,409) | 4,023 5% | | | |
| Other fundraising | 12,413 13% | 12,021 14% | (392) | 11,010 13% | | | |
| Other Income | 11,097 12% | 7,654 9% | (3,442) | 3,780 4% | | | |
| shortfall / (surplus) | 1,545 2% | 1,655 2% | 110 | 4,960 6% | | | |
| Annual running costs | 92,570 | 85,142 | (7,429) | 84,087 | | | |

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Safeguarding Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

In collaboration with Ely Diocese we are fully committed to ensuring that our churches are safe places for everyone, especially for children and adults at risk of harm. I attend regular network meetings on Zoom keeping up to date with the latest safeguarding legislation.

The Parish Dashboard, which is an online tool, is used to assist the PCC keep track of safeguarding in our church and updated with local and national changes in safeguarding requirements. The latest version of the Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework approved by General Synod in July 2024 came into force on 1 January 2025. It is now mandatory for anyone appointed or elected to a role within the church to complete the Safeguarding Basic Awareness Pathway training. I have been able to arrange group training sessions, which are working well and making people aware of basic safeguarding reporting.

We continue to open up our Church and activities involving children are very popular. It is important that our church officers are recruited safely and undertake the necessary safeguarding checks and training.

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group has made it clear that their insurance cover is only valid where National Safeguarding policy and practice guidance is being followed.

A safeguarding folder containing all relevant documentation and helpful information can be found at the back of the church.

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

Email: safeguarding@ramseysandupwood.org

Tel: 01487 814984 / 07779 101493

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Bellringer's Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

Quarter Peals (on 6 bells lasting 45 – 50 min.) were rung on the following special occasions:

- April 12 by visiting ringers
- August 1 to celebrate the new rector's installation.

Other events, in addition to the usual planned service ringing throughout the year included:

- **June:** We opened for tower tours in conjunction with the fete; we rang for the 80th anniversary of D-Day; three teams from Ramsey between them attained 1st, 2nd and 3rd placings in the various Ringing Festival competitions (Note: not just fun but also supporting the wider standard of ringing)
- **July:** The ringers provided the band teas on Abbey Green.
- **August:** Funeral ringing for Val's dad; Flower Festival Songs of Praise ringing.
- **September:** Our new Rector attended a full practice evening.
- **October:** Harvest Songs of Praise ringing; We rang for the Civic service.
- **November 10:** Remembrance Day ringing; The local Cubs visited the tower.
- And we welcomed visiting ringing bands from other towers in May, Sep and Oct.
- **Wedding Ringing:** We rang for four weddings; earlier this year (2025) we staged our usual presentation to encourage the 6 prospective wedding couples to choose bells. They all have!

Admin: We learned that the separate, dedicated bell ringers bank account set up last year, not least to facilitate wedding ringing payment procedures, is costing £4.25 monthly to operate.

We contributed to a DA seminar regarding the Future of Ringing.

We were proud to see one of our team, Emma, elected to member of the District Committee, and are pleased to have been joined recently by one more additional recruit, Lori.

Maintenance: David, our Steeplekeeper continued to ensure our safe ringing through his attentive maintenance regime. He also installed a much improved monitor system in the ringing room which assists with the timing of starting and stopping of ringing as necessary, such as at weddings.

Recruitment: We are fortunate to have so many ringers more than we have bells, and who regularly turn out enabling us almost always to ring on all 6 bells. We continue also to benefit from having so many keen Ramsey learners making such good progress. The March ringers whom we regularly welcome to both service and practice ringing also continue to inspire and support our ringers and their presence is most appreciated.

Safeguarding: Last but not least, we implemented an attendance register for all ringing sessions (not just practice nights) and enacted the requirement to ensure all ringers took the safeguarding course.

Paul and Cathy Joint Tower Captains, Ramsey Tower, April 2025

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Children and Families Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

Work with children and families has grown from strength to strength this year. We now feel like we are moving from connecting with children and their families to coming alongside them and discipling the children. This is only possible through the strong grounding over previous years and the openness from the church family to try new things and connect with young families.

In Church

We have seen more families join our services. In fact, we had 23 children at our Palm Sunday service, thanks partly to lovely Brian (the donkey) and Easter holiday club the previous week. Those leading our family worship (1st and 3rd Sundays) have worked hard to make these services more active and intergenerational (involving all ages worshipping alongside each other) which is a change for our congregation and has generally been received positively. A small number of our regular children are eager to take on leadership roles in services and this is something we are looking into.

Clubs

Ramsey 3in1 Club has a consistent group of children who attend regularly. We have a strong volunteer team who have developed a lovely relationship with the children and are able to 'walk alongside' the children in their faith discussions. Last term the children posed 'big questions' for us to focus on. This worked well as the children were able to share their thoughts and ideas alongside the adults. We had some wonderful theological and spiritual conversations.

Holiday clubs have gone well over the last year. We held one for three days in August, focused on science and faith, a Christmas craft morning with puppetry based on the nativity story, and an Easter holiday club focused on 'Jesus – our living hope'. This last club was our most successful yet, as it complimented the Church of England theme of lent and enabled the children to develop some sense of how Jesus died for us but also how he is with us always. 31 children attended the club, and we had 16 skilled volunteers, including David Painter, who came to tell us about being a beekeeper (linked to John the Baptist). When asked what they like about holiday club the children say they enjoy the mix of activities, the outside games and the food (thanks to Liz and Audrey!).

Outreach

We are working successfully with the local primary schools and have provided:

- 'Christmas Unwrapped' and 'Easter Cracked' workshops to all reception aged children in our benefice schools.
- Christmas or Christingle services in church from all benefice schools, including Abbey College.
- Workshops in church from Ramsey Junior School, Upwood Primary Academy and Ashbeach.
- Monthly 'Open the Book' assemblies in all our benefice schools (with a large volunteer team).
- Six-week 3in1 clubs in Ashbeach School every term. Thanks to Cathy for leading this with me. I am looking for someone to take on her role as she has decided to take a break.
- 1:1 mentoring in two of our benefice schools, although it is now proving difficult to make time for this.

LLM impact

In September I began my diploma in Theology, Ministry and Mission at Ridley Hall, Cambridge, leading to becoming a Licenced Lay Minister at the end of two years. It has been a steep learning curve for me – organising myself between tough academic study and my practical role as Children and Families Missioner. Seven months in and I can see the impact the study is having on my practice and on my role. I am becoming less focussed on teaching the children about faith and more about enabling them and ‘walking alongside them’ on their faith journey. I am also more confident to share my faith with others and feel braver to trial new ideas in services. I am grateful to Joe, Maggie and the worship team for allowing me to take some new steps in our services.

Next steps

- It’s important to continue building on the strong foundations of what we have achieved this year as we are seeing the fruits from seeds we have sown (clearly another thing I have learnt from my study!).
- I would like to explore ways to encourage parents to share their faith more openly with their children.
- Working with the worship team to further develop our intergenerational services will take time but could be powerful in developing a style of service where all people feel spiritually fed, wherever they are in their faith journey.
- Developing young leadership would empower the older children and hopefully they will continue to be involved in church in their teenage years.

Hayley Challinor, Children and Families Missioner (25 hours a week)

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Cleaning Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

Because there are so few volunteers for such a large church and we are not a particularly young bunch of people, it was decided to concentrate each week on what we considered the most important areas for a weekly clean.

So it was decided that the kitchen and toilets (1), carpets (2), and the dusting and brasses (3) fell into that category.

We are really grateful to the PCC for making this possible by supporting a quarterly deep clean ensuring that the pew areas, high dusting etc. is taken care of. Especial thanks go to Lesley Barker for organizing this

So for this last year a team of 12 has kept our church looking good. Unfortunately, this coming year our numbers will drop to just eight volunteers which means the rote will be three weekly.

We are looking to open the church to more people and activities so I cannot stress strongly enough that if the cleaning demands becomes too much for the present volunteers and no one else comes forward, we would be looking at having to employ someone if we want the church to stay clean and presentable.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank the cleaning team for their quiet devotion to duty. They are unseen, unsung heroes as they ask no praise or accolades, just taking great pride in what they do for their church building and so, the glory of God.

Cathy Moulton

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Craft Group Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

The craft night has continued to meet on the second Tuesday evening of each month in church. It is always a good evening of crafting and fellowship, starting with a warm welcome and prayer and during the evening refreshments are provided. It is a lovely group of people and on average, there are 28 of us crafting. (At the last session there were 34!). It is a great evening of outreach as many who come are not members of our regular congregation.

We vary the crafts each month so there are always new ideas to try. For example, this past year, we have tried wet felting, mosaics, dried flower garlands, button necklace making and decoupage. We also had a talk by Shan on the history of the church and for our Christmas get-together, a few of us demonstrated some lovely food which we all sampled! (and enjoyed by all!).

We make a small charge of £5 for the evening to cover any cost incurred for materials. More often than not, all the contributions have gone to charity and some to the church to contribute to lighting and heating costs. Some of the charities we have supported this year include Hearing Dogs for the Deaf, The Leprosy Mission, FNKD Hampers for Uganda, The Angels Foundation and St. Andrew's Renovation.

Our thanks go to all who have demonstrated and shared their craft, provided refreshments or helped in any way. We always welcome any new ideas for the evenings and anyone willing to share their specific gift / talent, please let us know. We look forward to another year of creativity and fellowship.

Rachel and Judith

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Fundraising Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

Committee: Richard Hyde MBE (Chair) Jane Cusworth, Jan Bowd, Janet Reed, Malcolm Bowd & Bill Seegar. (Why not Join us?)

Events:

13th April: "Alan Norris Big Band" Concert realised £523

During May: Two Celtic Crosses in Slate donated & sold by Silent Auction. Many thanks to those who made a bid. Realised £140

15th September: A New innovation! "Summer in the Park" with Puddings & Fizz (Dodging the Rain) realised £682.50

9th December "Tinsel & Brass" Concert by Somersham Town Band An annual Christmas Concert realised £1232.02

2nd March: "Rhapsody in Blue" Concert realised £1206.34

We thank all of our performers and those who supported the events.

Gaining Sponsorship from companies in the town brings the best rewards. So! if you come across any of our sponsors, tell them how much it is appreciated: Ramsey Traditional Butchers, Pet Havens & Ramsey & Warboys Informer, Butler Smith Pianos, The White Whale (Fish & Chips), The Farmers Café and Madeira.

Future planned events FOR YOUR DIARY are:

31st MAY "Church Fete" (All Committee involved) – see Posters

19th JULY "Huntingdonshire Concert Band" - see Posters

31st AUGUST "Jazz Fizz & Puddings" - see Posters

8th NOVEMBER "Remembrance Concert" Bury & Ramsey Concert Band

13th DECEMBER "Tinsel & Brass" with Somersham Town Band.

Many thanks for the support we get from members of our Congregation & Community for the offer of prizes & attending, which makes our fundraising worthwhile.

Richard Hyde

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Men's Breakfast Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

We are a group of gentlemen taken from STAB Church along with 3 gents who join us from the Methodist Church. We enjoy fellowship and support for each other when need is there.

We number between 10 and 14 at each event and are aged between 50/86yrs.

It is a great contact if you are new to Ramsey. We even have visitors from Thame .Oxon.

We meet on the 1st Saturday of the month 9am at The George in Forty Foot with the odd occasion at The Rendezvous. A highlight this year was the ladies joining us for a full English breakfast in Apri

Richard Hyde MBE

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Mission Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

Once again our committee have been heartened by the support we receive from our congregation for our work in North Kigezi in Uganda. There was a good response to our Christmas hamper appeal, not to mention support for the Nene Voices concert in July. Our hot dogs at the fete proved so popular that we will be selling them again this year. At Christmas we encourage people to send just one Christmas card to friends in the congregation, displaying it in church, and make a donation to our Uganda Mission. Martin Muir who, as well as being our co-chairman is also a trustee of FNKD, visited Uganda in the summer and was kept very busy visiting our sponsored children and making sure the Bucence Children's Centre was in good repair. His talk and slide show on his return were very informative and showed just how great the need is there.

As a church we have 3 sponsorships. Moses is now at an agriculture college studying animal husbandry, Johnson, who we co-sponsor with a member of our congregation, is at the children's centre and doing well at school and last year we paid for the salary of a trainer who taught sewing and life skills to the young women so that they could support themselves. Whenever a course or a sponsorship ends we are asked to take on another. The funding for this comes from the Jim Hewison Fund, set up in memory of a former churchwarden who believed that lots of small donations add up to a substantial amount. Sadly, the number of donors to this account has dwindled and we may find ourselves in future unable to replace a sponsorship when it comes to an end. We appreciate that for many money is tight but if just 6 members of our congregation paid £5 per month then we would have enough for a sponsorship. The committee's fundraising is used to pay for extras for the children such as exam fees, equipment for courses and also hampers. We were also able to send Martin to Uganda with some money for any desperate needs he saw out there.

Thank you for your support. If you would like to know more or help us through the Jim Hewison Fund then please speak to Martin Muir, Lesley Barker, Val Molloy, Cathy Moulton or Simon Marsland.

Lesley Barker

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Music Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

The choir is a part of almost all 10am services, leading a variety of music from traditional liturgy to recent worship songs. We use a mix of organ and music group according to the music chosen for each service.

Music is an important part of services for major church festivals including harvest, Christmas and Easter. Weddings and funerals feature music, and the choir help lead this along with a group of loyal reserve singers who help to boost our numbers.

We are a strong intergenerational fellowship within the church, with weekly meetings and structured work with children; we have almost 20 members who contribute to our work. It has been lovely to have a small group of children joining us and we hope they will continue to develop their love of singing.

We regularly enjoy learning new music in conjunction with worship leaders.

Our affiliation with The Royal School of Church Music means we can use their training materials with young and old members who wish to develop their skills as well as access to modern musical resources to support the role of music as a part of worship. Why not give us a try? We are always open to new singers!

Thanks go to all our singers and to Jackie and Rachael for their work with the youngsters. Thanks to Jackie for sorting the music for services as well as numerous admin duties.

Neville and Adam

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Pastoral Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

This past year we have continued with our social activities.

Becket Seniors Lunches continue to meet monthly on the 3rd Wednesday at 12.30 pm. We have kept the cost to £5 unless we are buying in Fish n Chips, in which case we have to increase the charge to cover our costs. We enjoyed a lovely meal at Christmas at the Old Nene Golf Club again, and this was a success for all who attended.

We have lost our cooks, so if anyone fancies taking a turn at cooking for around 25 people then Judith and I would be pleased to hear from you! My thanks to Pat and Jayney for the help they have given in the past year, and also to our regular helpers – Judith, Jane and Jackie. This get-together is much appreciated by all who attend.

We have held some coffee mornings, but not on the regular basis they were before. These are successful fund-raising events and my thanks go to Judith for organising and her helpers. These are happy meetings and coffee/tea and cakes enjoyed!

Taking communion into Florence House on the 4th Wednesday of each month has continued, with myself, Sheena, Jan and Judith. It is a lovely outreach to those who can no longer attend church and include past congregation members. The number attending has grown this year, and we are taking communion individually as well to those who are bed-bound. At Christmas we were joined by several other church members to swell the singing and the residents really enjoyed this.

I am also offering home communion and/or home visits to any who are now housebound and this has been much appreciated by those who still wish to feel part of our church. Yvonne Wright continues as an additional pastoral visitor. Please let me know of anyone you know who might like contact. This year I will be training as an Anna Chaplain – chaplaincy for the elderly. This is an ecumenical role, though I will be supervised by Joe. It will reinforce the work I am doing in the Parish.

We have had fewer Baptisms during the past year, but it is lovely to be able to offer them Toddler Time and the family services when they wish to maintain contact with us.

As highlighted above, these many ventures could not be achieved by one person alone and I am very thankful for all those helping. If you would like to get involved with any of the above please speak to me as you would be welcomed! Pastoral visitors of any kind do need to be DBS checked and complete a short basic online training course.

Val Molloy – Pastoral Lead

St Thomas a Becket Church, Ramsey
Toddler Time Report for the APCM 12 May 2025

We are delighted to say our Toddler Time group is thriving!

We continue to meet every Monday morning in Church at 9.30am during Term Time and welcome parents, Grandparents and carers with their preschool infants. Our usual number is averaging between 15-20 children each session, ranging from 'babes in arms' to those soon to start school.

We start each session by lighting a candle for 'Jesus is the light of the world'.

We then follow on singing some favourite 'choruses' and nursery rhymes, which is always a very joyful time! Then we have a Biblical story (we try to make this as engaging as possible). We then enjoy a craft activity which adults and children alike enjoy, followed by a drink and a biscuit or two. Having opened the session with the lighting of our candle, we close with a prayer, the candle is blown out, and we blow bubbles (sending our prayers heavenward).

We are quite a small team, with Judith and Pip leading. We work well together though, alongside our wonderful Lynn, Audrey and Liz, are very helpful with the crafts and provide our refreshments too! Jan has helped us for a year and we're sad she's leaving, but very grateful for all she's done for us.

The closing thought is that it is a positive group, where we feel we are reaching out to the adults as much as to the children. With that in mind, we continue a termly evening session we've named Refresh, an evening for the adults to have some child-free time and to have a grown-up version of the Toddler Time. Links are being made with our Sunday services, including Fen Church, choir, Sunday Fun (Sunday school) and also with '3-1 club' and Lego café.

We're encouraged: hope you are too!

The Toddler Time Team x