

Welcome to St Mary's Church, Goldington



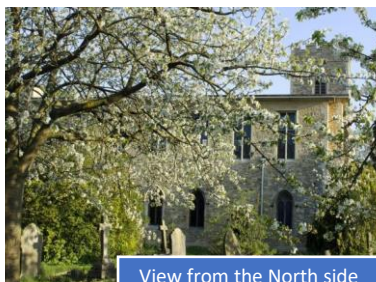
Our vision is to grow together as a worshipping church family, to know Jesus better and to find new ways to express our faith within our local community, and to be a safe place of joy and peace for the whole community.

Contents

		Page
1	What are we looking for?	3
2	In return we will offer you / The Vicarage	4
3	Our Priorities	5
4	Strengths, opportunities, things to improve and challenges we face	6
5	Community	7
6	Education	8
7	Worship	11
8	Ministry Team	14
9	Church Life	15
10	Church Buildings	17
11	Finance	18
12	Communications	19



View of the West End showing the 15th Century tower and 20th Century extension



View from the North side



St Mary's showing the south porch



The Lady Chapel

What are we looking for

We are seeking to appoint a full time Vicar of the parish of Goldington with a passion to encourage the members of St Mary's to share their love of Jesus within the local community, whilst enabling the church to be equipped to grow spiritually in worship, prayer and care.

We are looking for someone who:

- will be an example of a life devoted to serving God, who builds up relationships within the community
- will enable others to take on new responsibilities and contribute to the life of the church, whilst providing clear leadership enabling the church to grow
- will embrace the current range of worship, extending this to reach more families and young people
- will, as an approachable, supportive and proactive team member work closely with different groups within the church
- will get to know the congregation so that they can grow together as one, giving each person space for their own personality to shine through
- who understands and demonstrates the importance of the role of safeguarding within and without the church and will work with designated personnel to ensure St Mary's is a safe place for all.



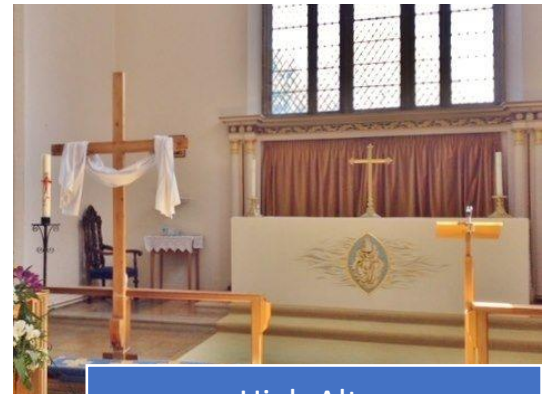
Coronation Lunch



Family Drop In

In return we will offer you

- A welcoming church, which takes regular collective worship seriously.
- A church that is prepared to try new things (demonstrated by new projects such as the setting up of Warm Spaces and employing a Family and Children's Minister in the last five years)
- A congregation that, although ageing, is willing to take on new opportunities and initiatives.
- Outreach that is beginning to lead to new volunteers from within services including at Warm Spaces and parent / grandparent volunteers at Messy Church.
- A PCC which meets regularly and is committed to moving things forward; with meetings full of encouragement and good humour.
- A church hall which allows the possibility of new opportunities.
- A ministry team which is already established and involved.
- A very proactive property committee and a well-maintained church and church hall which are in good order, and large grassed area.
- Links with two state primary schools in the parish.
- A history of successfully training curates and the possibility may be there in the future for an incumbent with the right gifts.



High Altar

We take seriously the need to undertake safeguarding training and to put procedures in place in accordance with the House of Bishop's Guidelines that enable us to provide a safe place for our community share worship and fellowship. We have a dedicated Parish Safeguarding Officer who keeps us up to date with training, guidance, and events, carries out DBS checks and provides us with support. Any church or hall users are required to demonstrate that they have and use the correct safeguarding procedures to meet our and their needs.



The vicarage from the back garden

The Vicarage

The Vicarage is adjacent to the church. It is a 1960s built four-bedroomed home with central heating and double glazing. There are front and rear gardens, private parking and an integral garage. Access to the Vicarage is by a private roadway past the church and church hall.

On the ground floor leading from the entrance hall are a study, large lounge with connecting dining room, spacious kitchen and an adjacent utility room and a cloakroom and toilet. The bedrooms and bathroom are located upstairs.

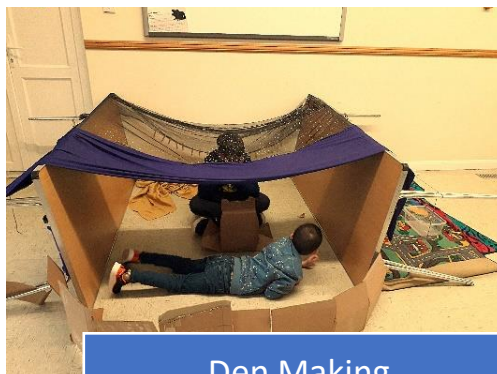
Our priorities

Our priorities are detailed in our current Mission Action Plan, which can be viewed at

<https://resource.stalbansdiocese.org/maps/?id=6574#mapview>



Messy Church



Den Making



Kebab Making



Worship at St Mary's



World Day of Prayer
2025

Community

Until the 1930s, Goldington was a village parish. In 1934 it was incorporated into Bedford Borough. In the 1950s large housing estates were built to accommodate post-war expansion and the Church was significantly enlarged. Industrial estates were established in the 1970s and 80s. Several new estates have been added in recent years on this north-eastern edge of Bedford that fall into the neighbouring village parish of Renhold but have road access from the Goldington side of the boundary.

Bedford is popular with commuters who take advantage of good transport links to London, Cambridge, Milton Keynes and other surrounding towns.

- Housing

Housing in Goldington is mixed covering the whole range from owner-occupied properties of varying sizes, detached and semi-detached to social housing supplied by a number of different Housing associations, the major one being Bedford Pilgrim Housing Association. Both Bedford and Goldington are diverse communities with Italian, Afro-Caribbean, Africa, Indian Subcontinent, Poland and the Baltic States most widely represented. Most residents are under 65, with a high number of under 18s.

The parish boundary, census, and historical data is available at the link below (zoom in to Goldington):

<https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=67bce0ed36dd4ee0af7a16bc079aa09a&extent=-0.4317,51.313,0.1986,51.5945>

- Response to Local Deprivation: Warm Spaces and Dwell Well

The Goldington Local Council area, which covers some of the parish, is amongst the 10-20% most deprived areas nationally on the IMD. Two projects at St Mary's respond to local need. Dwell Well helps people moving into self-supporting accommodation by providing a starter pack of new / like-new essential items such as saucepans, plates and duvet covers. Working on a referral basis, we have supplied over 200 of these tenancy packs since starting in March 2021. Since starting in 2022 Warm Spaces has provided hot drinks, cake and friendship. In May 2025 a second weekly session is being started thanks to funding from the local Co-op.

Warm Spaces has links with local Goldington ward councillors, community policing and Bedford Borough's Public Health Team and local Healthwatch representatives.

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/your-council/statistics-and-census-information/indices-deprivation-2019/index-multiple-deprivation>

<https://www.stmarygoldington.com/dwell-well>



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¹ Ref: By Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11383530>

- Local amenities

These include:

- ✓ Healthcare facilities
- ✓ Hotel and restaurant/pub chains
- ✓ Supermarkets and shops
- ✓ Green spaces such as Priory Country Park, community gardens, Goldington Green and the Embankment <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-sport/parks-and-open-spaces/parks-bedford-borough/priory-country-park>
- ✓ Leisure centres, gyms and sporting facilities including Bedford International Athletic Stadium
- ✓ Cultural venues including cinema, theatres and museums
- ✓ Libraries – including one within walking distance in Putnoe.



Warm Spaces



Tree Planting



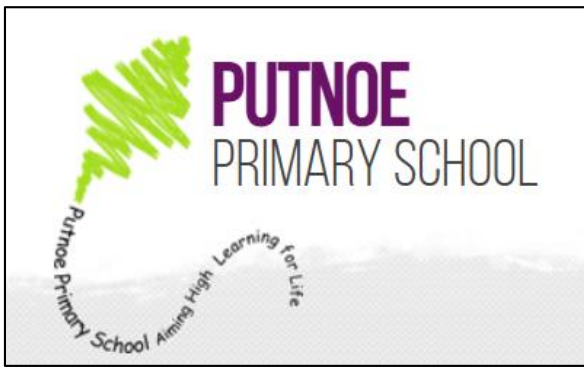
The Big Clean

Education

There is a breadth of school, college and university provision within Bedfordshire. The Bedford Borough School Directory can be located at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/schools-education-and-childcare/schools-and-colleges/bedford-borough-school-directory> and encompasses Nursery through to post 16 provision.

Whilst there are no Church schools within the parish, there are two primary schools within close walking distance of the Church, both of which have a relationship with St Mary's:

- Goldington Green Academy - <https://www.goldingtongreenacademy.co.uk/>
- Putnoe Primary School - <https://www.putnoeprimaryschool.co.uk/>



Goldington Green Academy

There are a number of Secondary Schools in the town, with the following being within walking distance:

- Goldington Academy - <https://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/contact/address-details>
- Mark Rutherford School - <https://www.markrutherford.beds.sch.uk/>

Provision is also available within Bedford for an all through school (Nursery - year 11) set on several sites

- Castle Newnham School - <https://www.castlenewnham.school/>

Post 16 education in a college setting is available through the Bedford College Group which has sites in Bedford itself and within Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. Information about the college is available from <https://bedfordcollegigroup.ac.uk/>. It is also offered through Bedford Sixth Form, details of which can be found at <https://www.bedfordsixthform.ac.uk/>

Private school provision is available within the town and information can be found at

<https://www.bedfordschool.org.uk/about-us/the-harpur-trust/>

<https://www.bedmod.co.uk/about-us/>

<https://bedfordgreenacre.co.uk/>

<https://www.bedfordgirlsschool.co.uk/>



The Bedford Campus of the University of Bedfordshire is close by and is supported by its chaplaincy team. Details of the university can be found at <https://www.beds.ac.uk/>

The Church is actively involved with local schools in a number of ways, including:

- The Family and Children's Minister leads a Christian Club in Goldington Green Academy, supported by volunteers from a number of local churches and the local charity Impact.
- Assemblies are delivered upon request by the Curate (when available) and the Family and Children's Minister. Input is also provided at an individual class level, also upon request.
- Church visits are supported, with year one pupils at one primary school attending each Easter to explore the Church and learn about the Easter story. These visits are well received.

The Family and Children's Minister supports both Goldington Green Academy and Putnoe Primary School by providing regular reading support, a priority for both schools.

The previous incumbent was a Governor at Goldington Green Academy and the Curate holds a position as Governor at Putnoe Primary School. The Family and Children's Minister is a Diocesan-appointed Foundation Governor at a federation of church schools outside the parish.

In addition the Family and Children's Minister works with local Christian education charity Impact – see <https://www.impactbedford.org.uk/> - and is a member of the Advisory Board for Bedford's Early Childhood Partnership – see <https://oneymca.org/what-we-do/family-work/early-childhood-partnership/> - which holds some groups in the Church Hall.

Worship

The current pattern of worship is predominantly Eucharistic

Day	Time	Service	Attendance
Sunday (first)	8am	Holy Communion (said) Book of Common Prayer	10 adults
	9.30am	Family Praise service (informal service with worship which is intergenerational and supported by the worship singers and signing group)	50 adults 10 children
	5pm	Taizé (October to April only)	15 adults
Sunday (second)	9.30am	Holy Communion (sung) with Prayers for Wholeness and Healing during Ordinary Time, with additional provision for children	65 adults 5 children
	5pm	5pm Praise is Rising	15 adults
Sunday (third)	9.30am	Holy Communion (sung) with services reflecting the liturgical season, with additional provision for children	65 adults 5 children
Sunday (fourth)	9.30am	Holy Communion (sung) with services reflecting the liturgical season, with additional provision for children	65 adults 5 children
	3.30pm	Messy Church, based on BRF materials (family congregation meets in the church hall)	40 adults / children
Sunday (fifth)	9.30am	Holy Communion (sung) with services reflecting the liturgical season, with additional provision for children	65 adults 5 children
Weekdays	9am	Morning Prayer - currently in abeyance but it is anticipated that the incumbent will resume this	
Wednesday	10am	Holy Communion (said) Book of Common Prayer	12 adults



Palm Sunday Walk and
Christingle Service



- Occasional Services

A range of additional services are run throughout the year including:

- ✓ Christingle
- ✓ Blue Christmas (introduced in 2023)
- ✓ Nine Lessons and Carols
- ✓ Family Nativity service on Christmas Eve
- ✓ Midnight Mass
- ✓ Ash Wednesday services with Imposition of Ashes
- ✓ Mothering Sunday (with posies and blessing of Simnel cake)
- ✓ Palm Sunday walk with donkey with North Bedford Churches Together
- ✓ Compline in Holy Week
- ✓ Maundy Thursday Communion service with Stripping of the Altars
- ✓ Good Friday Messy Church
- ✓ An Hour at the Cross on Good Friday
- ✓ Ascension Day evening service
- ✓ Harvest Festival
- ✓ All Souls Service
- ✓ Joint Remembrance Service with Churches Together in North Bedford.

A monthly communion is taken to Oakhill Place, a local retirement community

- Occasional Offices

Baptisms	Twelve baptisms took place in 2024 and five have taken place in the early part of 2025. These have taken place in separate services.
Confirmation	Six children have been admitted to Communion before Confirmation in 2024/2025 in accordance with the Bishop's guidelines. One young person was Confirmed - the first in several years. Preparation is predominantly led by the Family and Children's Minister.
Weddings	In 2024, eight marriages were celebrated and there are a number booked for 2025.
Funerals	During 2024 there were 16 funerals in church and 17 at Norse Road Chapel. There was also one interment of ashes without a service.

Our mission statistics are available for review

at: <https://app.klipfolio.com/published/53e3f368c5c3253491ea631de5a59086/diocese-of-st-albans---parish-mission-statistics>



Robed Choir

There is a small, robed choir which sings at 9.30am Holy Communion and some of the special services.

The Family Praise Service has a music group accompanied by guitar and piano. Praise is Rising is led by a lay worship leader and the music is mainly contemporary. The Taizé service is supported by a small group of musicians.

Vestments (including Chasubles) are worn at Holy Communion.



Congregational View

Ministry Team



Revd Joss: SSM Curate since July 2023. Director of Music at Bedford School since 2011.



Revd Jennie: retired priest and spiritual director who also offers quiet days and retreats.



Michael: Experienced Reader first licensed in 2002 with a wide range of ministry experience at St Mary's.



Cathy: Licensed Reader since 2018. Asst Diocesan Reader Secretary, Vocations Adviser and Formation Tutor. Works full time within NHS.



Susan: Licensed Reader since 2022. Pastoral Team Lead, Church Library Co-ordinator, member of the Signing Group.



Ceri-Anne: Part time Family & Children's Minister with MA in Theology, Ministry & Mission [Children, Youth & Family Specialism] (Common Awards). Reader - licensed in 2016.

There are currently two Churchwardens, one who is retired and one who works full time as a teacher. As mentioned above, Praise is Rising is led by a lay leader.

There is a small prayer fellowship, the development of which is a current area of focus for two of the Readers.

The Church welcomes the full ministry of women.

The PCC has approved the Incumbent officiating at marriage services of those who have been previously married with an ex-partner still living.



Grandparenting and Faith event attended by churches across the Deanery and beyond

Church Life

St Mary's has a vibrant worshipping community supported by a number of volunteers and regular groups. These volunteers ensure that our Sunday mornings, and other special times, are enriched by:

- A welcome which begins on the path up to the church and continues inside, with a regular team of people who greet new and regular members of the congregation.
- A band of ringers who ensure the bells of St Mary's ring out regularly.
- Eucharistic Assistants who support the administration of Holy Communion.
- A robed choir and a less formal group of singers who enhance our worship at both regular and special services.
- A catering team that ensures refreshments are available in the Church Hall after the service and on other occasions.
- A team who supports the technology used in worship



The welcome begins outside the Church

The Church community also hosts a number of groups to aid the discipleship of its members, including:

- Activities for children and young people
- House groups
- Lent courses
- Ad hoc events such as our Christian Grandparenting Event in September 2024 and a Godly Play Taster in April 2025.
- St Mary's is an active member of North Bedford Churches Together and engage regularly in activities with other local churches
- The church has a Church Mission Society mission partner, Heather Johnstone, who works with the Rehema Project in Tanzania - <https://rehemaproject.com/>



Prepared by Churchyard Working Party and ready for planting by Sunday Seekers

Social groups and activities include the following, and often attract members from outside the church family:

- Weekly Churchyard Working Party
- Weekly Short Mat Bowls (Sept-April)
- Weekly Knit and Natter Group
- Monthly Walking Group which undertakes accessible local walks
- Family Drop In held weekly in school holidays - targeted at families with under 12s

St Mary's has a strong association with Putnoe Scout Group; the Beaver Scout Colony is led by a member of the choir and the Family and Children's Minister. More details about Putnoe Scout Group are available at <https://www.putnoescouts.org.uk/>. There is also a strong connection with Girlguiding UK, with Rainbow and Brownie Units both meeting in the Church hall and a Guide Unit within walking distance. More information is available at <https://bedsguiding.org.uk/>.



Rear of Church Hall, referred to as 'The Paddock'

The Church Hall is used regularly by a number of groups, including a mental health charity, local Early Years Partnership, and several dance groups.

The fundraising events at St Mary's also attract many members of the local community, with the summer fete and autumn fair having historically been extremely successful. The income from these events is supplemented with fundraising from events including beetle drives and quizzes.



Catering Team

Dwell Well Initiative

The successful Dwell Well Initiative provides essential household items to those in the process of being re-housed. On Maundy Thursday 2025 our 212th pack was collected along with a new duvet and a pack of two new pillows. Supported by the congregation, the local community, the Beaver colony based at St Mary's, and various grant funding arrangements the initiative is making a positive difference to vulnerable people in Bedford.



Church Buildings

The PCC and Property Committee oversee all maintenance and are fully involved in the upkeep of the buildings, churchyard and grounds. This committee is supported by volunteers who maintain the interior of the church by cleaning brasses, washing altar linen, arranging flowers etc.

The churchyard is closed and maintained by the local authority but there are three areas where ashes can be interred.

The church is mostly fifteenth century, with a 1950s extension which now provides the main nave and sanctuary, while the chancel of the old church forms the Lady Chapel and the old nave provides seating on the south side of the main Church nave. In 2028 St Mary's will mark its 800th anniversary and plans are currently being developed to celebrate this milestone which will involve the church and the community. We have a church archivist.

There is more about the history of the church on our website at <https://www.stmarygoldington.com/history>

The Church building is in generally very good repair. The last Quinquennial report carried out in 2024 highlighted only some minor works required, mainly to the stonework. This will be completed this year.

We continue to explore how we are able to make our buildings net carbon zero. We have undertaken an Energy Audit and during 2024 replaced aging strip lights in the church hall and light bulbs in the Church with LED lighting. In order to more closely monitor our energy usage, smart meters have been installed in the Church Hall.

Some of the land is managed for nature with areas where the grass is allowed to grow longer, a hedgerow, pond, bird boxes and other features. There are swift boxes in the tower and further bird and bat boxes were recently put together by the Beaver Colony. A bug hotel was created at Family Drop In last summer. Other initiatives undertaken include hedgerow planting, participating in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch and Churches Count on Nature, and supporting litter picking initiatives within the local community. Last year we also hosted small open churchyard afternoons.

The Church Hall, located within the precinct and built in the 1960s, comprises a main hall, small extension hall, and a small committee room / office. The building and facilities are up to date. It has a re-furbished kitchen, toilets, including facilities for those with disabilities, and a baby-changing area. The hall building is used extensively throughout the week by a variety of hirers including uniformed organisations, as well as for church groups and activities and refreshments after the main Sunday service.

The car park is a tarmac covered marked area with disabled spaces between the Church and hall and is maintained by the Property Committee.

Finance

The parish continues to always pay its parish share in full.

The value of regular donations rose in 2024 and at the end of 2024 there was a small surplus. At the end of 2024, the available unrestricted and relevant restricted funds totalled £164,000.



Members of the Finance Committee

A grant seeking group is in place to look at bringing monies into the parish, particularly for outreach activities.

A high proportion of giving is now through the Parish Giving Scheme which makes the claiming back of Gift Aid significantly easier.

Both the 2024 Summer Fete and Autumn Fair took record amounts and income on the hall was up by £4,000 this year.

In 2024 the church acquired a card payment terminal, and this has made collecting money particularly at occasional services easier.

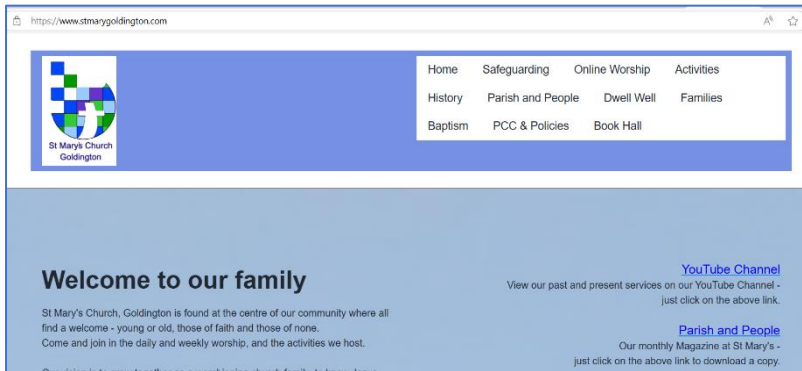


In 2024 4.3% of income stewardship income, plate collections and gift aid tax recovery was donated for missionary giving. This is shared between support for the work of our CMS mission partner, Heather Johnstone, at the Rehema Project in Tanzania (3/4) and WaterAid (1/4).

The Rehema Project (image courtesy of <https://rehemaproject.com/>)

A copy of the Church accounts are available on our website at https://mcusercontent.com/fbf9b1459c162fd57e3dcdbc0/files/28b4e1d2-fd14-34ea-cf55-a5f14948fd03/Goldington_PCC_annual_report_2024_MASTER_COPY.01.pdf

Communications



St Mary's has an active presence on the internet, with the following in place:

Website:

<https://www.stmarygoldington.com/>

General Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Stmarysgoldington>

Facebook Page targeted at local families:

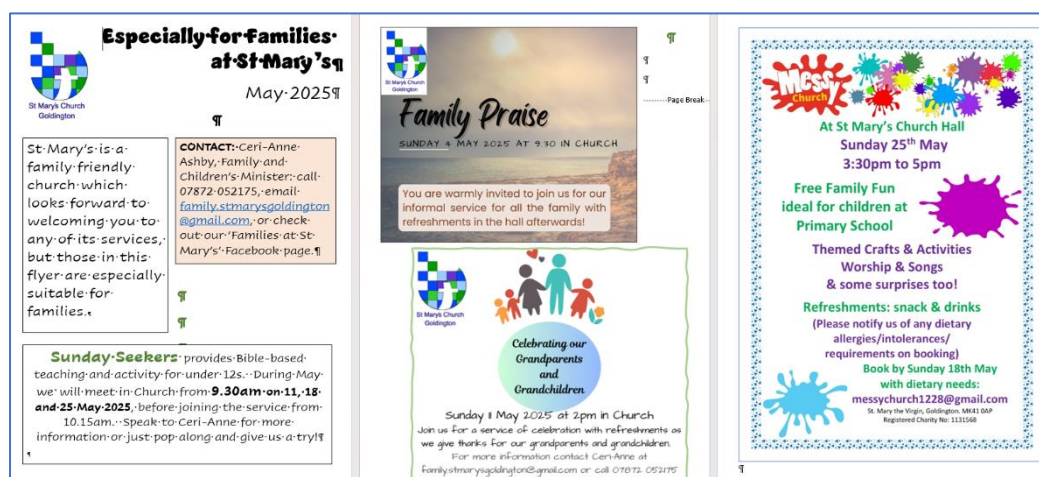
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556594426011>

These platforms support our streaming of church services via our You Tube channel which is used regularly – this can be found at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIcv8mIZVVF_mLgLS3XxOqw

In addition to these, St Mary's has in place two regular methods of communications:

- Weekly Pews News bulletin distributed via Mail Chimp and posted on the website at <https://us9.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=fbf9b1459c162fd57e3dcdbdc0&id=04e4bb48f1>
- Monthly Parish and People Church Magazine which is distributed in hard copy and posted on the website at <https://www.stmarygoldington.com/parish-and-people>

Pews News and Parish and People are both assembled by small teams of volunteers supported by members of the ministry team and a publicity team has been established.



The Family and Children's Minister creates a monthly 'Look forward' leaflet for families and circulates information about activities and services to local schools.