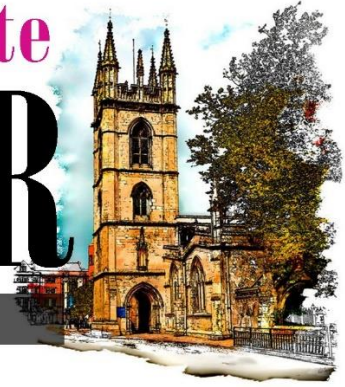


Friends of St. Mary's, Lowgate NEWSLETTER



Issue 5 December 2021

IMPROVEMENT SCHEME UPDATE

By Olga Li La-Vigars



As many who have undergone construction work at home will appreciate, it can be a messy, frustrating and difficult period. Undergoing such works in a church has proven just as hard with the added concern about the large amounts of money to be found if things go wrong or run over. In a building of such an age as ours it was inevitable that we would find things in or under the building that current members had no awareness of!

We began with clearing and sorting through church belongings to make space for Scothern's, our construction team, to work. I did not realise that such a large and empty looking building could hide so much rubbish and other belongings! Hilary and I with a small group of helpers have had to sift through nearly a century's worth of belongings and documents in an attempt to pare things down to the essential and things of historical interest. In doing so, we found all kinds of odds and ends that made us wonder WHY?

Finally in May, we reached a point where we could clear no more as the asbestos removal team moved in. For a little while, we were still able to get into church until the rest of the plastic tunnels covering the asbestos work went up, moving across the church like a maze. So, Hilary and I concentrated on trying to sort through old hymn books whilst trying to pump water out of the cellar.

During this time, we held some outdoor Sunday services in the churchyard, whilst the weather was good. The end of May also saw us using the Minster's nave for services when all the gratings came up and it became unsafe to have people in St Mary's.

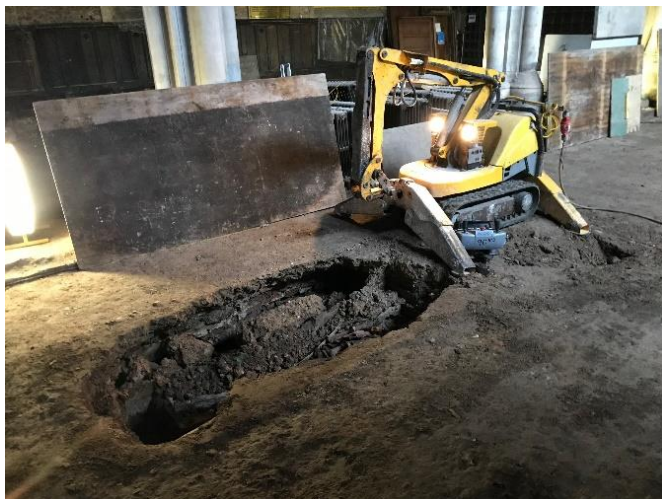
June saw Hull Homeless Outreach moving their belongings into the Porch, from where they have had to operate throughout all the work, thus far.

For a short while we continued with Sunday Eucharist in the Chapel of the Nativity, once Scotherns had made a safe route for the congregation. Unfortunately, whilst digging up the floor the digger became stuck, then a little later we had some unexpected cave-ins under the Victorian limecrete. Whilst it was interesting to find so many burial vaults under the nave, the finds held work up whilst the archaeologist checked them out and it was decided how to deal with them. They appear to be Georgian and added to/alterd as families buried their loved ones as close as possible to the Altar. This has taken several weeks but now the coffins have been left undisturbed and backfilled with a special substance which will hold the new floors until the new limecrete has set. This ensures the safe erection of scaffolding to remove plaster and some monuments for conservation and will allow new wiring to be installed for lights etc.

I am so relieved that we can now move forward. They say it always looks worse before it gets better but the building has looked horrific with all the floors dug up, holes everywhere and a central mound of pews etc which also had to be temporarily moved. I really look forward to a well-lit, heated space to offer both our congregation and the wider community, where the welcome is not just spiritually but also physically warm!



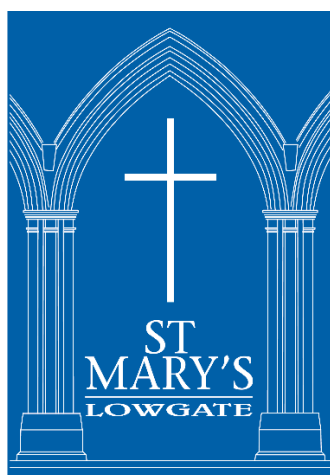
Caption – June 2021 and the work begins. L to r Churchwarden Olga Li La-Vigars, Kynan Simmons of Simonssherriff Architects, Paul Scothern of Scothern Construction, Churchwarden Hilary Newton and Fr Ian Walker



Caption – October 2021 - St Mary's floor had to be stress tested to check for areas of weakness/cavities beneath



Caption – November 2021 - work to the floor is well underway



Message from the Chair

Welcome to the Friends of St Mary's annual newsletter in which we aim to update all our Friends with news of St Mary's and to include articles of interest relating to St Mary's.

As you know, currently the church is closed for a major scheme of essential works to improve the interior. This, coupled with the difficulties caused by the pandemic, means that for a second year we have not been able to hold our annual Friends' spring visit or our Annual John Scott Lecture, which is a major disappointment and a blow to our funds.

The Friends' committee is investigating the possibility of re-arranging the Spring visit we had planned for 2020 to All Saints' Church in Hessle with a provisional date of Saturday, 26th March, 2022, and reorganising the John Scott Lecture we had planned last year with Dr Alec Gill for September 2022. Once we have further details, we will contact you by email in the hope that you will participate in these events.

Appeal for committee members

I should like to thank Olga and Stephen for all their enthusiasm, ideas and work as committee members. Our committee of just three continues to soldier on with event planning and preparing this newsletter, but we could do with more help, so if you can join the committee or provide support please get in touch by email.

Newsletter articles

If you are able to contribute an article or news piece for the newsletter about St Mary's, its history and people or you have interesting photos, then please do contact us by email.

Please renew your Friends membership

Given the challenges of the current church closure and the added difficulties presented by Covid-19, your commitment to the Friends is as vital as ever and we do hope that, if you have not already done so, you will renew your membership for the year September 2021 to August 2022. You should find a membership form attached to the email via which this newsletter is being dispatched. However, if you do not receive a membership form please request one by email.

We suggest a minimum donation of £10 per person and under 18s membership if free. However, please feel free to give what you can as we value your interest.

Please contact the Friends of St Mary's by email at: friends@stmaryslowgate.org.uk

Amanda Habergham
Chair, Friends of St Mary's

A REFLECTION FROM FATHER IAN WALKER



Caption – St Mary's Good Friday service began in the churchyard

In my last letter I wrote of the wheels of restoration grinding slowly and this remains the case. We are looking forward to being able to worship in our renewed church building in 2022, albeit a little later than we thought this time last year.

While the work is being carried out St Mary's congregation has been holding together and we have been worshipping in the traditional St Mary's manner in the chancel of Hull Minster. We are grateful to the Minster for their hospitality and this augurs well for future working together. We have had to hold our service at 9am which has made it difficult for some of our folk to attend so there is a sense that we are hanging on for better times to come.

At the time of writing (the last week of November) we have seen the first underfloor heating pipes installed so we can begin to look forward to worshipping once more in St Mary's. It is too early to say when this will be and we and our contractors will no doubt be working around each other for some time yet.

As St Mary's begins to open up, we are exploring ways of involving more volunteers in our continuing Project and we shall certainly need our Friends. St Mary's can play a great part in the life of both Church and Community in the coming years and I hope you will feel that you can play a part in this.

Fr Ian Walker Priest-in-charge St Mary's Lowgate.

VOLUNTEER APPEAL

Have you ever fancied some voluntary work?

Could you spare 30 minutes or more a week?

St Mary's would welcome both you and any help you could offer, from help cleaning the church with dusters and hoovers, helping to man the church whilst visitors wander in and out, clearing leaves from the churchyard or roof or making a cuppa for visitors.

There's no requirement to be a believer or a churchgoer, just a willingness to help with all those little jobs we all do at home. A chance to make new friends and to help safeguard our heritage. Whatever your skills please ring the churchwarden to chat about how you might help us and when.

Ring Olga 01482 323147 and leave your details for a call back.

IMPROVEMENT SCHEME FUNDING NEWS

Since the FoSM Spring newsletter, St Mary's has received more generous support for the current scheme of internal improvement works.

Grant applications and donation appeals organised by St Mary's Project Group have raised a total of **£84,350** to date for these desperately needed improvements. The Group has secured a further **£6,500** in grants towards the high priority conservation work needed to three of St Mary's monuments.

The Friends has promised a further £2,000, £1,190 has been raised from the sale of redundant pews and the St Mary's Organ Fund contributed £5,497 in the memory of Gordon Robinson (Organist and Choirmaster 1970s-2017) towards to the removal of the irreparable pipe organ to make way for toilets.

These sums, added to Miss Jean Jackson's generous legacy, have allowed Part 1.A. of the improvement scheme to proceed.

All at St Mary's would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to the following and others who have kindly contributed in so many ways:

Allchurches Trust	£23,350	Anonymous grant	£15,000
National Churches Trust Cornerstone	£10,000	Wolfson Foundation	£10,000
Joan Tottle Trust	£7,500	National Churches Trust Gateway	£7,000
St Mary's Organ Fund	£5,497	Sir James Reckitt Charity	£5,000
Diocesan of York Parish Buildings Grant	£5,000	Friends of St Mary's	£2,000
Sale of redundant pews	£1,190	Myton Law donation	£500
Individual donations	£650	Joseph Boaz Charitable Trust	£350



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The Wolfson 
Foundation



Despite this tremendous support, St Mary's still needs further funds to complete all the necessary works. As the scheme of works has progressed unforeseen additional floor work has been required and drainage works.

If you can help by giving towards these vital works, please donate by:

Cheque: Cheques made payable to 'St Mary's Parochial Church Council' and posted to:
Mr P Gibson, PCC Treasurer, St Mary the Virgin, Lowgate, Hull, HU1 1EJ

Online banking: Sort code 56 00 06 Account Number 03821269

Online: Via St Mary's 'Give a Little' page – there is a live link to the page on St Mary's website www.stmaryslowgate.org.uk.

SOUP KITCHEN UPDATE



Picture caption – the Lord Mayor of Kingston upon Hull Councillor Lynn Petrini visited St Mary's in November 2021 to thank the Reaching Out to the Homeless team for all they do.

Despite the practical difficulties caused by the pandemic and St Mary's currently being closed for the improvement scheme, the **Hull Homeless Outreach** team continues to provide food for 40 or 50 people each Wednesday and Thursday evening and **Reaching Out to the Homeless** run the Friday evening soup kitchen, all from St Mary's.

The soup kitchens currently operate from St Mary's South Porch on:

Wednesdays	from 5pm
Thursdays	from 5pm
Fridays	from 6pm

A big thank you to Greggs, Aldi, KFC and Nandos for the food donations. Also, thanks to Attitude hairdressers who come along during the Thursday soup kitchen to offer free haircuts and to medics from Yorkshire Medical Service Hull who attend.

For the moment HHO are keeping to a core of six volunteers to minimise Covid risk given the currently limited space for preparation and serving, but, once the church re-opens following the much-needed improvement work, HHO will be looking for additional volunteers.

Debbi Lee of HHO says, "The people who come along range from 18 to their 60s. They have just hit bad luck and some of their stories are heart-breaking. For some it's the only social interaction they get all week."

All at St Mary's wish to thank the Hull Homeless Outreach and Reaching Out to the Homeless volunteers for all the tremendous work they do.

You can find Hull Homeless Outreach on Facebook @hulloutreach and Reaching Out to the Homeless are also on Facebook

SAVING ST MARY'S' MONUMENTS

St Mary's contains over 30 monuments, dating back to 1525, representing major figures and families in the history of the city of Hull, including the Blaydes, Dobson, Hildyard and Pease families.

Our collection of monuments certainly has local significance, but several have some national significance too.

Undoubtedly, they add to the architectural appeal and value of the interior. The Pevsner Architectural Guide for Hull (David and Susan Neave, Yale University Press, 2010), devotes over a page to describing St Mary's monuments, including mention of the War Memorial in the Chapel of the Nativity, 1921, designed by Temple Moore & Moore.

In 2020 St Mary's' inspecting architect David Sherriff of Simmonsherriff recommended we commission a conservator's survey of St Mary's' monuments in advance of the commencement of the scheme of improvements works. The intention was to understand the scope of any conservation work needed to care for the monuments and to ensure that they could withstand the work about to take place around them.

Skillingtons, specialists in the conservation of monuments and sculpture, undertook the survey in July 2020 and, following additional archive research, provided their Survey Report with recommendations in December 2020.

Skillingtons' report identified a need for conservation work to six of St Mary's' monuments, three as a 'high priority' of which two are from the Georgian period, the Pease and Hall monuments, and one to the Tayler family is Victorian.

Why now?

St Mary's' architect advises that we take advantage of the benefits of carrying out monument works whilst the main contract for the internal improvement works is underway as scaffolding access will be easier, plastering work behind or around the monuments can be coordinated and the conservation work completed before the new stone floor is installed.

Financially, St Mary's can only hope to undertake the 'High Priority' work to the three monuments - the work required to the other three will have to wait. Even the high priority work to the three monuments, which will cost in total £17,767 plus VAT, requires St Mary's to find financial support.

The Project Group has applied for a number of grants and, as a result of those efforts, has received the following kind offers of funding:

The Georgian Group/Cleary Fund	£2,500
Churchcare/Pilgrim Trust	£2,000
Leche Trust	£1,000
Churches Conservation Trust	£1,000

St Mary's would like to offer these organisations our most sincere thanks.

However, we still need to raise £11,267 to commission the conservation work to this initial group of monuments.

This further financial pressure comes at a time when St Mary's, which does not receive any Church of England funding towards the building, has been hit by Covid closures and has committed to the current interior improvement scheme, which require all the funds which we have managed to raise over the last ten years and, of course the church is currently closed for that work, leading to an additional loss of donations from worshippers and visitors.

We do believe that St Mary's' monuments have a valuable role to play in adding to the interest of St Mary's as a place to visit so that it is important to conserve them. In particular, the monuments which have a link to Hull's maritime heritage will help St Mary's participate in the current **Hull: Yorkshire's Maritime City** initiative, which should help to attract more visitors to the church.

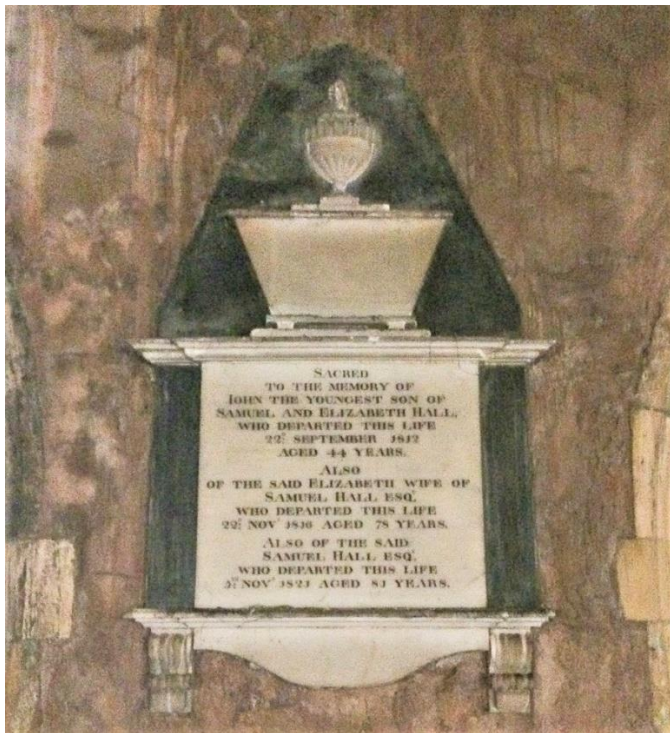
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Can you help?

St Mary's has appealed to anyone who knows descendants of the Halls, Peases and Taylers, who may have an interest in supporting the work needed to their family monuments, to come forward. So far, this appeal has not met with a response, but we are keen to hear from you if you have any connections with these families?

Also, if anyone feels that they can support this work to save these interesting monuments we do hope you will contact us.

You can email us at: info@stmaryslowgate.org.uk



The Hall Monument

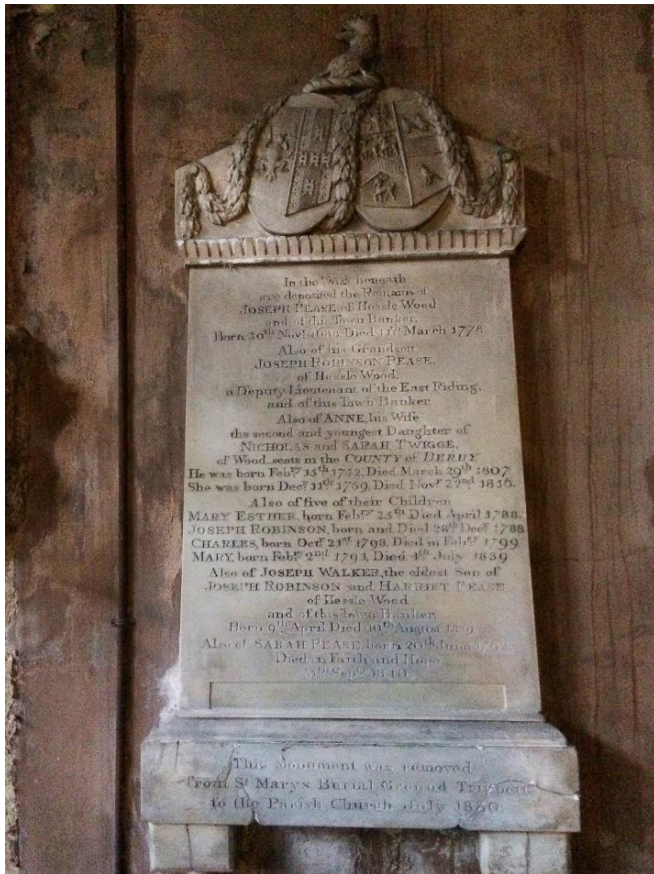
Samuel Hall was churchwarden to St Mary's in 1786 and his funeral in 1821 was conducted by the Revd John Scott at St Mary's. The monument commemorates Samuel, his wife Elizabeth and their son John.

The Halls were merchants and ship owners of Hull. Both Samuel and John were Freeman/burgesses of the city. Ships records dated 1809 show John as owning 16 vessels, including the 'Manchester', the 'Cognac Packet', the 'Pilgrim' and the 'Brazilian'. Both he and Samuel appear on quite a number of apprenticeship records. Initial research by Hull History Centre suggests they were involved in the timber trade, a key business for the port of Hull in the 19th Century – this ties in with evidence that John had spent some time, perhaps even living for a period, in Gothenburg.

Records also show that they were involved in establishing the Groves area of Hull along the banks of the River Hull, generating housing and industry. Samuel and John were both also on the board of the 'Drypool Engineering and Dry Dock Company' and were on the committee of 'Hull Female Penitentiary', a charity for 'fallen women'.

We anticipate that the history of the Halls will be a valuable element in St Mary's well-founded claim to be part of the city's maritime heritage, so establishing St Mary's as a point of interest for visitors exploring this important aspect of Hull's history.

Conservation work to this monument will cost ££8,657 plus VAT.



The Pease Monument

Joseph Pease (d.1778) founded a banking dynasty in Hull, which was **the first bank in Yorkshire**, and there is a blue plaque on a building in High Street, a short distance from St Mary's, highlighting this.

The Pease Bank was to last for several generations eventually becoming part of Barclays, although the family were also merchants with many other interests.

The Pease monument is of great significance within the context of Kingston-upon-Hull due to the role the family played in the city's Georgian and Regency growth. According to Skillingtons, as a work of art it is not distinguished so much by its accomplishment as its statement of wealth and power.

Due to the connection with Barclays Bank we approached the bank for support but were turned down.

Conservation work to this monument will cost £7,510 plus VAT.



The Tayler Monument

Amelia Frances was the wife of Revd George Tayler and the daughter of Revd John Scott. There were three John Scotts who served as vicars at St Mary's during the 19th Century, including during Gilbert Scott's restoration of the church (Gilbert Scott was related to Hull's John Scotts).

The John Scotts are of huge importance with

respect to the church's history, so the tablet to Amelia Frances has social significance due to that connection. The lower brass is also significant and, according to Skillingtons, there are scholars who study the nature of memorial to the clergy including their grandeur and their positioning, to reflect on their social status.

Skillingtons conclude that the Tayler monument is of very high local significance.

Conservation work to this monument will cost £1,600 plus VAT.

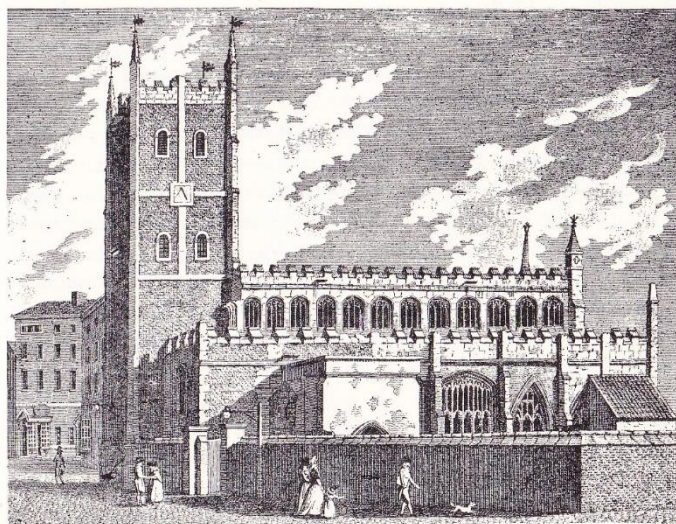
ST MARY'S THROUGH THE AGES

With thanks to John Buglass, Peter Gibson, Stephen Hackett, Olga Li La-Vigars and David Sherriff for discovering the following fascinating images and maps of St Mary's.

Please do get in touch if you have of images of St Mary's you can share with us. You can email us at friends@stmaryslowgate.org.uk



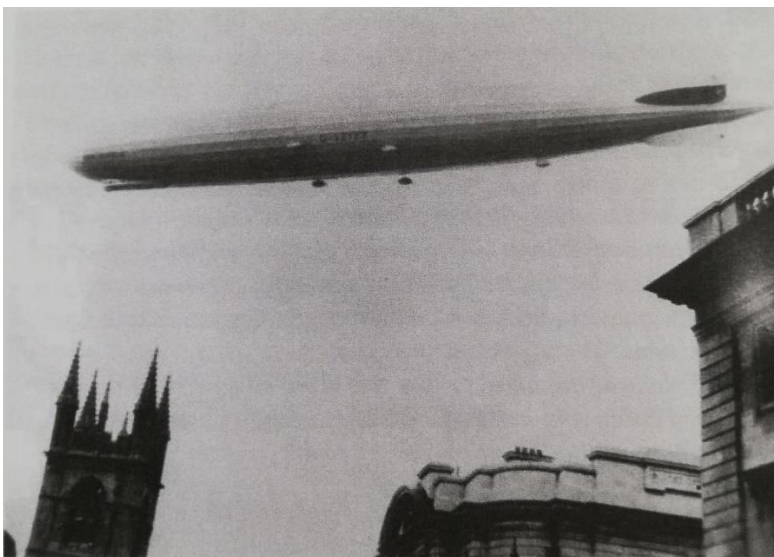
1780 – Image courtesy of Hull Museums



Drawing by FS Smith circa 1870



1853 OS map – note the name of the brewery!



On the left, St Mary's Church in Low Gate; in the middle the Post Office; on the right the Town Hall (courtesy of Ted Winkler).

1931

Taken from: 'Did you see the Zep Mr Jones? Zeppelin flights over Northern England and the Midlands 1931-1936.' By Andrew Stokell.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

With the pandemic and the work being undertaken to St Mary's these continue to be uncertain times, but we hope to hold the following Friends events in 2022 and will be in touch as soon as we have dates and details:

2022

March	Visit to All Saints', Hessle	Date to be confirmed.
September	Friends AGM	Date to be confirmed.
	Friends 'The John Scott Lecture'	Date to be confirmed.

SERVICES

During the current work for the moment, it is not possible to hold services in St Mary's. However, Fr Ian is endeavouring to hold a Sunday BCP Sung Eucharist Service weekly either at Hull Minster or Blaydes House. Please see the website for service times and locations:

www.stmaryslowgate.org.uk

The plan is to reinstate the Friday 12.30 Eucharist Service once St Mary's re-opens.

CHURCH OPEN

Again, the current improvement works mean that St Mary's cannot open to visitors as usual on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Please visit St Mary's website for updates.

WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS AND FUNERALS

Again, it is with regret that we cannot accommodate weddings, baptisms and funerals until St Mary's re-opens. The current estimate is that St Mary's will be re-open for Easter 2022, however please visit St Mary's website for updates.

If you have an enquiry for wedding or baptism services during 2022 please contact Fr Ian Walker on 01964 259252 or by email at irsw@btinternet.com

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