

Tas Valley Team Ministry Review of the year 2011



Our Benefice Family - The Things We Do Together

WORSHIP AND PRAYER (Benefice Wide)

Daily Prayer Worship and prayer needs to be at the heart of all we do as a benefice. Anyone is welcome to come to these short times of prayer at 9.30am:

Monday – St Mary's, Saxlingham

Tuesday – St Mary's Tasburgh

Wednesday – St Mary's Newton Flotman

Friday – St Mary's Newton Flotman

On Thursdays, prayers are said by the Open the Book Teams in the three church schools of the benefice.

There is also a joint meeting for prayer involving leaders in our benefice and Saxlingham chapel organised once a month by Andrew and June Gibson.

Prayer 24-7: We have now been holding a week of continuous prayer almost every year since 2006.. Continuous prayer takes place in our prayer tent with the "baton" of prayer being handed on each hour from one person to another. This year the interior space was designed by the cells based on the "I am" sayings of Jesus from John's gospel. There were many aids to prayer – a selection of music to aid worship and contemplation, a book for prayer requests, suggestions for meditative prayer, a paint wall, poetry, a map of the benefice with streets to be coloured in as they were prayed for, the ever popular home made loaf ("I am the bread of life") etc.. Although, we can pray anywhere, many people who participated said how much easier they found it to pray in this environment specially set aside. Some people completed whole nights of prayer and said they went past too quickly! The prayer-tent was used by all ages from babies and toddlers to folk in their eighties and by people who have been faithful Christians for many years as well as some just beginning to think about Christian faith for the first time. It also saw many styles of prayer from compline to prayer painting and loud praise. Many of the people involved in Prayer 24-7 this year were inspired by a book called "The Grace Outpouring" which tells the story of a small retreat house in Wales which saw incredible answers to their faithful and regular prayers for blessing on their valley. This has inspired the Blessing Project in 2012 where 25 people have committed themselves to set aside 1 hour a week for 52 weeks to pray specifically for God to bless our area. A structure for prayer and notes with areas for prayer and news is provided If you would like to do this, or simply to find out more, please ask Sally or Adrian.

Benefice Services In addition to Sunday services at each church, we came together for the following services in 2011

- High Mass at Candlemas in Saxlingham
- January Gathering" (cell led) with James Lawrence (CPAS)
- Ash Wednesday Service of Wholeness and Healing Special Services at each church during Holy Week
- Summer Gathering with Medad Burungi (World Shine Ministries)
- Remembering Loved Ones at Newton Flotman
- Two Confirmation services (in March and September)

OUR CHURCH FAMILY (Benefice Wide)

Passover Supper – On Maundy Thursday, a packed Tasburgh village hall was home to a Passover Supper led by Adrian Miller (See picture on the front of this report). People from all over the benefice came to enjoy the food (provided by the cells) and to learn about how Jesus fulfils the Passover symbolism. It was a wonderful evening. Thanks to all who made it happen.

Good Friday Choir – This year the choir involved people from every village in the benefice. Thank you Ros Lancaster for all you do in preparing us to lead worship on Good Friday and bringing us together for good music.

Freedom in Christ – We focused all our sermons and cells in the Spring on the course “Freedom in Christ” – discovering how Jesus can set us free from fears and difficulties we have in life.

Pastoral Leadership Team - The Pastoral Leadership Team meets to –

- seek to understand the “big picture” in the Tas Valley Team by listening to each other and God
- prayerfully seek practical ways in which the Tas Valley churches may “grow in God’s love”, where appropriate this may include making proposals and communicating them to PCCs for their decisions
- support each other in ministry and the exploration of their call from God including vocation to authorised ministry within the Church of England.
- help members to identify, enable, support and train other people to minister in the benefice

Members are chosen by the Team Rector and Team Vicar according to criteria first agreed by all the PCCs in 2008:

- People of prayer and mature discipleship, who are committed to meeting as church every week.
- If they have young children, they are committed to bringing them up in the Christian faith too.
- They already have long term pastoral leadership or responsibility for a clearly defined group of people eg. A Sunday school, youth group or cell leader or they regularly lead worship in one or more churches
- Weekly attenders of their own church but also have demonstrated a care for and formed good relationships within the benefice as a whole (through benefice activities - services, prayer 24-7 or holiday club etc)
- They are able to give time and priority to praying and planning with the leadership team on a regular basis
- The staff team (Sally, Adrian, Chris, David S & David L) will have prayed together about those to be invited and need to unanimously agree. (The staff take account of the need for a balanced team -representing different parts of the benefice & different ministry gifts – but people are invited on the basis of their current ministry rather than where they come from)

The current members of the team are William Ball, Sally Gaze, Chris Martin, Adrian Miller, Mark Morgan, David Sochon, David Lancaster, Kirsten Remer and Jim England. Please keep them in your prayers. If you are interested in exploring a new kind of ministry service in your Christian life, please speak with one of the members of the team who will do all they can to support you.

Clergy’s Extra Parochial Ministry - Parish clergy are warmly encouraged by the Church of England not to limit their ministry to within their parish only but to take on some wider responsibilities to use their gifts more widely and to help give their parish ministry a broader perspective. So here is what your parish clergy have been up to in 2011

- Sally works quarter time for the diocese helping others to start Fresh Expressions of Church to reach those not being reached by more conventional church. She has also become the chairperson of the national Fresh Expressions Rural Round Table.
- Adrian is a Member of the Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Team, he is involved in combating domestic abuse through the Breaking the Silence campaign and he is a trustee of the House of Prayer in Fishergate, Norwich.
- Chris has been engaged with other curates doing a substantial Initial Ministerial Development programme.
- David Sochon – is the Rural Dean for Depwade, caring for local clergy in the area and chairing the Deanery Synod..
- Mark works full time as a barrister in Norwich.

Benefice Account – This account is mainly a way of collecting from the churches their contribution towards clergy expenses. Other benefice expenses such as gifts for newly ordained clergy, benefice holiday club and the benefice website also go through here. The accounts for 2011 are included with this report. Within the account there is a Mission Training Fund – the money in this fund comes from the royalties of Sally’s book, “Mission-shaped and Rural” together with any ministry gifts received from speaking engagements. It is available for anyone who wants to undertake training for mission. . Anyone who wants to apply for funding should speak to Sally, Adrian or Chris Martin.

Wardens and Representatives Meeting – Thank you to all our church wardens who work so hard and make so much difference in the ministry and mission of our churches and care of our buildings. The wardens and other church reps had 4 meetings in 2011 to pray and plan. They represent the PCCs/cell leaders in making decisions with the clergy, which affect the whole benefice such as Parish Share and the Worship Plan. We enjoy spending time together especially at the superb Christmas meal, hosted by Adrian and Sarah Miller.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY (*Benefice Wide cont*)

Communications - The Website www.tasvalley.org is being developed by Adrian and is becoming more and more useful - including the ability to download the benefice worship rota. You can also sign up to receive regular updates from the website. Many thanks to Vicky Ball who kindly edits, prints and organises distribution of the monthly benefice newssheet. You can speak to Vicky at the Tas Valley church office on Wednesday afternoons or e-mail her your copy by the 15th of the previous month – vicky@tasvalley.org. Don't forget to pick up your copy of the newssheet each month or if you'd like to receive an e-mail copy, please ask Vicky to add you to the benefice news mailing list.

MISSION AND SERVICE (*Benefice Wide*)

Wastewatchers Holiday Club – This summer, about 90 children and teens were involved at Henry Preston (Church of England) Primary School, Tasburgh. The theme was looking after God's world – and we enjoyed the performances of Parky, the Park-keeper (alias Chris Martin) and his friends as well as excellent bible dramas from members of JAM. Other activities included competing in relays and races and making carnival floats and costumes. As well as having lots of fun, the children learned about the the Vidiyal Trust, founded by former hospital chaplain Pat Atkinson and in particular its work with children and adults who work on rubbish dumps. The charity provides homes, security, education and above all love to children and elderly in India. . By the end of the week, a Carnival Barbeque Event and sale of garden plants had also raised hundreds of pounds for the Vidiyal Trust.

Youth and families Internship - Hannah Pye started a year out with the Tas Valley Benefice in July 2011 after "A-levels". She is supporting the ministry of the benefice in countless ways, especially with our young people and families work. At the same time she is exploring her own vocation. £3000 has been granted by the diocesan mission fund to support Hannah, in her year with us and we want to match this with £3000 from donations. If you would like to support Hannah, either write a cheque (made payable to the Tas Valley Cell Church) and send to our Treasurer, Vicky Ball c/o The Rectory at Newton Flotman - or ask for a standing order form, and send that to Vicky.



Child Protection: Thankyou to David Lancaster who has continued to serve as the Child Protection Officer for the whole Benefice. His job is to seek to ensure that the benefice adheres to good practice in youth and children's work. He also ensures that all our volunteers have appropriate police checks. Please contact David if you need help in any of these areas.



Samaritans Purse – Over 250 shoe boxes, containing gifts for Children in need internationally were sent from this benefice. Thanks to David and Ros Lancaster for organising this.

Fair Trade – In 2011 we have been promoting fairer trade through the purchase of coffee and other items - both for individual use and refreshments for church meetings and we sold 60 "Real Easter Eggs" which in addition to being made of fairly traded chocolate tell the story of the resurrection on the box.

Pastoral Care - The Clergy, Readers and other lay people share in the task of Pastoral Care across the benefice. David Sochon has taken on primary responsibility for ministry to the residential homes and home communions.

Alpha – Three greatly appreciated courses ran in 2011 – A fortnightly daytime alpha course for at-home mums and two evening alpha courses, held in Saxlingham and in Tasburgh. All were led and supported by members of the cell church.

Confirmations- Congratulations to Andrew Hird, Lauren Hardwick, Lisa Cameron, Marcelle Pyne, Paul Rivett, Zach Cox, Matthew Gaze, Greg Doman, Lesley Cox, Kate Harvey, Alice Benstead, Norma, Margaret Farrar and Stuart Farrar who were all confirmed in 2011. (Nine of these candidates had attended an alpha course in the Tas Valley).



Saint Mary's Church, Newton Flotman (by William Ball & Jean Wilson)

WORSHIP AND PRAYER (Newton Flotman)

Sunday Worship: On the first Sunday of each month there is a traditional said communion at 8am. Then, at 9am breakfast is served before "First Sunday" all age worship from 9.30. First Sunday continues to be our largest service of the month with some families attending on this week only. In 2011 collections from this service were sent to support David Robinson (the last head teacher at the school in NF) in Tanzania, where he is working with his wife to support missionary families.

On the second Sunday, Family Communion is a more contemporary style communion where all worship together except for a short slot where children go out for a short period of activities. Holy Communion on the third Sunday has more traditional hymns and opportunities for quiet. We are very grateful to all those who support our services with music – Evelyn and George, Andy and band members. Many thanks also to Kirsten Remer for her leadership and development of Morning Worship on the fourth Sunday of the month.

Special Agents (SPAG), our children's church, is led by Kirsten Remer and runs for the sermon slot in the second Sunday Family Communion service. SPAG runs parallel to the adult service on 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays in the Church Room for a simple service and activities, joining the main congregation towards the end of the service in church. There is now a rota of volunteers leading Special Agents on the fourth Sunday.

F.R.O.G. ("Fully rely on God") is a group started this year on the 3rd Sunday of the month for young people of secondary school age to have separate worship and teaching during part of the 3rd Sunday service.

Special Services Special Services this year included the Confirmation services on 27th March and 4th September; Palm Sunday Donkey Procession, Father's Day Praise at the Village Hall; Praise Service with Medad Birungi; Harvest, "Remembering Loved Ones", and the Carol Service where Ros Lancaster once again brilliantly led our Christmas choir. The largest service of the year was again the Christmas Eve crib service with standing room only.

Monthly Praise Evening – started in September and is held on the 3rd Thursday evening each month in the church room with the band providing the music.

Prayer: We held an Easter Vigil on Saturday 23rd April. We supported 24-7 Prayer Week 1st to 8th June and the prayer space at Newton Flotman Primary School.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY AND CHURCH BUILDING (Newton Flotman)

New Members – We enjoyed welcoming several new members throughout the year through baptism and confirmation – and also enjoyed a special reaffirmation of baptismal vows service in September.

Social Events: In September we had a Harvest Weekend with a flower arranging workshop on the Saturday morning which was very well received – thanks to Sandra Gibbs and Linda Stimpson. In the evening we held our Harvest Supper in the Village Hall and enjoyed entertainment by Victoria Rawlins and her father. On the Sunday after our Harvest service we held an auction of produce, a lot of which was kindly donated by allotment holders in the village and a very enjoyable time was had by all throughout the weekend.

Church premises and churchyard: During the year 2011 we have redecorated the church porch and the metal gates; held working parties to tidy the churchyard; bought new notice boards for the church porch after the old ones were vandalised; the church room and kitchen were redecorated; the flint wall outside the church room was repaired.

Finance: Our Church remains financially sound and we continue to provide prudent stewardship of our resources. Our main fund raising focus in 2011 was for the Tower Fund for essential repairs.

MISSION AND SERVICE (Newton Flotman)

Church Mice – meets every other Thursday morning in the church room and continues to attract good numbers of carers and children. Singing, playing and craft activities are enjoyed at each session. Many thanks to Dawn, Vicky and Clair with their regular helpers, Val and Mary.

Baby Mice, a group for mums and young babies run by Geraldine Preston of children's services, continues to meet every Wednesday in the church room.

Partnership – our Parish magazine covers Newton Flotman and Swainsthorpe and the editor, Caroline Wolfe, has introduced a calendar for each month where anyone can put in a birthday, anniversary etc amongst the other events.

Pastoral care - The readers and clergy are involved in taking communion to the housebound and in taking a monthly service at Olive House residential home.

MISSION AND SERVICE (Newton Flotman cont.)

Links with Newton Flotman Church of England Primary School-

The Foundation Governors, Kirsten Remer (Vice Chair), Sally Gaze and David Moore show strong support for the school and participate in the Christian Character Committee of the Governing Body. This initiated a Prayer Space in school which was a fantastic success in the spring. The school is now planning a permanent quiet space where pupils can go to reflect on pray. The Open the Book Team go into school every week to lead collective *worship based on dramatised bible stories*. *The children* love this and are extremely keen to take part. The school holds end of term services at St. Mary's and Sally continues to lead workshops in the school prior to this to help the children prepare for the service.



Lesley Cox, Sally Gaze and Dawn Davidson lead "Film Fun Friday" for families and this is very popular. The Christingle Service, held at the school this year for the first time was extremely popular.

Charity support – Thanks go to Richard Smith for coordinating our wonderful team of Christian Aid collectors. There have been special collections for the Children's Society, Samaritan's Purse, Shalom Academy in Tanzania and the Royal British Legion. The Carol Service collection was donated to the Tower Fund. Carol singing round the village raised nearly £300 for EACH.

Coffee Stop - Lots of fantastic home-baking and good conversation every Saturday, including Bank Holidays. A Wedding Breakfast was held after the Royal Wedding In April and local traders, such as Phoenix Cards, attend occasionally by invitation. Donations are shared between the Tower Fund and other initiatives. The Cookery Book continued to raise funds in to 2011 and, with the demise of the Village Shop, there are plans to introduce some produce for sale. Many thanks are due to Amy, Sheila, Emily and the team of supporters.

Give and Take – four times a year we hold a recycling event during Coffee Stop in the church room where people can bring their unwanted household and garden items, clothing and toys. All the items given can be taken away free of charge and at the same time homemade cakes etc can be enjoyed with a cup of tea or coffee. At the end of the session anything left over is either given to the school for their fund raising events or taken to be sold at a local charity shop.

Angel Festival – we held this Festival from Friday 9th to Monday 12th December after Sharon Poyser had the idea to fill our church with as many different angels as possible. The church congregation, village school and pre-school, WI, local businesses, football team and NCFC provided angels and we opened each of the 4 days. We were visited by people from around the county plus radio, newspaper and television. On the Saturday we held craft workshops throughout the day and we had a photographer on hand to take pictures of children in angel costumes – thank you Gavin. On the Sunday we had a Songs of Praise service in the morning, a talk from Norwich Cathedral's librarian on Angels in the afternoon and then we finished the day with quiet, meditative prayer. Donations were received to support the Tower Fund.



St Peter, Swainsthorpe

WORSHIP AND PRAYER *(Swainsthorpe)*



Sunday services - There continues to be a service each Sunday. Holy Communion is held twice a month. The Swainsthorpe Special introduced over four years ago, still attracts 8-10 people each month, and is held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. We held a service on Mothering Sunday, a Rogation walk across the fields in May and a bug hunt in June. At our Harvest Festival, we enjoyed singing from Saxlingham Nethergate Choir, ate a delicious Harvest supper and held an auction of local grown produce. £116.50 was raised and was sent to Christian Aid.

In November we were again pleased to hold a Remembrance Service with a two minute silence at 11am. Our collection of £93.37 was donated to Help for Heroes. In December we held our first Christingle service. We had a wonderful atmosphere at our Carol service where 60 people took part in a Guinness World record attempt for the most

people carol singing in multiple locations.

We also enjoyed listening to songs from Jacob's Ladder band.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY *(Swainsthorpe)*

Welcoming building and finance - Dedicated PCC members continue to look after the church. The church is kept very clean and tidy, and the flowers continue to look beautiful. Our finances have continued to improve, this year we managed to pay £3252 of our Parish Share and all the Ministry expenses.

Burial Register & Book of Monumental Inscriptions – A team led by Jill Wright from Mulbarton, undertook a survey of all the graves in the church yard. We are now the proud owners of an up to date Burial Register and a beautiful Book of Monumental Inscriptions which has photographs and maps of the gravestones in our churchyard. Our thanks go to Jill and all those who helped. Both books were blessed at our Harvest Festival.

Church Tower Repairs – At the end of 2010, we learned that we had been successful in obtaining a grant for £63,000 from English Heritage. During 2011, our church was put on an official "At risk register" by English Heritage due to the state of our tower. An Access audit, Maintenance plan and Public Access arrangements have been agreed. During July, Stage 1 the investigative development works took place. Further repair work was found but was classed as ineligible works. Stage 2 - Repairs to the tower will take place during 2012, however we have just applied to English Heritage for an additional £25,000 to cover the cost of a new 1st floor and loft ladder plus additional costs. This is in addition to the £50,000 grant provisionally offered for the phase 2 works.

Church Bells - Peter Trent undertook a survey of our bells, which are in need of repair.

MISSION AND SERVICE *(Swainsthorpe)*

Art Exhibition & Flower Festival & Scarecrow Trail – This was held in September and coincided with the Churches Trust Sponsored Bike ride. This was another successful event, which raised £565.81. Our thanks go to David Chapman and Jan Flower for planning this event and for their dedication to the church. Andy Haggith yet again took part in the Norfolk Churches Trust sponsored bike ride and helped to raise £156.

Churchyard Conservation Scheme – conservation work continues in the churchyard by a small group of volunteers led by Andy Haggith.

Coffee Mornings - At Easter we held a coffee morning; with craft activities for the children, an egg hunt on the village green, and Easter garden making with Sally. At Christmas we held another coffee morning, with craft activities for the children, and a visit from Father Christmas. We also held a Bring and Buy sale in January (helped out by the PIG's) which raised £400 for the church.

Links with Community Action Group The PIG's (Project Ideas Group) have continued to raise funds for the Community Project; more than 15 residents are members of this group. During 2011, they held a Village green party in honour of the Royal wedding, a Musical evening in the church raised £900, the Art & Flower Festival with Scarecrows raised £565, sales of village Christmas Cards raised £200 and Christmas Eve carols around the tree raised £250. The PIG's also assisted at the Village fete which raised £1100 for the Parish Council.

Community Facility Project - David Chapman our Project Co-ordinator has continued to work tirelessly on the "Project" that will see the church opened up for wider use by the community. Early on it was decided to break the project up into 3 phases. Phase 1 will provide us with:

Permanent Facilities - removing the pews and replacing with comfortable stackable chairs to create additional space. We will replace the radiant down heaters. A new north door will be fitted. Excavation work will be carried out to connect the Church to the main water supply and main sewer in Church Road.

Temporary Facilities - fitting a temporary kitchen unit and water heater and connecting to the mains water supply and sewer. A temporary external toilet connected to the main sewer with electricity and hot and cold running water will be located just outside the new north door. *Hopefully, the temporary facilities will be superseded in the future by Phase 2 (an extension, including kitchen, toilet and meeting room) as funds become available.*

In November a Certificate of Recommendation was granted by the DAC. Both the Charity Trust and the PCC have been working hard to find grant aid providers to cover the cost of the project £79,575. To date £46,500 has been either paid or pledged. Further grant applications are still outstanding, if successful work will start during 2012.



St Mary's Church Tasburgh (by Vivienne Taylor and Julia Orpin)

WORSHIP AND PRAYER (Tasburgh)

Prayer We continue to keep our Church open daily for quiet prayer and meditation. The visitor's book tells us that people from far and near are regularly visiting the Church and comments in the visitor's book confirm how much providing this service is appreciated. A Morning Prayer service takes place each Tuesday morning in the church at 9.30 with a time of prayer for the needs of the whole benefice. Our services continue to be enriched by Intercessions led by members of the congregation.

Sunday Services, Children's Church and Sat Nav – Our Sunday services each month are designed to appeal to as many people as possible and usually consist of two Holy Communion services, a Matins service and an all age Family Service which includes a bring and share breakfast before the service begins. Family Services are led by Chris and Adrian and are closely linked with the work of the Sunday School. This year with the support of the youth band we have had some lively and well attended services; the children love Taz and the puppets. The Children's Church has gone from strength to strength and is regularly enjoyed by approximately ten children on most Sundays. The Sat Nav group continue to have space and time to worship together and the teenage members of our Church Family have become more involved in Sunday services and have led Holy Communion services this year. Thanks to Tina Martin, Jane and Duncan Rae, Julia McNulty and other helpers for their continued hard work with the Sunday School and youth work.

The choir continues to support our worship in a wonderful way and the members of the choir have worked hard under the leadership of Sarah Norman to provide some memorable services. This year the choir also sang at a Carol Service at Tharston which was well attended and much appreciated. Thanks to Sarah for her hard work in developing the music.

Special services – Special services this year have included a service of penitence and healing on Ash Wednesday, a Palm Sunday service, Compline during Lent, a Passover meal in the village hall on Maundy Thursday, The Easter Journey on Good Friday, a family service on Christmas morning and an Epiphany Praise service all of which have been much appreciated. We have been delighted to have the local scout group join us for both the Remembrance service and Palm Sunday services this year.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY (Tasburgh)

PCC & Churchwardens Our PCC continues to work together well. Thank you for all their hard work. Julia Orpin and Vivienne Taylor have continued this year to work closely together as church wardens. In October the PCC held an Away Day which was a time for prayer and discussion that was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who could attend.

Social Events We joined together once again for the annual village/church fete in September which was very well supported by the whole community. Other social and fundraising events this year included the annual Church Bike Ride also in September and a Church Open Day with cream teas at the Church in August to coincide with Open Churches Week. The Harvest lunch was held at the beginning of October in the village hall and was once again very well attended. The food, provided by members of the congregation was greatly appreciated. In May the annual Church family picnic was held.

We would like to thank all those who work so hard to support the church, especially to the ladies of St. Mary's Guild who work tirelessly at fundraising through coffee mornings and other events. We thank all those who provide coffee and breakfast on Sundays, clean the church, provide the flowers and enable the church to be so welcoming to everyone.

Church buildings. Our Church building continues to give us much pleasure and is a peaceful and beautiful place to worship which is much appreciated by many people. We continue to plan and carry out work to improve access to the tower and the bells. Unfortunately this year we have suffered a theft of lead from the porch roof. Temporary and more permanent repairs are proving to be a time consuming and costly job. We have continued to make improvements and minor repairs to the building including mounting the speakers for the sound system on the windowsills in Church, putting up hand rails on the ramp into the vestry, re-surfacing the path to the Church, repairing and repainting the gates into the churchyard and refurbishing or replacing benches situated in the churchyard. Thanks to John Merrills for all his work as fabric officer to Jim England for his support, to John Crowley for his hard work maintaining and improving the Church buildings and to Colin Gooch for his work on the benches.



Finance – We are delighted to say that we will be able to pay our Parish Share in full again this year.

MISSION AND SERVICE *(Tasburgh)*

Coffee Pot continues to meet each week in Tasburgh Church Room. Many thanks to Shirley Brooks for her ministry.

Links with Preston Primary School –Chris regularly take assemblies and runs termly workshops with the children at Preston Primary School. The “Open the Book” team continues to work hard with the children, taking a dramatic version of Bible stories into Tasburgh and Saxlingham schools on a Thursday morning. The Foundation governors are Chris Martin, Sarah Norman and Julia Orpin. Several other members of the PCC and congregation support Preston Primary as Governors and/or Members of the Friends Association. During the summer holidays the holiday club was held at the school and was again extremely well attended by children from across the benefice. In September, the PCC provided food for a joint lunch with the governors of the school.

Donations - Special Collections from Services have been given to the Royal British Legion, Salvation Army, Samaritan' Purse, Christian Aid, the Children's Society, Open Doors and Gospel for Asia.

St Mary, Tharston

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Each month we hold an 8.00am holy communion, 11.00am Holy communion and a Village praise service. The village praise service is planned around festivals, baptisms, and other celebrations to try to encourage a wider congregation. We have compline in Easter week, Harvest thanks giving at the end of September, Christingle and a Carol service in December. The average attendance at these services is as follows:-

8.00 am HC- 11, 11.00am HC – 6, Village Praise -17 (this included 2 baptisms) not included in the above is Easter which had a congregation of 17, Harvest was very disappointing with only 14, but Christmas was again well supported with 18 at the Christingle, 70 + at the Carol service and 28 on Christmas Day.



CHURCH FAMILY AND MISSION

The Electoral Roll numbers 13

Summer Fete. The fete was very successful and well supported by the village raising over £1300 for funds, it was again held at Picton Farm thanks to Steve Smith for allowing us to take over the garden once again. Also to Jane Valentine for organising wonderful vintage teas.

Harvest Supper

This year we decided to go back to having a supper rather than a lunch. Because we are still without a village hall in Tharston we had to decamp to Fornsett. Support was good (70) but many were from outside the village. This raised £423.

CHURCH FAMILY AND MISSION (Tharston cont)

Open Church

For the first time we had the church open for Open Churches week during which we held a British wildlife photographic exhibition, this was well supported and did encourage visitors to the church, following on from this we have managed to keep the church open on a daily basis for visitors thanks to a rota of local key holders. The photographic exhibition was co-ordinated by Jo Buckenham and her family. The wildlife initiative proved very popular with the community and we have an ongoing updated notice board at the back of the church for visitor interest.

Fabric

We are still awaiting decisions that will hopefully enable us to go forward with the Chancel repair work.

Friends and Helpers

Our ever grateful thanks go to the Friends of Tharston Church for their continued support. To those who help with keeping the church open, organise and support the Fete and Harvest supper, The P.C.C. and officers, a special mention this year for Anna Lambert who so kindly decided to help with the church cleaning as part of her D.O.E. award.

St Mary, Saxlingham

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Services are held on Sunday: Holy Communion (supported by a small formal choir) at 9.30am (1st and 3rd week), a child friendly All Age Service on 2nd week at 11am and Matins on 4th week at 11am. Additionally there is a said 8am communion on the second Sunday and a service on the 5th Sunday. Attendance is always higher at a 9.30am service but the other services are also well supported. The new All Age attendance averages about 25, and has drawn some new families to worship with us. Once a year an evensong is held on the site of the ruins of St Mary Magdalene, to the south of the present church.

There are special services for whole benefice, including a Good Friday service at 3pm. There is now an annual High Mass celebrated at Candlemass with Rev Mark Morgan taking the service.

Services have been maintained during the year by the Ministry Team consisting of Rev'd Adrian Miller, Rev'd Sally Gaze, Rev'd David Sochon, Rev'd Chris Martin and our Reader David Lancaster. They are assisted by Rev'd Mark Morgan - a non-stipendiary priest who resides in the village. An informal Open Air service was again held and was well supported including people who would not normally attend Church. It has been an exciting and busy year, bringing with it a number of challenges both in the practical and spiritual side of Church life.

There is a Residential Nursing Home within the village and once a month a communion service is held at the Home for the elderly residents. The Church enjoys a good relationship with the Village School and by invitation and in co-operation with the Head Teacher, the Team Vicar / or other team members take an active part in school life. Within the village there is a well attended non-denominational Chapel, which has a Sunday School and shared services have taken place, which have in recent years been in the form of an 'Open Air' service held on the day following the Church Fete.

CHURCH FAMILY

St. Mary's church building is situated in an attractive setting facing the church green and the primary school and serves the community of Saxlingham Nethergate and Saxlingham Thorpe which numbers approximately 700. There are currently 8 males and 20 females registered on the Electoral Roll. The church is blessed with a constant stream of volunteers, the bell ringers, the cleaners, the flower arrangers, sidesmen and readers, choir, organists and those who make sure the church is open to the public seven days of the week.

The combined income generated from regular covenants, collections and a number of extra fund raising events, has been adequate this year to meet the normal expenses, including full payment of the quota. There is still concern over the decline of general 'giving' to the church and it will be difficult to meet the increasing maintenance costs. The quinquennial review will take place at the end of 2012. In addition the church has agreed to replace the bells and although the fund is building up, a lot of fund raising still needs to be done.

Close links are maintained with the Chapel and their pastor (Ian Masson). The village and church benefits from Rev'd Miller living in the parish due to his support in so many activities.

MISSION AND SERVICE

The Monday Morning Mardle has continued very successfully and takes place every week. These gatherings in the church room allow a diverse group of people to get together socially and transport is arranged for anyone requiring it. Additional outings have also been arranged which are much appreciated by everyone.

Extra Pastoral Care work continues in and around the village such as providing a Bereavement counselling service and special work with the village school children. The school also holds its own special services such as a Carol Service at the Church. We have also formed a collective worship team, with lay and ordained from church and chapel, who lead worship at the school weekly under the "Open the Book" initiative. The joint Remembrance Service with the local Scout and Guide Group is very successful. A Communion Service has been regularly provided by members of the Ministry Team (usually Rev David Sochon) at the Saxlingham Nursing Home, also including some home visits.

The congregation have participated in fund raising events for charities including Educate Peru, Med Air, Samaritan's Purse, Water Aid and supported children's charities via the Carol Singing around the Village. Social events, encompassing fund raising, have been successful including the annual quiz, Open Churches Week and the fete. As usual a major part of our work has been maintaining the church building and grounds. A lot of hard work ensured that the appearance of the churchyard, the church, car park area and the new church room are all maintained to as high a standard as possible. The support we receive from the parishioners at the annual church fete reflects the high regard for the church held by so many living in the village.



Lighting 100 candles in St Mary's to represent the average number of deaths each year from domestic violence

All Saints and St Mary, Shotesham

WORSHIP AND PRAYER (*Shotesham*)

The following pattern of services has been maintained where possible.

- 1st Sunday 11.00 Holy Communion,
- 2nd Sunday 9.30 Morning Light at St Mary's.
- 3rd Sunday 11.00 Holy Communion,
- 4th Sunday 9.30 Matins at All Saints.

The festival services were well attended, with particular note that the carol service at St Mary's was back to levels of previous years after a more recent decrease in numbers, all available seats were filled, including those tucked away and rarely used.

Special services this year were well attended, two being newly introduced: St Luke's Day on October 16th to which members of the medical profession were specially invited and Christingle on 11th December. Adrian and Hannah led Christingle and it was a pleasure to see a number of children in church. We hope to build on this in the future.

Autumn was particularly busy as we also had a Helpers' Service/ Opening of the Maisie Benson Room and Remembrance Day. The former was particularly well attended with the congregation staying on for wine and nibbles afterwards. This year was our first year without British Legion participation for Remembrance as sadly the local branch closed. However we were delighted that the Parish Council stepped in to organise the ceremony at the war memorial and we were pleased to welcome the councillors and families to the service afterwards.

The service folders purchased for St Mary's the previous year proved to be such a success that more were bought for All Saints. We are grateful to Adrian for his help with this.

The Christmas carol singing round the Christmas tree continues to go from strength to strength. All Saints was filled to capacity when everyone moved into church for more singing and hot drinks. The Christmas morning combined Communion and Family Service was held again this year and was well attended. A Christmas collection was given to charity.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY AND CHURCH BUILDINGS (Shotesham)

2011 has been overall a successful year with the PCC working well together and passing all resolutions unanimously. We are aware that we have sadly lost several staunch members of the congregation over recent years which is reflected in decreasing numbers at some services. But on the positive side we have welcomed new people into church too at festivals and special services. We appreciate the continuity that having Adrian with us for many of the services brings. We have a number of church rotas for flowers, opening, cleaning, which run smoothly thanks to the help of many in the community, some of whom wouldn't normally come into contact with the church.



After the services we are delighted that the congregations remain for coffee, biscuits and chat. This certainly adds to the happy atmosphere we experience at both churches spiritually and socially.

A short service is held every Monday morning at The Trinity.

Bell Ringers - Bell ringing practice is on Monday evenings and we are pleased to hear the bells regularly throughout the year before services. Visiting teams also make use of our Norfolk five bell ring.

Fabric Report for All Saints - This has been a momentous year for All Saints when after struggling with the issue for a long time we were delighted to at last install a toilet. This was the initial aim when the project started some time ago but thanks to the expertise and persistence of John Torbitt the end result is a new church room in the old vestry complete with kitchen facilities, meeting area and a toilet. The room has been named the Maisie Benson room in honour of a loyal member of the church who left our churches a generous bequest.

The side chapel has been re-ordered and used as a vestry and is now a freshly decorated space looking much improved.

Arkscape have continued to keep the churchyard looking very trim. The path to church was widened as part of the work to lay water pipes for the new room. It has been edged with a discreet metal edging which has resulted in a far tidier appearance.

Fabric Report for St Mary's - The area at the back of the church has been re-ordered and looks much tidier with storage for coffee making apparatus and books in a new cupboard. During 2012 the floor to the side of the organ will be a target for work. The conservation group have continued to maintain the churchyard to maximise wild flower areas and Arkscape to more thoroughly tidy the area beside the path.

MISSION AND SERVICE (Shotesham)

Our donations to charity this year totalled £545 and were to British Legion/ Help for Heroes (Remembrance Sunday), The Children's Society (Christingle), School for the Blind and Each (Christmas).

At our Harvest Appeal we placed collecting boxes for the Norwich Foodbank in our two churches. It was decided to continue with the boxes in the churches to enable the local community to have an easy access point for dropping off contributions for this very worthwhile project.

All Saints hosted a concert given by Framingham Earl Singers and the Norwich Clarinet Choir in June which was thoroughly enjoyed and well attended.

All Saints and St Mary's participated in the Annual Cycle Ride and the Classic Car Rally called at the churches during Open Churches week.

Both churches were open every day of the year thanks to the continued help of approximately 30 local residents prepared to take turns on the two rotas. The Visitors' books have comments left by overseas visitors as well as more local ones, pleased to find the churches open, clean and in good order.

Ash Wednesday saw the arrival of a group of Pilgrim's carrying a cross en route from Oxford to Walsingham. They were entertained to tea by Janet in the Sochon's garden.

Preservation of the ruin of St Martin's Church: The area which had been cleared and seeded by the village conservation group around the ruin last year was a mass of wild flowers during the summer. The hard work of the volunteers created an up-lifting sight. Quotes have been received for the work on St Martin's tower to make it safe. A fund-raising plan is being devised by the PCC to move forward with this work. In the meantime a wooden fence has been erected around the tower to keep visitors away from the dangerous area without spoiling the overall aesthetic of this charming site.

Tas Valley Cell Church

All Involved; Becoming Disciples; Creating Community; Doing Evangelism; Encountering God.

The Tas Valley Cell Church began in 2003. Its primary purpose is to enable people that conventional parish churches can't reach, to connect with God and become disciples of Jesus – but many people who love parish church, love to do Cell church alongside too. It is a "church without walls" composed of cells which are small groups (Up to 12 members in each), meeting mostly in people's homes during the week. Members come from across the entire benefice. The name comes from the idea that the Church is the Body of Christ and that all living bodies have cells which multiply – the units of life. In 2011 there were over 50 adults and about 28 young people involved in the Tas Valley Cell Church on a regular basis.

WORSHIP AND PRAYER (Cell Church)

Worship at a typical cell meeting is quite different from Sunday church - more informal and often quite meditative using candles and quiet music. Because we are meeting in a small group we are able to pray for individuals in a more intimate way and often see quite dramatic answers to prayer. Each cell aims to have communion together about once a term. At most cell meetings, we read the bible, often looking again at the teaching given in Church on Sunday. We use discussion and activities to help us understand a passage or a subject better. We pray for each other in our desire to put the bible's teaching into practice in our lives as well as for people's needs.

The Gathering is a larger worship event, run by the cell church for anyone to come. There is a band leading contemporary worship songs and more lengthy in depth bible teaching than is usually possible on a Sunday morning. In January, we decided to try something new: Instead of a sermon, we started The Gathering with a teaching workshop on "Doing Evangelism". People could come to just the workshop or just the worship or both. Our workshop leader was James Lawrence from CPAS who was very inspiring.

Cell members also particularly supported the Praise Evening with Medad Burungi in July and the two confirmation services when several cell members were confirmed.

Worship Band & Monthly Praise Evening Cell members originally started the worship band which plays mainly at Newton Flotman, but also at Tasburgh and in other churches across the benefice and beyond. During the year, drummer Pete became engaged and decided to leave the band to concentrate on other things – We miss him but wish him well. Steph, Em, Anna, Emily, Georgia and Andy continue to increase in confidence and repertoire, leading a mix of traditional and 'new' worship songs and have done much to enhance our worship with much assistance at the mixing desk from Wayne Doman, Zach Cox and Matthew Gaze. The band also play at a monthly worship evening on a Thursday and support other churches in their praise services, including Stoke Holy Cross. We are seeking more musicians in order to have several worship bands serving in the benefice in 2012: if you are interested, please contact Andy Cox or one of the clergy.

Prayer 24-7 The cells provided the backbone of creativity and prayer for the Prayer 24-7 week at the beginning of June – designing most of the prayer stations and spending time in the tent for prayer both as cells and as individual members.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY (Cell Church)

Cell church places a high value on Creating Community. We have fun together and support each other. Many cell members are also very active members of their parish churches and find that cell life supports them in this. Others would not be part of a church at all if it were not for cells. Cells enable those who cannot get to a Sunday Service to be fully involved in the life of the local church. They are based on networks - people inviting friends, rather than the geography of a single parish.

The cells complement the other forms of church in the benefice so that everyone can grow in God's love. Because there is a mix of parishes represented in each cell group, the presence of the cells within the benefice helps the churches in the benefice to grow closer together as a church family. We work together with the benefice and pay our own allocation of Parish Share. Cells support benefice initiatives and sometimes take on particular responsibilities to help in parishes. In 2011 cells have hosted tables and provided food for the Benefice Passover meal as well as running benefice alpha courses and working in partnership with individual churches.

Thanks to all the cell leaders' who are real pastors to their cell members. Cells do the essential things that other churches do expressed in their values – All Involved; Becoming Disciples; Creating Community; Doing Evangelism; Encountering God.

Freedom in Christ – In the first half of the year, most of the cells followed this course, which helps people to allow God to heal them of past hurt and negative patterns of behaviour. Many thanks to Adrian for organising this and the great away day.



Bishops' Mission Order Update Back in 2009, the various PCCs and the cell APCM agreed to explore seeking a Bishop's Mission Order. The main benefits of this are -

- recognition by the diocese of the Cell Church as a new Christian community, equivalent in some ways to a parish church within the life of benefice, enabling the cell church to plan for the future with confidence
- appropriate and supportive oversight of the cell church and benefice helping the cell church to grow in complementarity to the other forms of church in the benefice
- ensuring proper provision is made for ministry in the cell church including representation in the appointment process of a new incumbent should that arise in future

Legal documentation has been drawn up for a potential Order – but Sally has not got round to editing it. Jim England is now helping her so there will be more progress in 2012. Further consultation involving the deanery, cell church and all the benefice parish churches will take place before any Bishops Mission Order is finalised.

MISSION AND SERVICE *(Cell Church)*

The value which we call “Doing Evangelism” is about being good news in peoples’ lives. Cells try to put faith to work in practical service and have a lot of fun – Most cells have a event every 4-6 weeks to which they invite friends and neighbours who don't normally come to church. There are some examples in the highlights from each cell below. This year several cell leaders completed the national Mission-shaped Ministry Course to equip them to lead their cells to reach out more effectively with the good news of Jesus.

Sunday Cell (Older teens) We continue to be delighted with the progress that Sunday Cell has made. At the end of 2011 it had 9 members. It is led by Em Martin and Hannah Pye. Through their efforts, all of the cell members have become involved in leading the 4Ws. After a fantastic Alpha run at the end of 2010, those who had made their first steps of faith at Alpha quickly became part of the group and enjoyed preparing for confirmation. In the autumn, the cell began to prepare for another alpha weekend course (held in Feb 2012). Since 2012 began, the cell has been joined by Hannah Rae and Gerorgia Doma. Latter in 2012 the cell will lose Anna Martin, Em Martin, and Hannah Pye who will be greatly missed but we are confident of bringing on new leaders and the cell will continue to thrive throughout 2012.

JAM (2 Youth cells meeting on Mon) We have been running busy programme, including sessions using the Harry Potter films to look at life issues and then examining the Bible to see what we could learn about what God is saying to us. Once a month we do a social and this year it has included movies, swimming, Quasar and sailing. We again had a good trip to the Christian holiday, Spring Harvest. Although there is a special JAM group at Spring Harvest, anyone from any of the churches can come along to the Butlins site in Skegness. There is a programme for all ages and several families from our benefice booked in. The year ended with around 14 regular members in two cells. During the year, leaders Teresa Doman left to help lead the Special Me Cell and Netti Freeman because of more family commitments. Hannah Pye joined the leadership team in the summer. Other current leaders are Chris Gaze, Clair Amerigo, and Chris Martin. Thank you to them all. Hannah and Chris will be leaving us this summer and we are therefore currently seeking more adult leaders for JAM, if you would like to find out about this please contact Chris Gaze.

Daytime cell – lead by Joelle Luxton, met at different times during the year according to members’ work commitments. This cell has a particular emphasis on prayer and hosted an Alpha course at the start of 2011.

Tues eve cell – A cell led by Andrew and June Gibson with an emphasis on bible study and pastoral care. For Prayer 24-7 they made a magnificent life-sized empty tomb to enable reflection on Jesus saying “I am the resurrection and the life”

Wed eve cells – Chris Martin's cell held a “Hot Potatoes evening at which they served baked potatoes and had a panel to attempt to answer people’s most difficult questions about faith. This led to an Alpha course in the Autumn and the cell have loved having the new members who have come along since that time.

Richard Bond's Cell has been seeking to support individuals with whom they are in contact, particularly the elderly. They have held social events such as a pancake evening as part of their outreach.

Men's Cell – A small group of men met to think and pray about how to enable more men to participate in church life and find faith.. The plan was to meet for bible study and prayer most weeks – but also to have a monthly working party helping with practical jobs in homes, gardens, churchyards etc. However, while they were praying and planning there was a request to run an alpha course and after asking if others would like to come, this became the main focus for Jan 2012

Thursday morning Mums – We meet in between the Church Mice meetings and have been following the Alpha course – but also praying together and

Thurs eve cells We particularly worked towards the Angels weekend at Newton Flotman church – helping with angel production, making community contacts, manning the church, decorating and clearing up. We also supported an alpha course.

Film Fun Friday - Sally Gaze and Lesley Cox met to pray about how they felt God was calling them to serve the school community in Newton Flotman. In September they started "Film Fun Friday" – a monthly film night for families which was the idea of Dawn Davidson. Dawn has joined the team and

Fri eve (multigenerational) Cell – The Raes lead an all age cell in Tasburgh which seeks to serve a wide range of contacts in the village. Highlights this year included a pancake evening and bonfire party.

"Special Me" Cell -



The Special Me Group is for youth with special needs. Their family, friends and carers are welcome too. Special Me Group is part of the provision of the Diocese of Norwich for its young people, and supported by Prospects. The leadership team is one of the Tas Valley Cells.

Special Me is for people who would like to find out more about God and Jesus but may feel a bit shy about going to church for the first time. We have a programme that lasts for 15 sessions. People can join at any point in the programme and stay as long as they like. At each session there is Bible study and various activities. These include drama, craft, music, singing, puppets and worship. Some are in small groups, some are for everybody. When people are ready to move on Special Me will help people settle in their local church. They will advise the church of the strengths of the person moving and how to support them in learning and worship. Special Me leaders will accompany people to church for as many Sundays as they need to settle in.

2011 was a time of praying rehearsing and gaining skills for this ministry. They have also been offering special prayers and support for baby Caiden who was born with a floppy windpipe and we are committed to continue in prayer and care for him and his family to overcome future challenges. From April 2012, Special Me will be meeting from 1.30-3.30pm on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month, at St Michael's CE VA Junior School, Bowthorpe. Contact Wayne and Teresa Doman for more details.

A Word from the Team Rector: Blessings, Breakthroughs and Bubbly

On behalf of everyone, Adrian and I would like to thank Chris Martin, David Lancaster, David Sochon and all the Pastoral Leadership Team for their pastoral care, servant-hearted leadership, teaching and worship leading. We are truly blessed to have such a great team. Special thanks also to the church wardens who do so much for little recognition and have been a great personal support to the clergy as well. Much gratitude also to Vicky Ball who has now been our wonderful voluntary Benefice Administrator since April 2004.

2011 has been a challenging year in the Tas Valley Benefice. Many individuals have gone through hard times and in that I include our family with Katie's time in hospital and learning to live with her Sturge Weber condition afterwards. We have through a very trying time been so grateful for the outpouring of love and prayer from you all. Thank you so much especially to Adrian Miller for his outstanding care and to all who visited us in hospital, sent messages and gave practical help.

As we have moved into 2012, Adrian, Chris and I have been seeking to listen to God for his work in the Tas Valley. The key word for me was BLESSING - God's desire to bless us, to bless his world and for us to learn to both speak his blessings and to be a blessing to his world. For Adrian the word was BREAKTHROUGH – an encouraging word for many of us after a difficult year. Chris had a picture – a bottle of overflowing champagne! – This is a lovely picture of the overflow of God's blessing reaching beyond the church into our communities. So we move into 2012, expectant to see more of God's work in our midst and encouraged to both receive God's blessing and to pass it on through what we do, say and pray. Here is an ancient and beautiful prayer for us to receive for ourselves and to pray for others:

*The Lord bless You and keep You
The Lord make his face to shine upon You
And be gracious unto You
The Lord lift up His countenance upon You
And give You peace.*

THE PRIESTLY BLESSING FROM NUMBERS CHAPTER6