

Tas Valley Team Ministry

Review of the year 2015



PHOTOS SHOW:

Superheroes Holiday Club at Newton Flotman School, Outreach worker Andy Cox, Cell Group in Tharston, Janet and David Sochon's leaving service at Shotesham All Saints, Confirmation at Tasburgh, Rev Martin Hartley on Lambing Sunday

Our Benefice Family - What We Do Together

WORSHIP AND PRAYER (Benefice Wide)

RHYTHM OF PRAYER Worship and prayer needs to be at the heart of all we do as a benefice. There is a daily rhythm of prayer at 9am around the benefice:

- Monday - St Mary's, Newton Flotman
- Tuesday - St Mary's Saxlingham Nethergate
- Wednesday - St Mary's Tasburgh
- Thursday - In Schools before Open the Book Assemblies
- Friday - St Mary's Newton Flotman

BENEFICE SERVICES We came together for the following services in 2015

- Monthly Evening Praise, held at St Mary's, Newton Flotman
- Ash Wednesday Service of Wholeness and Healing at Swainsthorpe
- Holy Communion on Passion Sunday with Archdeacon Steven and the Commissioning of new Authorised Worship Assistants
- Special Services in Holy Week around the Benefice
- Confirmation service at Tasburgh
- A farewell evensong for David and Janet Sochon at All Saints, Shotesham in April
- Deanery Evensong in Saxlingham Nethergate in June
- Remembering Loved Ones at Newton Flotman in November
- Benefice Communion for Sunday after Christmas at Saxlingham

PRAYER 24/7 - Prayer 24-7 - Many people joined in our week of 24/7 in our tent in Newton Flotman Rectory Garden at Pentecost. This year we particularly benefitted from reading and prayerfully meditating on large chunks of the new testament. The theme was "Come Holy Spirit" and various groups within the benefice contributed creative prayer stations reflecting the Pentecost story

OUR CHURCH FAMILY (Benefice Wide)

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TEAM & NEW AUTHORISED WORSHIP ASSISTANTS -

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
- 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

In 2015 the pastoral leadership team included

- Staff - Sally Gaze, Dawn Davidson, Jenny Cooper, David Lancaster and Andy Cox
- Authorised Worship Assistants - David Hamilton, John Torbitt, Kate Cakebread, Kirsten Remer and William Ball
- Cell Leaders (not already on the above list - Richard Bond, Chris Gaze)

Four of our new Authorised Worship Assistants were authorised in a service with Archdeacon Steven on Passion Sunday - and Kate, a few weeks later. The AWAs meet after a ministry meal three times a year for training and support and are each supported in their development by a member of the clergy. We are grateful for their prayerful, creative ministry which has been so valuable to all the congregations. Please keep all the pastoral leadership team in your prayers.

CLERGY NEWS

David and Janet Sochon moved out of the Benefice in the Spring. We are grateful to them both for many years of service in the Tas Valley. David (OLM) had served as both Reader and Priest here and as Rural Dean. He had a wonderful ministry at Saxlingham Hall, The Trinity and Olive House as well as leading Sunday services. We miss them both and wish them every happiness.

Sally became a Honorary Canon of Norwich Cathedral in May. Thank you to all who came to support her at her installation.



In November, we were sad to hear of the death of Rev Philip Wood after a long illness. Phil was Team Vicar in the Tas Valley Team Ministry from 2004-2008. Phil's hallmark was his love of Jesus together with personal warmth. He was prayerful and a great listener. Many from the benefice attended his funeral in Happisburgh and we continue to remember Phil's wife Yvonne in our prayers. , our previous Team Vicar

First Thursday Meal - On the first Thursday of each month at 7pm there is a 'bring and share' meal at the Rectory at Newton Flotman, for all who would like to come. This is an opportunity to get to know others from across the 6 parishes better and to hear what is going on in . This is followed each month by a short meeting that has a special focus for groups of people with a particular ministry in our benefice.

Communications Update -With so much going on in the Team Ministry, much had to be greatly abbreviated in the old monthly newsletter which then made it less useful. Therefore in 2015 regular services were omitted from the new monthly news sheet which instead now focuses on 2 or 3 new events or issues relevant to everyone. Each church designates a person or people to receive this and arrange for it to be printed off each month and distributed in their church/cell only. Information about more regular events can be found on our website www.tasvalley.org and the wardens will display details of other regular events on the church notice board. including the Benefice Worship Rota.

Wardens and Representatives of the Cell Church Trustees- 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 3 meetings in 2014 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 Tim and Dawn Davidson.

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 2015 will be attached to this report.

MISSION AND SERVICE (Team Wide)

Junior Heroes Holiday Club -Thank you to everyone who helped with the fabulous Junior Heroes Holiday Club which was held from Mon 27 - Thur 30 July. Special Thanks to Martin Hartley (otherwise known as Captain Y-Fronts) who organised and led the event. Also to Newton Flotman School and staff who provided a fabulous venue and were helpful in every way. About 50 children were involved over the week including teen helpers and the under 5s group the mini-Marvels.

Bible stories, drama, games, crafts and songs were all part of the fun as we learned about some of the Junior Heroes whom God used to do great things in the bible.

Safeguarding: We have updated our procedures for Safeguarding. Corinne Boyce is the Ned Person for the Benefice both for Children and for the protection of Vulnerable Adults. She is assisted by a safeguarding officer in each church who seeks to ensure that proper procedures are observed and care taken in this area.

Benefice Charity Support - In 2015 we have been promoting Fair Trade through the purchase of coffee and other items - both for individual use and refreshments for church meetings. Many thanks to all involved in the splendid Benefice effort in sending shoeboxes for needy children via Samaritan's Purse again this year and to David Lancaster for coordinating our efforts. Thanks to all who contribute to Food Bank in each church and the cooperation between the churches in delivering goods.

Confirmation Congratulations to Alice Rae, Hollie Ireson, Sophie King and Lara Cakebread, who were confirmed on 26th April 2015 in Tasburgh Church

Alpha - An alpha course was held at Saxlingham Rectory in the Autumn and was supported by the Saxlingham and Tharston cells with people coming from round the benefice.



Saint Mary's Church, Newton Flotman

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

PRAYER: Morning Prayer in church takes place on Mondays and Fridays at 9am, including particular prayer God's blessing on the people and activities of the village.

The local House of Prayer which previously took place at the school each month, has developed into a cell group which meets at their home and supports in prayer the outreach of its members including, the school and the Special Me Group and community work undertaken in Newton Flotman by Andy.

Newton Flotman congregation strongly supported the week of Prayer 24/7 in the spring and the prayer stations were subsequently moved into a classroom at Newton Flotman School and a prayer week celebrating Pentecost was subsequently held there. This engaged many children and some parents, and building on the tradition previously established in the school.

SUNDAY WORSHIP: First Sunday services continue to be well attended and we have used the new projector to enable these services to be conducted using a screen, rather than books and service sheets, and have widened its use to second Sunday and Evening Praise. This has been very successful on the whole, making the services easy to follow for all and child-friendly, with lively pictures to illustrate the themes. Family Communion on the second Sunday has the young people going out for a short period of activities. The teens have recently formed a worship band which has begun to take responsibility for leading the worship in these services. We also host the Benefice Praise Service on the second Sunday of each month

Instead of the more traditional Holy Communion on the third Sunday, in April we began an outreach-focused Cafe Church in the school hall, which had attracted some families linked with the school. A wide variety of church members participate in welcoming, leading table discussions, setting up and helping with children's activities, whilst the services are led by William Ball, the children's work by Kathryn Critchell and refreshments provided by the Luxton family. A team has been built over the course of the year. This service has also been adapted to host special seasonal events such as Palm Sunday and the Christingle service. We are continuing to discuss how the service can be made more effective.

SUNDAY WORSHIP LEADERS: During the year Kirsten Remer and William Ball continued to develop their ministry and were commissioned as Authorised Worship Assistants. We are very grateful to all those who have supported our services with music - Evelyn, Andy and band members.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ON SUNDAYS: Special Agents (SPAG), our children's church, continues to be led by Kathryn Critchell, and runs for the sermon slot in the second Sunday Family Communion service and 4th Sundays, in the Church Room for a simple service and activities, joining the main congregation towards the end of the main service. Other members of the congregation help on the rota from time to time, for example on the fourth Sunday. New children from last year have continued to attend and three children from one family are being prepared for baptism and/or confirmation, with adults from their families. Many thanks to the Critchells and Gazes for picking up children who cannot be brought by parents. Special children's activities and FROG for teens, led by Chris Gaze, take place on the third Sunday at Café Church.

SPECIAL SERVICES: These included: Palm Sunday and Lambing Sunday and Christingle in Cafe Church. In church, special services included Easter, Harvest Festival "Remembering Loved Ones" on 14th November. Advent began with a great service led by Special Agents; Christingle at the Village School Café Church on 6th December and the candlelit Carol Service on 20th December, where Ros Lancaster once again led our Christmas choir. The school has special services at the end of each term and the new projector has also been successfully used for these, enabling the congregation to view photos at the summer leavers' service, children's art work based on the theme of the Resurrection at Easter, and multicultural art produced by different classes for the Christmas service.



OUR CHURCH FAMILY (NEWTON FLOTMAN)

SOCIAL EVENTS: In May we welcomed around 50 people touring churches in the area and provided refreshments and informal talks on specific points of interest in the church building. In July, we held a Strawberry Feast get-together for all those involved in our “Friends of Newton Flotman Church” initiative. In September we once again baked and served refreshments at the Village Fete.

A barn dance was held in October which we also made our Harvest Supper this year. Tickets were sold for a fantastic evening of good food, music and dancing and we raised over £900. A fortnightly social gathering, known as the Social Club has been started in the church room by Mrs Jean Wilson; this has attracted 10-12 people from the village with an opportunity to gather and chat. As previously mentioned, a monthly Community Lunch has been running since September, hosted by Andy Cox and a team of helpers drawn from the church and wider community: the roast dinners are provided by the cooks and kitchen staff at NFPS, and around 22 people have attended each time; a number have been able to attend from Olive House, thanks to support from South Norfolk District Council in financing a community lunch: they have also provided grants towards table and chairs, and seasonal treats for a Christmas special. Both elderly village residents and young mums have attended these lunches, which originated in the desire to combat village loneliness highlighted through the Who Cares initiative, and developed through the new community outreach role taken on by Andy Cox. Coffee Stop on a Saturday morning in the church room continues to be a regular social venue.



COMMUNITY HUB DEVELOPMENT

Major improvements to the interior of the Church were explored following the Growing for the Future programme. The building is already used for some evening meetings and children's parties but St Mary's PCC want the church premises to be more available throughout the week for prayer and for other activities: Plans include accommodating a potential village vending shop and warm overflow space for Church Mice, Coffee Stop, the Community Lunch and a space to drop in for coffee and chat after the school run.. The task is to provide this without “spoiling” the space in our lovely church for traditional and modern worship, weddings and funerals. The plans which have been used and modified in the consultation process in the village and among heritage bodies have been available for viewing, and architects are now drawing up more detailed plans to be put forward for a faculty application. The whole process has been guided and overseen by Chris Gaze who has met with architects and refined plans; Christopher Remer who is designing a business plan for the proposed village vending machine, and Anne Leitch who has continued to source funding. Consultations about the plans were held on an open Saturday at the church, on the school playground and at the village fete with mostly positive response and enthusiasm from many.

OTHER CHURCH BUILDING WORK:

It was decided to bring forward the Quinquennial inspection so the state of the building could be ascertained, with particular attention to weather-tightness as it would be inappropriate to carry out re-ordering including decoration if the building is not water-tight. This work has revealed a need to repair a number of roof flashings, repointing to some walls, extension to downpipes and the digging of some new drains.

At the same time the extent of the problems with the church room also became clear. On the advice of our architect we hired the services of surveyor Colin Williams. His report highlighted building defects to the walls, which are letting through damp and the roof, which has interstitial condensation. This repair work went out to tender and tenders were received in 2016. Work on the church room is scheduled to start August 2016. If we obtain grant funding we will do the rest of the repair work starting in September. During the year we applied for grants to improve the interior of the Church tower which we expect to carry out in 2016. Many thanks to Chris Gaze for his extensive work in this area.

FINANCE: Giving has increased. Our Church remains financially sound and we continue to provide prudent stewardship of our resources. However, when we discovered the extent of the restorative work needed on the Church Room, the PCC reluctantly decided to withhold parish share payments until this work has been completed. We expect to pay our parish share in full in 2017. We also intend to send to Norwich Diocese the amounts withheld in 2015/6 provided compensation is received in respect of the building faults. The “Friends of St Mary's” scheme has continued, and donations from the Friends will support the work on the church tower. Many thanks to Berice our excellent treasurer and for the assistance provided by Vicky this year.

MISSION AND SERVICE

UNDER 5S Church Mice continues to meet every other Thursday morning in the church room and attracts mums, grannies, carers and their children (occasionally dads and grandads too!). Singing, playing and craft activities are enjoyed at each session. In December two team members from Action for Children in Long Stratton joined us and led a story book session followed by some energetic singing. Action for Children has also given us two stair gates which will be very useful in warmer weather, when we would like to open doors and keep the toddlers safe. Many thanks to Dawn and Vicky with their fantastic regular helpers, Val and Mary. In between, Church Mice Sessions a smaller group of Mums has gathered in the church room since September to “Knit and Natter” and at Christmas they held a Christmas story workshop for under 5s.

CHARITY SUPPORT - Thanks go to Kirsten Remer for coordinating our team of Christian Aid collectors who collected a total of £517. There have been special collections for Samaritan’s Purse (including the Shoebox appeal) and the Royal British Legion. The Christingle Service collection was donated to the Children’s Society. Foodbank collections are received at Church throughout the year and our Harvest gifts were also given to them.

Carol singing in the village this year took the form of singing on the village green around a Christmas tree donated the previous year by the Remer family, who also provided refreshments for the good number of villagers and church members, several of whom had gathered earlier at Olive House as a “Christmas Choir”.

COFFEE STOP - Continued thanks are due to Amy, Sheila and their team of supporters, including Eleanor Luxton, who provide refreshments and cakes every Saturday morning. Attendance remains good and fund raising for the Tower Fund and other initiatives are most welcome.

PARTNERSHIP MAGAZINE - This is a great local publication sponsored by the PCC for the communities of Newton Flotman and Swainsthorpe. Thanks to the editor, Caroline Wolfe who works hard on all aspects of the content and presentation.

OUTREACH WORKER - Following the Who Cares initiative the previous year, the post of Community Outreach Worker was created by the Cell Church as part of the Rural Evangelism Project. This has been filled by Andy Cox. In addition to supporting Film Fun Friday and Cafe Church, Andy has developed a new Community Lunch and provided pastoral visiting, hospital visiting, practical care and support to members of the village complementing the work of the clergy team.

COMMUNITY LUNCH A monthly community lunch started in September in the church room. Meals are provided by the school kitchens and served by a small team led by Andy Cox. The lunch brings all ages in the community together and involves 20-30 people each time. Andy also organises transport for the elderly and disabled to attend.



LINKS WITH OLIVE HOUSE Monthly services at Olive House have been led by Jenny Cooper and a small team. Andy Cox has also developed a close relationship with Olive House, supporting them for trips out and special occasions

SCHOOL LINKS - The school has three foundation governors - Sally Gaze, Geoff Billings and Kathryn Critchell who are very active in supporting the school and are part of the “Open the Book” Team which leads collective worship. The school holds end of term services at St. Mary’s and Sally and Kathryn lead seasonal workshops in the school, planned in advance in consultation with the Christian Character Committee of the school governors. “Open the Book” continues as a regular feature of school life. The “Film Fun Night” has continued on one Friday each half term, and is well supported. Regular services are now held at the school, taking the form of the new Café Church initiative, led by William Ball, Sally and volunteers. In the Statutory Inspections of Anglican and Methodist Schools, Newton Flotman Primary achieved a “Good” rating and the close relationship with the local church was particularly noted as a strength of the school.



Saint Peter's Church, Swainsthorpe

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

At the beginning of the year St Peter's started with a pattern of services comprising of; one Sunday being a Swainsthorpe special, a more informal service that appeals to a wider group of parishioners alongside 2 Holy Communion services and on the 4th Sunday of the month, Breakfast Café. The Breakfast Café attracted many families from within the benefice to come and worship together at St Peter's, and the live music provided by the band added to its appeal as a more informal and interactive act of worship. However once Newton Flotman established their own Breakfast Café services, the numbers attending the Breakfast Café at St Peter's became too small to realise the benefits of the Café church model. For a while St Peter's experimented with the same pattern of services but with a sign-up sheet, available a month to 6 weeks ahead, with an agreement that a service would only take place if at least 4 people had signed up to attend. This had the benefit of allowing the Tas Valley Team to plan use their limited resources better, as Sally felt that as so much preparation for a service is required it can be very disappointing for clergy when only one or two people attend the services. However it was difficult for those attending services to plan ahead and the sign up sheets proved an unreliable way of predicting how many people would be attending a particular service.

Therefore St Peter's has decided to keep the pattern of one Swainsthorpe Special, 2 Holy Communion service and one Breakfast Café going for the time being but to review the pattern and type of services regularly at the PCC meeting.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our congregation remains small but friendly and we have a wonderful hardworking PCC. In April we welcomed a new member of the PCC in Corinne Boyce and a new churchwarden to join Chris Duffield in Susan Peters Corbett who has also become PCC secretary.

FINANCE AND BUILDINGS

Our finances at St Peter's have continued to improve under the care of our excellent and hard working Treasurer, Andy Haggith. For the second year in a row, we have paid our parish share in full and local villagers, who may not themselves attend services very often, continue to donate generously and regularly to St Peter's, making a real difference to the health of our financial situation.

The Church is going to have its roof repaired during the coming summer of 2016, thanks to David Chapman who has, as usual, worked tirelessly during 2015 to get a good architect on board, apply for and succeed in getting a grant for almost the total cost of the work (thanks to the Listed Places of Worship) and has overseen the tendering of the work to get the best value for money and ensure the quality of the contractors. David will oversee the work this summer acting as a Clerk of Works and we are very grateful to him for managing this important project that will restore the Church roof helping to maintain the fabric of St Peter's for use by both worshipers and the local community alike.

MISSION AND SERVICE

The Churchyard continues to flourish and give pleasure to all those who visit St Peter's Church. It is maintained by a small group of volunteers, lead by Andy Haggith, and including Jill, Claire and Steve and Stephen. It also provides a place of sanctuary for wildlife to flourish, indeed 15 different kinds of insects were discovered in the Churchyard when the Bug Hunt took place in May.

FESTIVAL GROUP began its work this year, meeting to agree a calendar of events which the whole community could celebrate together.

THE EASTER COFFEE MORNING was very well supported, lots of cake and chatter, a wonderful (seemingly everlasting raffle) and crafts for the children who decorated eggs to take home. The Easter bunny put in appearance to help the children search in the Churchyard for Easter eggs. The Coffee morning raised £162.00.

THE BUG HUNT in May, had lovely weather, and crafts and refreshments were available. Those families attending had a lovely time.

THE SWAINSTHORPE BAKE OFF was next event in the calendar what a lot of talented bakers and jam makers we have in the Benefice! This photo gives you some impression of the fantastic entries we received, they were carefully judged with the help of Sheila Buchanan and best of all, in the afternoon we all got the chance to sample the goodies with a nice cup of tea!



THE HARVEST SUPPER in September was an opportunity to thank those who help the Church throughout the year, whether by giving their time to cut the grass or by making a regular donation. The Harvest Service and Thanks Giving was followed by a delicious supper. This year, instead of having a auction of produce, we asked for donation of dried goods which were given to the Norwich Food Bank. Everyone was so generous with their donations and the food bank were delighted with the gifts, which allow them to continue to help those in need in Norwich.

CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING was a happy and festive event, the homemade Christmas Cakes and Puddings went down very well, next year we will be making Gluten free versions too and taking orders in advance! We made £161.00.

CHURCH MICE continued to meet until early summer, but are now taking a break, as so many of those attending were expecting new arrivals! It is hoped Church Mice will start up again this summer.

ST PETER'S AS A COMMUNITY SPACE The PIGs group continue to utilise the community space at St Peter's to provide a varied timetable of events and entertainments that appeal to the villagers and the wider community. There have been quiz nights, historical talks about the Yards and Courts of Norwich, as well as a spectacular musical evening provided by Upper Octave, an Italian 3 course meals with all the trimmings to name but a few. The PCC hopes to meet with the PIGs soon to discuss the possibility of further extensions to the building, to make it even more attractive and suitable for community use and events.



St Mary's, Tasburgh

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

We continue to keep our Church open daily for quiet prayer and meditation. People from near and far have signed the Visitor's book confirming how much they enjoy having easy access to the building. A regular Morning Prayer service takes place at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesdays offering prayers for the whole benefice. Members of the congregation lead intercessions and read lessons at our weekly services.

Our Sunday services followed a regular pattern. On the first Sunday of the Month there is BCP Morning Prayer and Freedom Café (which is usually held at the school), Family Communion with Children's church on the 2nd Sunday, All Age Service on the 3rd Sunday and Holy Communion with Children's Church on the 4th Sunday - this pattern is designed to appeal to as many people as possible. We would also like to give a big thank you to the choir under the direction of Sarah Norman for their continued contribution to our services.

We have had some special services in 2015 - Christmas was a busy time starting with our 'Living Nativity' Play when the children from Preston Primary School came to the church to see the Christmas story acted out by the 'Open the Book' team. The traditional 'Carols and Lessons' Service, followed by a Crib Service and Midnight Communion, with a family service on Christmas morning all met with a good response. Remembrance Sunday was well attended and it was great to have the Cubs and Scouts join us on this occasion. Good Friday and Easter Sunday were marked by special services. With regular Compline services throughout Lent.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

GROWING FOR THE FUTURE St Mary's has been implementing ideas in 2015 which were suggested in the Growing for the future consultation that took place in 2014. This has looked at youth and children's church, worship and pastoral care. We have now developed an informal cafe style church (Freedom Café), and the a pastoral care team.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children's Church meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month and on the first and third Sundays all ages are together. Our thanks go to Andrea and all the helpers for their work with the children. We were delighted that four of our teenagers were confirmed this year in April - Congratulations to Alice, Sophie, Hollie and Lara.

PCC & CHURCHWARDENS - Our PCC continues to work together well as a team. The Church Wardens very much appreciate the help and support they receive from everybody, without this help we would never achieve our goals.

AUTHORISED WORSHIP ASSISTANT - We are delighted that Kate has been authorised to lead worship in our churches and seek to support her as she learns from Jenny and Martin how to lead worship in different styles.

CHURCH BUILDINGS - Our church building is a peaceful and beautiful place to worship in and is much appreciated by many people. There is always work to be planned or carried out, this year electrical work to the porch and bell tower as well as essential repairs to masonry. The Yew Trees that run alongside the path that leads to the entrance of the church have had a long awaited prune. We thank Jim England for his contribution as fabric officer in organising these projects and more.

FINANCE - We met our parish share in full in 2015. The envelope scheme has now ceased and Graham Pates our treasurer has been encouraging people to switch to direct debit. This continues to be a testing time with our Parish share increasing again in 2016. We would like to thank Graham for his hard work as treasurer.

MISSION AND SERVICE

PRAYER WALKING: Andrea, Jenny and Martin have been 'prayer walking' and this has been warmly received by the wider community.

COFFEE POT continues to meet each Wednesday in the church room - many thanks to Shirley and her team. Andrea and Mart

LINKS WITH PRESTON PRIMARY SCHOOL The "Open the Book" team visits weekly in term time taking a dramatic version of bible stories into school, in which the children are enthusiastic participants. The foundation governors are Sarah Norman and Rachael Hartley who attend meetings and are regularly in school at assemblies and other events. During the summer the Friends of the School held a scarecrow trail and the church provided refreshments and hosted many

scarecrows including a familiar-looking curate and a wedding couple. A week long holiday club was held at Newton school and was enthusiastically attended by children from across the benefice. We would like to thank the small army of volunteers who made this possible.

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Pastoral Care Team coordinated by Kate Cakebread has six members who meet regularly to respond to any pastoral care needs that has been brought to their attention. In 2015, the group developed a prayer chain, appointed road reps and working with the parish council have produced a welcome pack to be given out to people who have moved into the village.



SOCIAL EVENTS - This year we held our Church Fete in June. Other events included the annual Church Bike Ride, the Harvest Lunch at the village hall in October was very well attended and a wonderful meal was enjoyed by all. Thanks to Viv and Ian for their hard work in making it a very successful occasion and to the great cooks who made it all possible.

FREEDOM CAFE Freedom Cafe began in Dec 2014. About 25 people attend each month, including several children. Many people who don't come to church at other times, enjoy the Freedom Cafe event. It gives people the opportunity to explore their faith as well as enjoy the bacon rolls and excellent coffee! It is run by a small enthusiastic team who began meeting and praying as a cell in the autumn. There is a wonderful ethos of generosity and creativity. Thanks to all involved.



GIVING - TIME AND TALENTS - Special Collections from services have been given to the Royal British Legion, the Salvation Army, Christian Aid, the Children's Society, and the Norwich Food Bank.

We would like to thank the Ladies of St. Mary's Guild for their tremendous effort in fundraising through coffee mornings and other events which has enabled the church to undertake essential work to the building.

Thanks also to all those who do the cleaning, arrange the flowers, make the coffee, open and close the church and act as sides people. This silent majority ensure our church runs efficiently and we wish to extend our thanks to them all.



St Mary, Tharston

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Tharston continues to offer two services a month - 8.00 am Holy Communion on the 3rd Sunday and 11.00 am on the 2nd Sunday. These services are adjusted to accommodate festivals and special services. Our Christmas Carol service attracts a congregation of about one hundred, it is lead by Tasburgh choir and is a very festive occasion. This year we were joined by two new decorating ladies which was very encouraging.

CHURCH FAMILY

Thank you to our wonderful churchwardens Pat and Sue and all our hardworking PCC.

Although our core helpers remain the 'faithful few' we do enjoy the help of many in the village on such occasions as the fete and other village activities. We are so grateful to The Friends of Tharston Church who make such generous contributions to our finances which enables us to pay our parish share in full and keep minor repairs up to date.

FABRIC.

The church fabric is being maintained by the PCC. As a committee we are exploring the possibility of doing some major remedial work together with reordering. We are awaiting a report from our architect, we have decided to commission a feasibility study to assist us in future plans, as at present there does not seem to be any progress on a new village hall and we find ourselves still without anywhere in the village to hold any functions. We are keeping the Parish council informed of our plans to hopefully assist them in their future thoughts on village amenities.

The church yard has again been kept beautifully tidy under the watchful eye of Michael Duffield.

MISSION AND SERVICE

In 2015 we held a village Open Gardens this was a huge effort by all concerned -not aided by the weather! But was a great success and raised £1800 for funds. The church fete, again held at Picton farm was well supported and raised £1000. Although our congregation does not increase we are well supported by the village and the Friends of Tharston Church when we do hold events.

There is a second new housing estate of 120 houses being built in the village over the next few years and we hope to involve them in the community and to provide a useful welcome pack to each newcomer.

We continue to be able to keep the church open on a daily basis thanks to a rota of volunteers. This enables us to be able to continue to support the Norwich food bank.



St Mary, Saxlingham

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

We continue the successful pattern of services - on the 1st and 3rd Sundays Holy Communion is celebrated at 9.30am, supported by a small formal choir. On the 2nd Sunday is an 11am Matins with 'Finders Seekers' children's activities in the church room at the same time while on the 4th Sunday an 8am short Communion takes place, followed at 11am with an increasing number of families attending the 'All Age' Family service.

Refreshments are served before the Family Service at the back of the church and in the church room following the services at other times. Additionally there is usually a service on the 5th Sunday, including an annual service, dependent on the weather, held on the site of the ruins of St Mary Magdalene, to the south of the present church.

Special Services for all ages together have included Mothering Sunday, Easter, a open air Pet Service, Harvest (complete with vegetable monsters pictured below) and Christmas. In addition to these, we hosted benefice services on Good Friday and the Sunday after Christmas.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

PCC & CONGREGATION Cindy Brookes is the churchwarden but ably assisted by other members of the PCC to carry out the various duties required. Geoff Blyth has remained as Fabric Officer but not as a serving member of the PCC. He regularly contributes reports to the meetings and attends if requested. The congregation is in good heart and we have 31 members on the Electoral Roll. The Ven Steven Betts, Archdeacon of Norfolk, visited the church and gave some helpful guidance on resources for the PCC and the churchwarden.



The church is blessed with a constant stream of volunteers from the bell ringers, the cleaners, the flower arrangers, sidesmen and readers and those who make sure the church is open to the public seven days of the week. There are also rotas for serving refreshments and cleaning the church and the church room.

LICENSED MINISTERS Regular Services have been maintained during the year by Rev'd Dawn Davidson, Lay Reader David Lancaster and occasionally by another member of the clergy team. As usual, 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. The village and church has benefited from Rev'd Davidson living in the parish.

TREASURERS REPORT The combined income generated from regular covenants, collections and a number of extra fund raising events, has almost been adequate this year to meet the normal expenses, including the full payment of the quota. As with last year's accounts, there is concern over the decline of general 'giving' to the church and it will be difficult to meet the ongoing increasing maintenance costs. Margaret and Roy Downes, who have looked after the financial affairs of the church for over 30 years will be retiring at the annual meeting and an evening to recognize their commitment will be held to honour them. The PCC and Mr and Mrs Downes greatly appreciate the assistance of Geoff Freeman during the past few years.

FABRIC There are various items of maintenance work listed in the quinquennial report which need to be completed within the next couple of years. It continues to be difficult to raise additional income which is inevitably needed to pay for the rising costs of general maintenance and to develop and improve church facilities. The church clock stopped working and this is being remedied. Internal redecorating is due to start in spring 2016.

MISSION AND SERVICE

MONDAY MARDLES are weekly and have continued very successfully. These gatherings in the church room allow a diverse group of people able to get together socially and transport is arranged for anyone requiring it. Additional outings are also arranged which are much appreciated by everyone.

PASTORAL CARE continues in and around the village including home visits.

SCHOOL LINKS Mrs Chris Gibson, headteacher for many years retired this year. The school is exploring having a shared headship, meanwhile, Miss Lou Kent is acting headteacher. The foundation governors are Joanna Stevenson and J'Anne Robertson. The school has a new teacher, Mrs Chloe Rayfield who is keen to promote the link between the school and the church. Dawn goes into school every week with the Open the Book team and on other occasions to help children learn about Christian faith. It is hoped to start a Messy Church in school in the near future. The school also holds its own special services such as a Carol Service at the Church.



SCOUTS The joint Remembrance Service with the local Scout and Guide Group is very successful, with over 100 children present.

LINKS WITH SAXLINGHAM NURSING HOME Rev'd David Sochon was the chaplain to Saxlingham nursing home. Since he moved, the monthly Communion Service at the home has been organised by Revd Jenny Cooper, aided by some members of Tasburgh Church.

SOCIAL EVENTS have been successful including the annual quiz and fete. As usual, the Norfolk Churches Bike Ride is taken up by a few parishioners and there is a rota for sitting in the church and offering light refreshments. Events through the year included a Harvest Lunch.

FOOD BANK The church is pleased to be involved with collecting items to be taken to the Norwich Food Bank.

AWAY DAY The PCC held an Away Day in November. We looked at the Bishop's 3 questions on mission and outreach. Various ideas were discussed, including how we might make services more 'attractive to the wider community.

CAROL SINGING: There had been a tradition of carol singing around the village over several nights in December but this had proved difficult due to a smaller number of people able to commit to this. This year a group of singers went to a few houses one night and then a community sing was organized, with simple refreshments, based at the War Memorial. This worked well and will be repeated next year.

CHURCH BUILDING & CHURCHYARD: A major part of our service has been the usual maintenance of the church building and grounds. A lot of hard work ensured that the appearance of the churchyard, the church and the car park area looked cared for. The contractor who mowed the grass in the churchyard is no longer able to continue and it has proved very difficult to find a replacement. The new church room is also ten years old and it is hard to remember how we managed without its facilities. 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.

CONTACT: (The Parish Magazine) is initially funded by the Church. The Trade Directory on the back of it ultimately covers the cost and it also together with individuals' and Parish Council sponsorship raises funds for the Church. Contact is the only method of reaching every single household in Saxlingham. It is produced by a whole team in the village, starting with the individuals who provide the articles, Teresa Stevens collating, preparing and typing it, Roger and Vicky Stocks photocopying it, Alex Watson collating and delivering it to a group of approximately 13 individuals who put it through each and every letterbox. Thanks to all involved!

All Saints Shotesham and Shotesham St Mary

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

The following pattern of services has been maintained where possible.

1st Sunday 11.00 Holy Communion, 2nd Sunday 9.30 “My Church” at St Mary’s.

3rd Sunday 11.00 Holy Communion, 4th Sunday 9.30 Morning Worship at All Saints.



The 2 new services which were introduced last year have continued.

“My Church” led by John Torbitt, which is a relatively informal family friendly one.

Debatable Sermons led by David Hamilton when there is an opportunity to debate questions arising from the sermon. This being an occasional service held on a 5th Sunday. Particular thanks to Geoff Blyth for stepping in to play the organ on many occasions whilst Joy has been unable to play. The hymnal machine has been used in both churches during the year on occasions when we have had no organist.

SPECIAL SERVICES: Our regular Thank You Service for all our helpers at the churches was held in July. The service was followed by wine and nibbles.

On October 18th we held a St Luke’s Day Service at All Saints. All members of the medical profession in the village received invitations to attend and we were again pleased to serve wine and nibbles afterwards.

Remembrance Day was commemorated with the help of the Parish Council who organised the laying of wreaths at the war memorial. This was followed by a well-attended Service in church.

The Christmas and Easter services were well attended; with more people at the St Mary’s carol service and the Christmas morning service at All Saints this year. The picture above shows the My Church Christingle.

Easter Day featured a Sunrise Service with Holy Communion at St Mary’s as well as the Easter morning service with Holy Communion at All Saints.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

PCC 2015 has been overall a successful year with the PCC working well together and passing resolutions unanimously. We have very much valued having Dawn in the chair, her measured guidance is much appreciated and we have all enjoyed getting to know each other better. We very much miss David and Janet Sochon from the PCC and acknowledge their great contribution during many years of service, but we were pleased to welcome Marcelle Pyne and Trish Leighten to our Council this year.

AUTHORISED WORSHIP ASSISTANTS In 2014 the PCC were pleased to propose Dr David Hamilton and John Torbitt to train to become Authorised Worship Assistants. Both were accepted and duly authorised by the Bishop on 22nd March. Both now take services on a regular basis in Shotesham and occasionally in other parts of the Benefice.

VOLUNTEERS Our thanks go to the many members of the community who help immensely by cleaning, flower arranging and opening both churches daily. We have hundreds of visitors to each church every year who from the favourable comments in the visitor’s books obviously appreciate the churches being open and welcoming.

FACILITIES Both churches offer coffee after the services making the most of the kitchen facilities at each. Visitors for weddings and funeral are particularly appreciative that we can provide toilet facilities at both churches. The Maisie Benson room at All Saints has been used by the village for various functions and is an ideal venue for PCC meetings.

FABRIC: In June John Torbitt arranged for an electrician to install LED spotlights at rafter level in All Saints as part of the PCC’s improvement programme. This was done with access by cherry picker and we took the opportunity to remove the cobwebs which are normally out of reach.

All Saints has greatly benefitted from the removal of the worn kneeler at the Altar rail and the arrival of a new cushioned version.

Last year the very worn carpet at the Altar rail of St Marys church was replaced by a wonderful embroidered cushion featuring an exact replica of the former pattern. The tapestry frames we purchased for the kneeler project at St Mary’s are now on permanent loan to the Cathedral on the

understanding that we may use them again if needs be. This year all the kneelers in the pews have been replaced to match. This is a wonderful effort by Ladies in the village and great thanks are due to Sandra Coles for organising the work.

Our Contractor Robert Jackson has continued to keep the churchyard at All Saints looking very trim and has kept the paths mown at St Mary's. We aim to achieve a balance between tidiness and conservation of the wild flowers in St Mary's churchyard.

Martin Leighton our decorator cleaned the paintwork of the larger porch at All Saints to restore it to newly painted condition and redecorated the porch to the chancel. Our thanks are due to Robert and Martin.

The work carried out at St Mary's last year to provide an excellent car parking area has been a wonderful improvement for those attending services, particularly busy ones such as the Carol Service. It is also well used by the many visitors who park there to walk locally.

Bob Harris cleared blocked drains at the east end of All Saints and repaired the damaged flag rope. Minor redecoration to the painted walls was carried out at St Marys and a quantity of tiles were replaced in the Nave where the floor had suffered minor subsidence. Our thanks are due to John and Bob for their work in maintaining the fabric of both churches which are generally in good order.

FINANCE: For the General fund there was significant increase in general collections which more than compensated for a reduction in Gift Aid collections(Envelopes). Standing orders were more than maintained which was due to increases in existing orders and new standing orders compensating for lapses due to leavers from the village. Donations were less than 2014 because of exceptional donations in that previous year (eg donations in respect of weddings). There were no weddings in 2015. Expense payments for 2015 were more or less on budget and similar to 2014 except the transfer to support churchyard expenses was made from the Legacy fund in 2015 rather than the General fund as in 2014. Overall, the result for the General fund was very satisfactory with a much lower deficit than the 2015 budget.

The other significant fund is the Legacies fund. A further £1,862 was received from the Maisie Benson legacy due to a late financial settlement. There was a large increase in Investment income from the investments through Barrett & Cooke from £11,045 in 2014 to £14,133 in 2015. Some of this was due to exceptional dividends that will not be repeated. Barrett & Cooke estimate an income of £11,088 for 2016. The value of the investments fell by £10,163 due to stock market falls. The stated policy of the Parochial Church Council for the restricted Legacy fund is 'to invest most of the fund and use the income for the maintenance, major repairs and improvements to our two medieval buildings so that they will be there and used for generations to come'.

MISSION AND SERVICE

DONATIONS to charities totalled £946.89 and were made up as follows:

- Donation of 50% Remembrance collection to help for Heroes £152.75
- Donation of 50% Remembrance collection to British Legion £152.75
- Donation to Norfolk Churches Preservation Trust £30
- Community carols donation to Medicins Sans frontier £310.76
- Christmas day collection donation to Embrace the Middle East £254.38
- Christingle collection donation to the Children's Society £46.25

FOODBANK: Throughout the year we continued to collect in both churches for the Norwich Food bank. People are able to leave contributions at any time whilst the churches are open in a box stationed in each church. Furthermore the congregation is encouraged to contribute to the Foodbank when we remember those less fortunate than ourselves during the monthly "My Church" Service.

SAMARITAN'S PURSE We always support the annual shoe box appeal and many members of our congregation rise to the challenge. The contribution made by our member Jill Masters with the help of folk from her hospital is quite amazing. Jill's team filled no less than 330 boxes this year. We ask people to leave donations for the boxes in All Saints throughout the year for Jill's team to pack at their regular meetings.

CHURCH OPENING AND CARE: All Saints and St Marys are both 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. Both All Saints and St Mary's churches participated in the Norfolk Churches Trust Annual Cycle Ride and walk.

CONSERVATION GROUP: We are most grateful to the Conservation group who continue to help us carry out work at St Botolph's and St Martin's sites and in St Mary's churchyard.

LINKS WITH VILLAGE ASSOCIATION: An event for children was run by the Village Association at Easter, the hunting and decoration of eggs. All Saints was the venue for this. The Christmas Eve community carol singing round the tree on Church Hill was once more hosted by the Village Association. Afterwards about 160 people packed into the church to warm up, sing more carols, and enjoy refreshments.

BELL RINGING Practice is on Monday evenings and we are pleased to hear the bells regularly throughout the year before services. Visiting teams can also make use of our Norfolk five bell ring.

Tas Valley Cell Church

The purpose of the Tas Valley Cell Church 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. We seek to live by 5 values (above)



WORSHIP AND PRAYER

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 discussions 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.

PRAYER 24-7 - The cells prepared Prayer Stations for and sternly supported the week of round the clock prayer in May. The overall theme was "COME HOLY SPIRIT" and cells provided lots of creative resources to help everyone to pray for God's blessing on our local area and local people

THE GATHERING We haven't had one of these larger teaching and worship events in 2015. We have an hour long time of teaching or a workshop followed by contemporary worship, led by the band. However, we continue to gather about three times a year specifically as cell church for worship, training, the Annual Meeting or for fun.

LOCAL HOUSES OF PRAYER Local houses of prayer launched in January 2013 as an associated ministry of the Cell Church. A local house of prayer is an effective prayer-based missional community. It could be a cell with a special focus on prayer. Its purpose is for God's Kingdom to come in the area for which it prays. God's Kingdom simply means what happens when God is in charge - blessings such as good relationships, joy, peace, economic stability, health, growth, refreshment, love.... This movement has been growing across the Benefice. In Tasburgh there are two LHOPs to pray specifically for God to bless the village, while in Saxlingham and Newton Flotman the local house of prayer ideas have become part of the cells meeting there. Jenny Cooper is the minister responsible to help and support these local houses of prayer. Please contact her to find out more

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

The name "Cell" comes from the idea that the Church is the Body of Christ and that all living bodies have cells which multiply - the ever-changing units of life. Members come from across the entire benefice. In 2013 there were about 50 adults and about 25 young people involved in the Tas Valley Cell Church on a regular basis.

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 See below!

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.

Trustees In 2013, the Cell Church becomes a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This is a kind of charity which is able to operate very much like a PCC but without a building. Instead of a PCC we have Trustees who manage the affairs of the Cell Church

Importantly, we are now able to claim tax back on donations. Please could any donors who are taxpayers fill in a declaration form to enable us to reclaim tax on donations made since this date.

The Cell Church also has a Bishop's Mission Order. This means that the Cell Church is recognised by the Bishop and diocese as a new Christian community, equivalent in some ways to a parish church within the life of the Tas Valley Team. The Cell Church is now officially involved in decision-making which affects the Team Ministry, for example, the appointment of any new incumbent. Bishop Alan is the official "Visitor" of the Cell Church and works with Sally to help the Cell Church grow in a way that complements the mission of the other churches in the Team. Rev's Dawn Davidson has joined the Trustees and taking on a leadership role within the Cell Church as part of her work as Team Vicar.

MISSION AND SERVICE

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. We are also beginning to learn that the mission of its cell is its heart so cell groups whose mission purpose has been fulfilled often finish in their current form and members go to serve and reach out in new cells in different ways.

RURAL EVANGELISM PROJECT The Tas Valley Cell Church set up the Rural Evangelism Project in Partnership with the Fountain Network and employ Andy Cox as an outreach worker in Newton Flotman and Adam Jackson to work across Norfolk with young adults.. A separate report on their activities is available. Andy's work has been instrumental in a new lunch club, cafe church in Newton Flotman and new work at Olive House including an Alpha course due to start in April 2016.

SUNDAY CELL (Older teens) Sunday cell continues to meet together in Tasburgh on a Sunday evening. We currently have 4 members aged between 16 and 19. One of the things that we have done over the last 12 months has been the youth Alpha course, which was found to be very thought provoking for the group. For our socials we have been to Quasar and have been 10 pin bowling a couple of times.

JAM (2 Youth cells meeting on Mon) JAM continues strongly . For a typical meeting we spilt between a younger and older group watch a film clip, study the bible and pray. Every fourth week we go on a social such as swimming or Quasar. Throughout 2015 we had 14 members and this has just gone up to 15. Thank you so much to Clare Amerigo, Emma Bond and Richard Bond for there hard work and enthusiasm..

FREEDOM CAFE CELL Freedom cafe cell group has been meeting in Tasburgh on Tuesday evening since Sept 2015. The group was set up two main reason. Firstly to give the freedom cafe team an opportunity to come together on a more regular basis outside of planning meetings, to worship and to pray together. This has been invaluable in terms of team building. Although initially it was only the team members who came along to the group the intention was to open it up to other people who have contact with freedom cafe. For Lent we decided that we would do this, shaping the meetings around sharing a meal together each week, while we study the Lent material together. We have been encouraged to have three new members that have come along. The Cell group's main focus for mission is the freedom cafe, which helps to keep the whole initiatives connected.

TASBURGH WEDNESDAY CELL (Until Summer 2015) We enjoyed a Bible study series on the book of James, as well as some single Bible studies. The group had a celebratory supper together in the summer as the group finished to make space for Freedom Cafe Cell to begin

HANDS TOGETHER This group, led by Rev Dawn Davidson with Vicky Ball, meets on the first Wednesday of the month between 10.30am and 12.30pm at Saxlingham Rectory. This group in itself is not a Cell Church but is a project supported by the Cell Church. It is an informal gathering open to all who are interested in handwork. Faith may come in to the conversation but there is no intentional offering of Christian content at our monthly meeting. At present we have people doing knitting, crochet, embroidery and quilting. There is widespread interest in doing this kind of handwork and several people who haven't yet come along have expressed an interest in doing so. The group is well attended, mainly by women who are involved with church, cell or chapel and we have been greatly encouraged to see some ladies join us from the wider community.

We also offer extra meetings, known as 'Hands Together Specials' which do include a planned element of spirituality. The intention with these is to grow our awareness that creativity is a gift from God and to explore how we can celebrate God and our faith through the work of our hands. There is huge potential for creativity in prayer and for the making of items to be given to individuals or sold to raise money for charity. It is hoped that these 'Special' sessions will eventually develop into a bona fide 'Hands Together' Cell Group. So far we have had an 'Advent Special' and there are plans to offer 'Specials' that tie in with other significant times in the Christian year. As those who attend the 'Specials' share their enthusiasm with the main group and invite others from outside, we pray that numbers will go from strength to strength.

SAXLINGHAM WEDNESDAY CELL We are ten in number and meet in one of three homes around Saxlingham and Shotesham. The leaders are Richard, supported by Dawn, Tim and Teresa. This year has been a significant year in the life of the Saxlingham cell, a year of change and reflection.

So, firstly a year of change: As Dawn and Tim have settled into village life we have been really fortunate to have them join us in cell on a regular basis. Many of the Cell were involved in the Alpha programme that ran last year. In addition to that, we looked at the Beatitudes and how giving is all part of our worship. As I write this we as a group are finishing the follow up Alpha study entitled 'A life worth living', that looks at the letter to the Philippians. While we may struggle with some of the cell values, I believe within the group there is real community and care for one another and a desire to grow as disciples. If you would like to join our group please give me a call or have a chat with Dawn or Tim.

A time of reflection. I first became involved with this cell when Phil and Yvonne left to go to Happisburgh. Over their time there the group kept in contact and as Phil's health deteriorated we lifted them in prayer. Sadly Phil died towards the end of last year. At his thanksgiving service, there was a picture of him on the table at the front of the church. In that picture you could see that twinkle in his eye, the warmth he purveyed and, in the music and eulogy his love for his Lord and those around him. Whilst although they had left Saxlingham eight years earlier, Phil and Yvonne were and are still fondly remembered. The Saxlingham cell group has much to be thankful for, mainly the way in which they built up and led the group and the group just wants, as a final comment to this review, to send Yvonne their love.

NEWTON FLOTMAN WEDNESDAY CELL We enjoyed a good year, with lots of bible study led by Kate Cakebread, who sadly left us in December to start a new cell in Tasburgh. Our outreach included a pancake party and fireworks night. We also support Newton Flotman cafe church and Sally and Tamzin's work with mums and toddlers.

NEWTON FLOTMAN HoP CELL The local House of Prayer which previously took place at the school each month, led by Andy and Lesley Cox, has developed into a cell group which meets at their home and supports in prayer the outreach community work undertaken by Andy. This cell also supports Wayne and Teresa Doman, who lead the Special Me cell which is another important expression of the church's outreach work.

NEWTON FLOTMAN THURSDAY CELL Our aim is to meet every week to ensure those who are not able to attend Sunday church have the chance to worship God and join in fellowship with other Christians. 6 of us met regularly throughout the year and were pleased to welcome old and new friends on various occasions. One of our new friends was a refugee from Africa and needed our help with a variety of things including opening a bank account, sorting out bills and a job application form. We try and celebrate Communion a couple of times a year and Rev Jenny Cooper has been welcomed into our meetings to make sure that happens. Throughout the year we keep our trusty "Cell money-box" out on Thursday evenings for contributions towards our Parish Share and alongside it we have a smaller tin for contributions to a local charity. All the members discuss and decide on what that local charity will be.

We also try to ensure we reach out to our local community with acts of service through various ways. In December we did a “Christmas Crafts and Photo Session” and raised £206 for church funds. Three of our members help out at Olive House, the residential home in our village, where we visit residents and help at the monthly communion service Jenny Cooper leads. In 2016 we hope to continue with our outreach, offering help wherever we can.

THARSTON THURSDAY CELL During the later months of 2014, into 2015, an Alpha course was held in Tharston, culminating in a successful Away Day in Hethel on 4 February 2015. This Alpha group formed the basis of a new Cell, to be led by Andy and William, and it was in September 2015 that it began to meet regularly at a member’s home in Tharston. The cake tradition from Alpha was carried forward! There are now 6 regular members, from Tharston, Newton, Tasburgh and Fritton meeting weekly.

SPECIAL ME GROUP SMG is a group for people with special educational needs and their families/carers. It has been a very active year, with visits to the food bank, social events - inviting the wider Cell Church to see what we do and bedding the SMG structure over the Cell Church principles. Luckily this has been relatively easy as we already shared a lot in common.



We have almost finished our current teaching material “Being like Jesus” and have selected our next programme of teaching “Listen to Jesus”. We tried a new method of delivering the teaching material, with the leaders rotating the teaching methods, i.e. drama, music, craft and hosting. This has been a challenge, as each of the leaders have a favoured delivery method, however it has created a more sustainable leadership team and it was agreed to continue this. Our membership has been fairly consistent throughout the year, 18 in total, however since Christmas this number has increased to 21. All members are very active in the group and regularly take items they have created at SMG back into their churches. We look forward to celebrating the groups 4th birthday in April and thank God for the blessings we have received.

In Conclusion

As Team Rector, I would like to warmly thank on your behalf, Martin Hartley, David Lancaster, David Sochon, Mark Morgan, Jenny Cooper, Dawn Davidson and all the Pastoral Leadership Team for their pastoral care, servant-hearted leadership, teaching and worship leading. We have been truly blessed to have such a great team. Special thanks also to the church wardens and cell church trustees 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 our wonderful voluntary Benefice Administrator.

It is encouraging to remember what God has done among us as we look back over the year 2015. In the week leading up to Pentecost 2016, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have called for a wave of prayer across the nation. Their hope for the week is a wonderful one for the Tas Valley to adopt

- for all Christians to deepen their relationship with Christ
- for all of us to have confidence to share the Gospel
- for all to respond to the call of Jesus Christ to follow him as disciples, to live out the Gospel and to seek God’s Kingdom from day to day

They write, “At the heart of our prayers will be the words Jesus Christ himself taught us - “Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be done” It is impossible to overstate the life-transforming power of the Lord’s prayer. It is a prayers that is reassuring enough to be on the lips of the dying and yet dangerous enough to be banned in cinemas. It is famous enough to be spoken each day by billions in hundreds of languages and yet intimate enough to draw us ever closer into friendship with Jesus Christ. It is simple enough to be memorised by small children and yet profound enough to sustain a whole lifetime of prayer. When we pray it with sincerity and with joy, there is no imagining the new ways in which God can use it to his glory.”

Amen. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done here in the Tas Valley

Sally Gaze, Team Rector March 2016