

Tas Valley Team Ministry

Review of the year 2016



Pictured above - Live Nativity at Tasburgh Church December 2016

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 2016

- Monthly Evening Praise, held at St Mary's, Newton Flotman
- Ash Wednesday Service of Wholeness and Healing at Swainsthorpe
- Special Services in Holy Week around the Benefice
- Confirmation service at Newton Flotman
- Farewell Service for Rev Jenny Cooper
- Remembering Loved Ones at Newton Flotman in November
- Benefice Communion for Sunday after Christmas at Tasburgh

THY KINGDOM COME - The Archbishop's Task Group for Evangelism has called for a week of prayer for evangelism from 8-15 May 2016. We had a week's programme of prayer events with a focus of prayer in each of our villages, different on each day of the week.

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 2016 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)

Jenny Copper moved out of the benefice this summer. We missed her love, her prayerfulness and her amazing administrative skills. Thank you to Jenny for working hard to hand over her ministries to other people and to all those who are now serving in new ways.

Vicky Ball stepped down as our wonderful voluntary benefice administrator during the year and her ministry has been greatly missed, especially as we have not yet found anyone else who feels called to undertake this ministry. Please let Sally know if you would like to explore this as a possible calling.

The AWAs meet after a ministry meal three times a year for training and support and are each mentored in their development by a member of the clergy. Our AWA training included: Guidance on Preparing a Sermon, Leading Intercessions, Preaching workshop. 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.

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 - Information about more regular events can be found on our website www.tasvalley.org and the wardens display details of other regular events on the church notice board.

including the Benefice Worship Rota. Jenny Cooper added lots of events to the website and we are still missing this ministry. Our hope is that one person from each parish will add their events to the website so that all can see what is happening - Thank you to Cindy (Saxlingham), Julia M (Tasburgh) and Jackie (Swainsthorpe) who have begun to do this for your parishes. If you would like to undertake this ministry for Newton Flotman, Tharston or Shotesham, please ring Sally.

The benefice also host a Facebook group called "Tas Valley families" which is a group to advertise events and activities suitable for families and children in all our villages. Please join and post!

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 2016 will be attached to this report.

MISSION AND SERVICE (Team Wide)

Monsters Stink Holiday Club -Thank you to everyone who helped with the Holiday Club which was held from Mon 27 - Thur 30 July. Special Thanks to Henry Preston Primary 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-monsters.

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 Named 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 2016 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 Tyler Merry, David Wharton and Eleanor Luxton who were confirmed this autumn

Alpha - An Alpha course for young mums with toddlers started in the autumn



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.

SUNDAY WORSHIP: First Sunday services continue to be well attended Family Communion on the second Sunday has the young people going out for a short period of activities.. We also host the Benefice Praise Service on the second Sunday of each month changing to last Sunday of each month. Cafe Church in the school hall on third Sunday of each month, which continues to attract some families linked with the school and others from the wider community 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. This service also hosts special seasonal events such as Palm Sunday and the Christingle service. Fourth Sunday continues to be a Communion Service.

SUNDAY WORSHIP LEADERS: Kirsten Remer and William Ball continue in their roles as Authorised Worship Assistants. We are very grateful to all those who have supported our services with music - Evelyn, Andy, Edward and Emily Remer. A special mention for Matthew Gaze who sets up and manages the sound system for all services at Newton Flotman.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ON SUNDAYS: Special Agents (SPAG), our children's church, continues to be led by Kathryn Critchell 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 continue to attend. Many thanks to the Critchells and Gazes for picking up children who cannot be brought by parents.

SPECIAL SERVICES: These included:

- Palm Sunday Cafe Church
- Harvest Service where we collected for Norwich Foodbank and Harvest lunch which was well attended in the school with invited guests from Olive House and the Community Lunch.
- The Bishop of Thetford officiated at the Confirmation service of David and Eleanor on 27th September and also commissioned people to give Communion (WB; SB; KR; JL; VB). Tyler was confirmed shortly afterwards at the Rectory due to illness.

- Christingle in Cafe Church.
- The candlelit Carol Service on 11th December, where Ros Lancaster once again led our Christmas choir.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY (NEWTON FLOTMAN)

SOCIAL EVENTS:

- Lambing Sunday on 17th April included 'Bacon Butties',
- Father's Day - Café Church in June with cooked breakfast, games and crafts at school for all the little ones and all the Dad's going home with a bottle of beer!,
- Friends and Thank You evening - 24th June. A full evening of entertainment from ARTS and Amy Ferguson with a feast of a spread
- Harvest Lunch at the school.
- Christmas fund raising in church with lunch provided and a visit by members of the Theatre Royal pantomime cast.

COMMUNITY HUB DEVELOPMENT

Major improvements to the interior of the Church began to be explored following the Growing for the Future programme in 2014. 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 now secured all relevant permissions for this work to go ahead. In 2017, the major task will be seeking finances for the work to begin. Many thanks to Chris Gaze and his team for all their work.



OTHER CHURCH BUILDING WORK:

We were unfortunate to have the lead stolen from the chancel roof in November 2016. There is a range of other weather tightness and drainage work required and we did apply and fail to receive a grant from the the listed Places of Worship Roof Fund. However the building has been placed on Historic England's At Risk register and this should make fund raising easier. Fund raising including large grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund is underway for the repairs and to fit a roof alarm.

The Friends of St Marys have been raising funds for repairs to the church tower and phase 1 will start in May 2017.

All the work has been done on the church room due to problems with the initial build and the theft of lead from the church room. Chris Gaze and David Wharton have worked hard to make a claim against the original architect and builder.

FINANCE: Our Church giving remains broadly consistent with our usual costs 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 in 2015, the PCC reluctantly decided to withhold parish share payments until this work has been paid for. We intended to send to Norwich Diocese the amounts withheld in 2015/6 when we received compensation in respect of the building faults. Unfortunately, despite extensive work by Chris Gaze and David Wharton the cost of pursuing our legal claim against the architect proved prohibitive and we were not therefore able to pursue our claim to compensation. We expect to restart payment our parish share in 2017 and pay in full again by 2018. Many thanks to Berice our excellent treasurer and for the assistance provided by Vicky this year.

MISSION AND SERVICE

CHARITY SUPPORT Kirsten Remer organised a Cake Crawl on Friday 20th May for Christian Aid. Tickets were £5 each and the evening was a huge success, ending at Amy Ferguson's home with more cake and a raffle. The Cake Crawl started in the Church Room and maps issued so everyone could find the host homes. There was a special collection for the Royal British Legion. We had a very well supported Shoe box packing party for Operation Christmas child at school. 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".

ZACH COX

In September 2016, Zach went to begin a 2 year traineeship with Rock UK to become an activity leader and is doing really well so far gaining a number of qualifications in relevant activities and now beginning to run groups at the Frontier Centre near Kettering. If you would like to support Zach financially or in prayer, please contact Andy and Lesley.

CHURCH MICE met every other Thursday morning in the church room until the autumn when the Church Room was closed for urgent repairs. It attracts mums, grannies, carers and their children (occasionally dads and grandads too!). Singing, playing and craft activities are enjoyed at each session. 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 or in each others homes. When the Church Room was closed for repairs, we held a survey around the village to find out which day suited mums and toddlers and what the needs were. As a result of this, Church Mice restarted every Friday with a new team of volunteers in place to run it. There is also a 'drop in' beforehand for any parents/carers after dropping children off at school for coffee etc. Many thanks to Vicky, Dawn and Mary who have stepped down after all these years of faithfully running Church mice - and to the new team led by Louisa Rose who is building on their good work.

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. There is a lovely atmosphere and fund raising for the Tower Fund and other initiatives is most welcome. Coffee Stop celebrated St George's Day and Queen's 90th birthday as well as its own 11th Birthday this year. The problems with the church room building meant Coffee Stop had to be put on hold until the work was finished. Unfortunately it did take longer than expected and both events did not meet for a few months in the autumn but has relaunched in the New Year.

COMMUNITY LUNCH The monthly community lunch continues to go well, led by the Outreach Worker employed through the Rural Evangelism Project of the Cell Church - Andy Cox. 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 about 25 each time, many thanks to all the

volunteers who help make it happen each month. We continue to have several from Olive House each month who are transported by Norwich Door to Door.

OLIVE HOUSE

We continue to hold a monthly service at our residential care home Olive House. Since Jenny has moved on, Vicky, with the help of Sheila and Andy lead the services which are usually well supported and appreciated. We have also secured funding from dreams and visions, Long Stratton over 75's team and cell church and purchased a wheelchair with power pack to help enable residents get out and about more easily and this has meant some have been able to get to church on a Sunday. Six residents enjoyed an Alpha course there last year and are keen to continue some form of bible study. The relationship with Olive House continues to develop with Andy encouraging a team of regular visitors and also helping to get school involved.

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 and the team of helpers that distribute it.

SCHOOL LINKS

The school has two foundation governors - 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. Café Church is held monthly on 3rd Sunday at school.

OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICE

- A group from the community took part in a Litter pick during Lent.
- Village Fete Sunday 11th September. Some of the congregation held stalls and organised refreshments to raise funds for the church. The opportunity was taken to talk to people about the church building plans and village shop initiative
- Churchyard clear ups through the year with church members and villagers joining in.



Saint Peter's Church, Swainsthorpe

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Weekly services have continued with a mixture of "Swainsthorpe Specials" and Holy Communions each month. The pattern partly depends upon the clergy available to take the services. Regular attendance remains small, usually half a dozen or so each Sunday. However at the services for Easter, Harvest and Christmas St Peter's is full, and it is wonderful to celebrate these important dates of the Christian year with the larger community of Swainsthorpe.

We would like to thank Ros Lancaster for playing the church organ whenever she attends services, the congregation always sings better with her music to guide them.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our congregation remains small but friendly and we have a wonderful hardworking PCC. Special thanks to our wonderful churchwardens Chris Duffield and Susan Peters-Corbett (who has also been a great 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 third 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. This year has seen the church undergoing renovations to the chancel roof, so St Peter's has not looked particularly handsome for the first 6 months of the year, covered with scaffolding and corrugated iron. Now the work is complete and the chancel roof beautifully restored.

MISSION AND SERVICE

FESTIVAL GROUP The Festival group has continued to thrive. Altogether they have raised a £ 470.84 this year, most of which has gone towards the Church fabric fund and there has also been a real building of village community through their activities.. Their first event was a Lent Lunch, a simple meal of soup and bread in keeping with the Holy season. The donations from this event supported the Archbishops chosen good cause for Lent. This was followed by an Easter Coffee Morning, and I am pleased to say that the Easter Bunny visited us again with a basket of treats!

To celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday, there was a moving service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Queen Elizabeth 11, followed by afternoon tea. The tables were groaning with an assortment of dainty sandwiches, scones and cream, sausage rolls and so many cakes that it was hard to choose which to have. It was a very happy and sociable event, well supported by the village.

The next event was the Harvest Festival and supper, again this was well supported. The Harvest Supper is the PCC's chance to thank all those in the village that give financial support, or give in kind by offering their time and expertise to support St Peter's Church. Donations of food went to the Norwich Food bank.

Remembrance Sunday, was officiated by David Lancaster and was, always a moving occasion. The £100.00 collection was donated to " Help for Heroes "

The Christmas Coffee Morning was a success as usual. Homemade mincemeat, Christmas cakes and puddings were on sale, as well as handmade Christmas cards. Jan's fanatic £1.00 tombola was a huge success.

The Christmas Carol Service saw the Church full and also boasted the wonderful choir of St Mary's and St Peter's, rehearsed and conducted by Ros Lancaster. Their singing was heavenly.

The church yard continues to benefit from the efforts of constant gardeners, Jill and Andy Haggith, Claire and Steve Tuttle and Stephen Talby. The gift of their precious time, hard work, energy and dedication makes St Peter's Church yard a peaceful and radiant place to come and visit and remember loved ones resting there. It also provides a place of sanctuary for wildlife to flourish.



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. Our thanks go to Andrea and all the helpers for their work with the children. 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 2016 - Christmas was a busy time starting with our 'Living Nativity' Play when the children from Preston Primary School, Saxlingham Nethergate Primary School and Tasburgh Pre 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 2016 which were suggested in the Growing for the future consultation that took place in 2014. This looked at youth and children's church, worship and pastoral care. We have now established an informal cafe style church (Freedom Café), and formed a pastoral care team. Freedom Cafe has been well attended giving people the opportunity to explore their faith as well as enjoy the bacon rolls and excellent coffee!

PCC & CHURCH

PCC continues to well as a team. Wardens very the help and receive from without this help achieve our Julia and Kate wonderful work.



WARDENS - Our work together The Church much appreciate support they everybody, we would never goals. Thanks to for all their

CHURCH

church building and beautiful place to worship in and is much appreciated by many people. Our Visitor's book shows that people come to visit the open church from places as far away as Australia. There is always work to be planned or carried out. We have a new Fabric Officer, Mr. Willie Crawshay, organizing these projects and more. A lot of work needs to be done to maintain the ancient yew trees and keep other species under control.

BUILDINGS - Our is a peaceful

FINANCE- We were able to meet our parish share in full, as well as pay for the essential repairs that were necessary. We are very grateful to St. Mary's Guild for the very generous donation given to the church, due to their fundraising activities. Their support is very much appreciated. This continues to be a testing time with our Parish share increasing again for the coming financial year. We would like thank Graham for his continued hard work as treasurer and for producing the finance reports that keep us up to date with the situation.

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.

MISSION AND SERVICE

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

COFFEE POT' continues to meet each Wednesday afternoon in the church room, a popular place to drop in for tea, cake and a chat.

SOCIAL EVENTS - This year we held our Church Fete in June and a special Helper's Service to thank all those unseen folk who support St. Mary's in so many ways. 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.

LINKS WITH PRESTON PRIMARY SCHOOL continue - 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 holidays, a week long holiday club was held at Tasburgh 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.

CHARITABLE GIVING- Special Collections from services have been given to the Royal British Legion, the Salvation Army, Christian Aid, the Children's Society, the local Food Bank and The Toybox Appeal.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD - An exceptional contribution was made to the Shoebox collection for Operation Christmas Child. Many thanks to Jane Rae and her team of packers



St Mary, Tharston

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

The pattern of Services has remained as established in recent years, with two regular Services per Month. A Holy Communion Service at 8 a.m. proving more popular, and thus attracting a larger attendance, than the 11 a.m. Matins Service. In general, attendances at Services are just a fraction lower than in 2015.

Festival Services, Harvest and Carol Services are much better attended, with the Church full with 100 Worshipper at the latter, where we again enjoyed the leadership of the Tasburgh Choir.

The Church Registers record just two Burials during the year.

CHURCH FAMILY

Thank you to our wonderful churchwardens Pat, deputy Tim and all our PCC. We were sad to say goodbye to Barbara Cattermole who stepped down as PCC secretary after many years of faithful service. In 2017 we have welcomed Hazel Gill as a wonderful new addition to the team.

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 remains, in general, in good repair, with the majority of the Quinquennial urgent repairs completed, although the poor state of the Nave wooden floor is causing concern and needs to be renewed in the very near future.

The proposed re-ordering of the interior of the Church, as a consequence of the floor renewal and mentioned in last year's report, has made steady progress. Plans of our initial proposals have been produced by the Church Architect, and Statements of Significance and Need have been forwarded to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for consideration. As part of the proposals are exploring the possible use of the Church as a Community facility, the Parish Council have been kept informed of our plans and progress, and are indicating general support for our proposals.

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

MISSION AND SERVICE

The annual Church Fête held at Picton Farm by courtesy of Steve and Bev Smith continues to be the main fund raising event, and this year a record £1,582 was raised. We are indebted to the few dedicated persons who help with the organisation of this event; the additional, more widespread, advertising helping to create both better attendance and result. (Thankyou to Howard Temperley for allowing us to use his wonderful artists impression of the fete in our publicity - right.)



We are also indebted to the continuing financial support from the "Friends of Tharston Church", they contributing generously to both our General and Church Repair Funds.

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

Holy Communion is celebrated at 9.30am on the 1st and 3rd Sundays each month, supported by a small formal choir. On the 2nd Sunday is an 11am Matins while on the 4th Sunday an 8am short Communion takes place, followed at 11am with an 'All Age' Family service. Refreshments are served in the church before the Family Service and following the services in the church room on other Sundays.

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 and Christmas. In addition to these, we hosted benefice services on Good Friday and the Sunday after Christmas.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

The PCC, led by Rev'd Dawn Davidson, met six times during the year. Cindy Brookes is the Churchwarden, ably assisted by the Fabric Officer Geoff Blyth. The congregation is in good heart, although slightly reduced in numbers mainly due to advancing ages and we have 28 members on the Electoral Roll.

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. This year a Thank You service was held to honour the 40+ volunteers, many of whom are not regular church attendees.

LICENSED MINISTERS: Regular Services have been maintained during the year led mostly by Rev'd Davidson, with support from Rev'd Gaze and Lay-Reader David Lancaster. The village and church has continued to 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 eventual 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.

FABRIC There are various items of maintenance work listed in the quinquennial report which are dealt with in order of need. The north aisle had major maintenance work done on the outside walls, which were suffering from damp, and the area was repainted. 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.

MESSY FINDERS SEEKERS

This is a fun packed session on the second Friday of each month at 3.30pm. Very messy with lots of craft activities focussed on a particular Christian theme children need to be accompanied by a parent or carer contact Jo Stevenson jo.stevenson73@gmail.com



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 arranged at regular intervals and are much appreciated by everyone.

SCHOOL LINKS The foundation governors are Joanna Stevenson and J'Anne Robertson. There are 'Open the Book' assemblies and regular assemblies led by Rev'd Davidson. The school also holds its own special services as well as a monthly assembly in the church.

SCOUT AND GUIDE LINKS The joint Remembrance Service with the local Scout and Guide Group is very successful, with over 100 children present, as well as the annual St George's Day service.

SAXLINGHAM NURSING HOME A Communion Service has been regularly provided by Rev'd Jenny Cooper assisted by lay members of Tasburgh congregation at the Saxlingham Nursing Home and this lay team has continued to visit after her departure with Rev's Dawn Davidson taking the communion services.

OTHER PASTORAL CARE work continues including home visits

SOCIAL EVENTS encompassing fund raising, 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. Two new events were held - an extremely enjoyable Ceilidh in a barn in the summer and we hosted a pre-Christmas evening with the Anglian Singers, with both events being very successful. The church is pleased to be involved with collecting items to be taken to the Norwich Food Bank.

BELLS, CHURCH AND 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 are well maintained. 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.



HANDS TOGETHER This group, led by Rev Dawn Davidson, 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. 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.

CONTACT (The Parish Magazine) is initially funded by the Church. The Trade Directory on the back of it ultimately covers the cost and, together with individuals' and Parish Council sponsorship, raises funds for the Church. Contact is the only method of reaching every single household in Saxlingham and it is produced and distributed by a small team in the village. 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 service we call “My Church” led by John Torbitt, which is intended as a less formal service to be particularly family friendly introduced 2 years ago continues. Food Bank offerings are invited and blessed at this service.



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

Also in June “My Church” was specially dedicated to marking the Queen’s 90th birthday.

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 festival services were well attended; the carol service at St Mary’s and the Christmas morning service at All Saints bringing a large number to church.

The Christmas Eve community carol singing round the tree outside and then continuing inside All Saints was again hosted by the Village Association and was as well supported as ever.

Easter Day was celebrated at All Saints

.The hymnal machine has been used in both churches during the year for all regular services. Geoff Blyth has played for us on special occasions. We are grateful to John and Sandra for sterling work on the Hymnal and to Geoff for stepping in when requested.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

PCC The PCC continued as a harmonious unit through 2016 working well together to reach unanimous resolutions under the very capable and valued chairmanship of Dawn.

AUTHORISED WORSHIP ASSISTANTS Dr David Hamilton and John Torbitt took services on a regular basis in Shotesham and occasionally in other parts of the Benefice. Sadly David moved to Wymondham in the summer. We are very grateful for all they do.

VOLUNTEERS Our thanks go to the many members of the community who keep our churches in good order by cleaning, flower arranging and opening both churches daily.

FACILITIES Both churches offer coffee after the services making the most of the kitchen facilities at each. Exceptionally our churches hosted 8 weddings this year, our toilet facilities were greatly appreciated. The Maisie Benson room at All Saints continues to be an asset used by the village for various functions and for PCC meetings.

FABRIC All Saints has been further improved inside by the installation of a specially made wooden frame to lift the new altar kneeler from the stone beneath. This prevents damp moulding the fabric of the kneeler. In addition 14 tailor made pew length cushions have been placed on pews to make the seats more comfortable. Our thanks to Betty Torbitt for arranging this.

The kneelers at St Mary’s were completed so every pew now has the churchyard flowers tapestry kneelers. In addition 2 kneelers for bridal couples were completed for each church and a seat cushions for the clergy chairs. Thanks to Sandra Coles, Patricia Leighton and Noreen Downing for their hard work.

A wider gate into the St Botolph site was installed to allow Robert Jackson access for his cutting equipment. Robert has kept the grass neatly cut at the two churches and the two ruins throughout the year. Our thanks to Robert.

John Torbitt managed the installation of sturdy cobbles at the approach to St Mary's car park. This has made access safer and retains the gravel more satisfactorily.

Martin Leighton re-decorated the porch at All Saints and stripped back the old paint on the porch pews before staining them to match the pews inside the church. Thanks to Martin for smartening up this area.

Bob Harris is investigating the condition of the tower at All Saints due to movement from bell ringing and the state of the bell frame. This is an ongoing project.

Our thanks to John and Bob for all they do to maintain the fabric of both churches.

FINANCE: Despite a large increase of £1,500 in Parish Share the General fund result was a positive net income of £123 mainly due to fees from exceptionally eight weddings. Income from collections, standing orders and gift aid tax refund totalled £14,895 which was only a small increase on 2015. There are 22 standing orders for the General fund of which about one third are from non-regular church attendees. There was an increase in one-off donations, mainly due to more donations in the donation box/jar in the churches. There was a significant increase in All Saints electricity costs of £240 possibly due to more activity in the church in cold weather.

For the Churchyard fund there was a small increase in memorial fees of £350. Cost of grass cutting increased significantly by £1,241 to £4,424 resulting in a deficit before transfer from the Legacy fund income of £2,381. This was due to a wet summer and extra costs of keeping the two ruin churchyards tidy.

The Legacies Fund income from the investments was less in 2016 (£11,971) compared to 2015 (£14,133) which included a few exceptional dividends. The investment income for 2016 was still a little higher than that received in 2014. The main costs met by the restricted Legacies fund was the improvements to St. Mary's car park, the All Saints kneelers and the excess cost of grass cutting.

MISSION AND SERVICE

CHARITIES DONATIONS: These totalled £898 and were as follows:

Emma Nuule concert to Hamlet Centre £220

Donation of 50% Remembrance collection to Help for Heroes £137

Donation of 50% Remembrance collection to British Legion £137

Crib Service collection donation to Children's Society £78

Donation to Norfolk Churches Preservation Trust £30

Christmas day collection donation to Save the Children Yemen Appeal £296

FOODBANK: Throughout the year we continued to collect in both churches for the Norwich Foodbank. People are able to leave contributions at any time whilst the churches are open at one of the boxes stationed in each church. The congregation is encouraged to contribute to the Foodbank as a part of the My Church Service.

SAMARITANS PURSE Jill Masters once again exceeded last year's total of shoe boxes. Donations for the boxes can be left in All Saints during the year for her team to pack at their regular meetings. Well in excess of 300 boxes were sent with the help of individuals in the parish and Jill's team.

CHURCH OPENING Both churches are 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 participated in the Norfolk Churches Trust Annual Cycle Ride and walk.

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.

CONCERTS Three were held at All Saints during the year. Emma Nuule and Flute Bravada was a church initiative arranged by Pat Harris in February. A piano concert followed during the summer and a concert featuring American Folk music in the autumn. The latter two arranged by the Village Association.

THE CONSERVATION GROUP continues to be involved in maintaining St Mary's churchyard.

BELL-RINGING Practice is on Monday evening and bells are rung regularly throughout the year before services. Visiting teams can also make use of our Norfolk five bell ring.

FLYING COMPETITION This was held at All Saints in July. A happy event was enjoyed by all ages and was followed by afternoon tea in the churchyard.

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.

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 2016 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 in the Spring and Summer of 2016

JAM: 2016 was a good year for JAM. The group expanded to about 15 regular members - split into 2. They are following separate programmes but join up for most socials.

One group is led mainly by Claire Amergio and Chris Gaze (and assisted by Richard Bond) and spent the last part of the year looking at bible study themes coming out of the Harry Potters movies.

The other group is lead by Emma Bond and Asher Girling. For those of you who don't know them Emma is in her late teens and attends St Thomas' Church and Asher, a former JAM member, has just finished at university and attends Surry Chapel. They follow a more obviously adult cell format.

In the summer some members went to New Day Christian Festival and this year we are going to Soul Survivor.

The group is one of the largest youth discipleship groups in the diocese and probably the largest to be run solely by volunteers. Thank you to Emma, Asher, Claire and Richard for all their hard work.

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. We continued collecting for local charities at our meetings. We organised a village litter pick and asked others to join us tidying our village. As a consequence we won a £200 prize from South Norfolk Council. During the Prayer Week in May we organised a prayer service in Newton Flotman Church which was well attended. At Christmas we put up the Christmas tree, decorated the church (with help from William and Andy) and held a Christmas Craft Fair and Photo Shoot which raised £766.90 for Newton Flotman Church.

THARSTON CELL: Tharston Cell meets on a Thursday and 2016 was its first full year. Members are from Tharston, Tasburgh, Newton Flotman and also from outside the benefice. During the year we have grown together as a supportive group and in following the “4 W’s” have developed our Word and Worship in particular. This means that our focus for the future will be on Witness.

SAXLINGHAM CELL: This last year seems to have gone very quickly but the weekly Bible study (cell) seems to have become increasingly important for many, with good discussion, prayer as well as friendship and support. Over the last year we have been blessed through greater involvement by Tim and Dawn. We have also welcomed Heidi who has returned to Saxlingham from Australia. If you are interested to find out more, please contact myself, Dawn or Tim.

TASBURGH WEDNESDAY CELL: “The ‘reformed’ Wednesday night Tasburgh Cell has recently celebrated its first birthday. We are a small but committed group who meet to worship and pray together. We are all active volunteers in other areas and welcome the opportunity to spend time with God and to support one another. Sadly we said our goodbyes to Jenny Cooper during the year, sending her on her way with our very best wishes and recently have been pleased to welcome a new member to our group. During the year we have used a mixture of bible studies and online resources to support our journeys of faith. We would welcome any new members, please do put anyone in touch who would be interested in joining us. “

SPECIAL ME SMG was a group for people with special educational needs and their families/ carers. 2016 was a very active year, with visits to the food bank, social events - Around 20 attended every fortnight. All members are very active in the group and regularly take items they have created at SMG back into their churches. There is a lot to celebrate with SMG’s 4th birthday this year and two young people deciding that they wanted to be confirmed. Sadly, however several team members felt they needed to leave the group to concentrate on other ministries and so sadly the last session in its previous form was in December 2016. A smaller cell group with three young people and two adult leaders will continue in 2017 and focus on preparation for confirmation.

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 WEDNESDAY CELL & ALPHA WITH TODDLERS: Our biggest event this year was the arrival of Emily Rose born to cell members Chris and Rach - Congratulations! We are an informal cell, seeking to study God’s word and be real with each other through the challenges of life - especially those of parenting as we are all parents. Our outreach has been mainly by running events for other young families. We act as the team for Newton Flotman’s cafe

church and we have had a pancake party, a Father's day breakfast and a bonfire party. Two of our members started Alpha with toddlers on a Thursday morning and the rest of the group prayerfully support this.

FREEDOM CAFE CELL (Tasburgh on Tuesdays): Freedom cafe cell group has been meeting in Tasburgh on Tuesday evening since Sept 2015. Freedom Cafe continues to be a real encouragement as we seek to provide a platform for people to grow in their understanding of the Christian faith. The team continues to work hard at making this as creative as possible. The Tuesday evening cell group is a great support for the team, and we have one new regular member coming from freedom Cafe. Things are going to change the freedom when the Hartley's leave so your prayers for its continued success and for the team would be greatly appreciated.

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.

It is encouraging to remember what God has done among us as we look back over the year 2016 but it is also a reminder that there are big challenges ahead of us in 2017. Over the last year our core team of leaders has been reduced by three with Martin also moving in April 2017. Thankfully, God is still heading our team and we can put our hand in his when things are challenging. In addition, we are discovering in new ways that all of us are Christ's body, each one a part of it, precious and indispensable in the place where God has called us.

In the week leading up to Pentecost 2016, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have called for a wave of prayer across the nation. The aims of the prayers for the week, to be repeated in 2017 provide a wonderful focus for our prayers in the Tas Valley at a time like this

- 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

The Archbishops wrote, "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....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 2017

