

St Mary's Church, Thwaite St Mary

**Annual Report
And Financial Statements
of the Parochial Church Council**

For the year ending 31st December 2016

Priest-in-Charge

The Reverend Lynn Chapman
The Vicarage
The Street
Brooke

Bank:

Barclays Bank by Telephone

Independent Examiner:

Frank Bowes
Ditchingham

Introductory Letter

The development of a Growth Plan for the Benefice was the main task of 2016 and this was completed and dedicated on Advent Sunday. The plan was developed in consultation with all those who worship in our churches. We were encouraged to focus on the good things that have been part of our Benefice life and to discern where God may be calling us to work in the future. Sundays in June were particularly used to pray and discuss our plans and the formal plan was adopted by PCCs in November. Attached to the plan is an action plan which helps us to work out a "one step at a time" approach and to be able to evaluate our progress. I am pleased to say that some of the first steps were in place before the turn of the year. The Growth Plan and its action plan are both available to view on the Benefice Web-site.

Throughout the year we continued a regular pattern of worship in all five of our churches. Using our established selection forms of worship we continued to keep the seasons of the church's year. This year we met less often as a Benefice, mainly doing so when there was a "fifth Sunday", but these services were enjoyed by those who attended. Over the year Café Church continued to see a steady rise in attendance and we made the decision to have a monthly service at both Kirstead and Mundham/Seething. This was made possible by the willingness of our Reader, John Ash, and the Churchwardens of Mundham, to lead Café Church – a big "thank you" to them for their generosity.

2016 was a record year for weddings with ten taking place across the Benefice. Welcoming so many couples and their guests was a great honour and an opportunity to show them the care and love that lie at the heart of our faith. Baptisms also took place, usually at Café Church services, and we welcomed some large family groups who were delighted to feel so at home in church. Across the year there were also a number of funerals in our churches, some followed by burials in our churchyards. We continued to take Songs of Praise to Brooke House once a month. We were delighted to welcome Bishop Alan again in December as three of our members were Confirmed and we continue to pray for them as they develop in the faith. June saw our first attempt at "Songs of Praise at the Meres" in Brooke when we gathered outside for worship. We hope that this may become an annual event. We also took part in the national "Thy Kingdom Come" project between Ascension Day and Pentecost.

After some prayer, thought and discussion, 2016 was the year when we opened all our churches to the public. We arranged the necessary insurance cover and all can now be accessed by visitors throughout the year. Some work was done to make the buildings welcoming and to interpret their features but this will be a task to continue in 2017. We have received feedback in visitors' books and in person that tells us that locals and tourists alike are enjoying the peace and quiet of our ancient churches.

Throughout the year we continued to fund raise and were able to make inroads towards paying the Parish Share, with most parishes being able to raise the amount asked of them. Attendance at a Benefice Support Meeting in November was again very positive and we have made a decision to divide the share differently for 2017, to give all parishes a better chance of paying. Aside from making money we enjoyed a good number of social events during the year including the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations in Thwaite, Open Gardens at Seething, a very sunny coffee morning at Mundham and the Garden Fete at Brooke. We also enjoyed a Benefice outing to Sheringham where Evensong was sung by the two St Peter's choirs. Heartfelt thanks are expressed to all those who give of their time and skills to make all these events possible, they are greatly appreciated by all who experience them.

The coming year will once more be one of challenges, but we hope that our strategic planning will provide a focus for our efforts. We will continue to review our worship and look at ways to encourage others to join us whilst also seeking methods to help the "hidden congregations", who use our churches during the week when they are empty, to develop and nurture their own faith. We will continue to seek ways to grow in our own knowledge and love of God, so that we may help others to find that love for themselves.

*The Reverend Lynn Chapman
Priest-in-Charge
January 2017*

The Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest-in-Charge in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish of Thwaite St Mary, the whole mission of the Church; pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Membership in 2015:

Priest-in-Charge	Reverend Lynn Chapman	
Churchwarden	Mrs Mavin Shulver	
Treasurer	Mrs Mavin Shulver	
Elected Members	Mrs Marion Barwick	
	Mr Tom Edwards	Fabric Officer
	Mr Jim Hadingham	Lay Chair
	Mrs Janet Hadingham	
	Mrs Valerie Healy	
	Mrs Su Mahon	Secretary

At the time of the Annual Meeting in 2016 there were 18 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll. The average weekly attendance was 11. There were 0 baptisms, 1 wedding and 1 funeral (including cremations) during the year 2016.

The PCC met four times during the year. Among other items addressed were:

- Honda self propelled lawn mower purchased
- Lopping of trees
- Combination padlock on Vestry door.
- Parapet of Tower re pointed
- Nave window repaired.

During the year the worshipping community of the Parish continued to worship Almighty God, to build up faithful Christian witness and to proclaim the Gospel to the community.

Depwade Deanery Synod Report for the Year 2016

Our February meeting was at St Marys, Long Stratton, Bishop Alan Winton, Bishop of Thetford, told us about the process to do with the Scriptures, Mission, and Human Sexuality which is currently taking place across the Dioceses. The country has been divided into 13 regions and Bishop Alan is leading the discussions in our Diocese.

On May 22nd we all came together for a Deanery Choral Evensong at St Peters Church, Brooke. This was preceded by a country walk and afternoon tea. It was a nice occasion and enjoyed by many from across the Deanery.

For our October meeting we were privileged to spend the evening at Norwich Cathedral. On arrival we shared a lovely supper together in the Refectory. Following this we met in the cloisters where the Dean welcomed us and took us on an interesting tour of the cathedral. The evening finished with a service of Compline taken by the Dean. This all felt quite special as we were the only people in the Cathedral at the time.

Rosemary Sanford

Brooke Benefice Rep

Fabric

This year, the PCC concentrated on addressing the findings of 2015 Quinquennial Inspection report. Firstly a local builder repointed the internal walls of the tower parapets. He also discovered a crack at the top of the tower which he is going to fill in the spring.

The main piece of work carried was carried out on the Nave window nearest the Pulpit this window was removed from site, the lead work was redone and any cracked panes replaced and the none ferrous saddlebars were swapped for the existing iron ones. This work was quoted at £720 and the glazing company (M C Lead Glaziers Ltd) came in on budget.

The churchyard continues to be well maintained by the inhabitants of the village giving a tidy and pleasant feel to the church and surroundings.

Tom Edwards

Other Church Activities

Community Lunch

This continues to be held on the first Tuesday of the month at Seething Village Hall and is well attended, and much appreciated by those who live in the three villages.

Social Events

The Parish Council on Saturday 11th June celebrated the Queens 90th Birthday with a party. By kind invitation of Mr and Mrs Barwick their field was used, gazebos were erected for games and food. The Treasure Hunt took place in the Church and Churchyard. At the Carol Service on Monday 19th December after the service a Buffet was served and it was generally agreed to have it again next year.

Parish Magazine

The parish magazine continues to be produced on a bi-monthly basis throughout the year. The village correspondent was Geraldine Hayes, while Fiona Berry continued to collate the material and Mavin Shulver deals with advertisers and collecting their contributions.

Finance Report

At the end of December 2016 the Business account balance was £7,914.15 and the Current account £1,636.27. The Parish share is paid in full by Standing Order. Thanks are expressed to all who support the church by monthly donations via Standing Order.

Mavin Shulver

Balance Sheet for St Mary's Thwaite		January 1st to December 31st 2016	
Balance 2015:	£9,596.33	Parish Share:	£2,253.00
Collections:	£1,636.90	Deanery Subs:	£7.00
Standing Orders:	£1,224.00	Electricity:	£192.96
Donations:	£440.00	Lynn's Expenses - Printing	£692.91
Tax Refund:	£873.75	New Lawnmower Padlock & Hasp	£482.81
Church Box:	£31.05	Children's Society	£98.00
Soup Lunch:	£180.00	Wine Nativity Figures	£54.00
South N.D.C. (Marquee)	£233.90	Marquee S.N.D.C. & Box (£199+£35.35)	£234.35
Brooke Garden Party	£70.00	Advert Fees to Seething & Mundham:	£100.00
Wedding	£442.00	Diocese Wedding Fee	£189.00
Internment of Ashes	£174.00	Work done on Tower	£265.00
Newsletter Subs:	£69.00	All Hallows Hospital:	£68.00
Newsletter Adverts:	£150.00	Norfolk Churches Trust:	£30.00
Interest:	£4.52	Royal British Legion:	£44.00
	<u>£15,125.45</u>	Window Renewed:	£864.00
I confirm that I have examined the books and found them to be correct...		Balance Current: £1636.27	£9,550.42
		Business: £7914.15	
			<u>£15,125.45</u>