

St Mary's Church, Thwaite St Mary

Annual Report

And Financial Statements

of the Parochial Church Council

For the year ending 31st December 2017

Priest-in-Charge
The Reverend Lynn Chapman
The Vicarage
The Street
Brooke

Bank:
Barclays Bank by Telephone

Independent Examiner:
Frank Bowes
Ditchingham

Introductory Letter

There seems so often to be a tightrope to walk in our journey as the Church in the villages that we serve. We need to keep our balance as we seek to maintain the longstanding things we enjoy and cherish and look for new ways to interpret and share our faith. At the same time we need to balance the reality of our falling numbers and increasing average age with our ambition to be active in worship and in service. We have not fallen off yet, but there are times when the other side seems a long way off and the drop beneath us feels far below. Hopefully this report will help us to celebrate all that we have achieved and will inspire us to go on journeying as God's people in this place.

Guided by our Growth Plan we tried some new things in 2017. Following much consultation a new Sunday morning service was introduced in the Autumn – "Morning Worship". Using contemporary language, it seeks to be inclusive and participatory. The service may include Holy Communion and we have tried it both with and without. It has been experimented with in three of our churches. There are very mixed feelings, particularly among those of us who like the familiarity of our more traditional forms of worship. During 2018 we will be reviewing the service again and making decisions about its use in the future.

Growing in discipleship encouraged us to attempt to form links with those who have been baptised in the Benefice in recent years, particularly those under seven and their families. Barney Bear moved into the Vicarage and during the year he invited children and their families to attend his summer picnic and a Christmas party. Great fun was had by all and we hope to extend this work during 2018.

We were delighted to re-hang the bells at Brooke and these rang out in May when the Bishop of Norwich came to rededicate them to the glory of God. The lottery funding involved encouraged us to work with the community and as part of this we created a Children's trail and Family trail for St Peter's Church. We improved our welcome in the other churches of the Benefice too, with new notices and a good tidy up of publications and information. This is a work in progress, but it has been gratifying to read numerous complimentary entries in our visitors' books.

Links to the local community are very important to us and we continued during the year to provide for and support the various community lunches and cafes that we have contact with. Some of our churches were also venues for concerts, which were well attended and we organised talks, concerts and meals in our village halls, which were well attended by members of our communities. As Vicar I continue to maintain links with our primary schools, with the Brooke Adventurers Football team and with our local uniformed organisations. We were delighted to welcome the Beavers and Cubs to our Mothering Sunday worship in March and I have been invited to work with the Beavers on several other occasions through the year.

Without the work of our various Friends groups our churches would not be able to function as they do. During the year mammoth fundraising efforts took place at Brooke, Kirstead and Seething, providing entertainment and an opportunity to build community, whilst raising much needed funds. A car treasure hunt at Thwaite provided in much the same way. This is a good opportunity to thank all those who belong to our Friends groups and those who support their work.

To return to the image of the tightrope: the high wire performer soon learns not to look down but to fix their gaze on their destination. This should perhaps remind us all of our need to fix our eyes on Jesus as we travel on his way. At the heart of all that has taken place in the last year has been a bedrock of faithful prayer and of careful discernment of where we are being called next. It is vital that we continue with this, remembering our own need to grow as Christians which runs alongside our calling to take the good news of God's love to the world.

The coming year will once more bring challenges and we will need to seek the point of balance again and again. I hope and pray that we will do so firm in the knowledge that God holds us in the palm of his hand and that when we set our eyes, and our hearts, on him we cannot fall or fail.

*The Reverend Lynn Chapman
Priest-in-Charge
January 2018*

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 2017:

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

There are 18 on the Electoral role and average weekly attendance is 11. There were no Baptisms, no Weddings and no Funerals in 2017

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

- The Benefice Teddy Bears picnic in the church.
- Trimmed trees and hedge.
- Resolution for the War Graves'
- Resolution for moving the church notice board.
- Treasure Hunt for church funds.
- Harvest Supper.

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 2017

Our meeting in February was held at St Marys Junior School, Long Stratton. We welcomed our new Rural dean, The Rev Heather Wilcox. She explained that Lynn Chapman will take responsibility for Deanery synod matters. We had a workshop session reflecting on our previous experiences of synod and following this we went into small groups to discuss our hopes for the Deanery in the next three years.

In June we met at St Peters Brooke, after the usual business we had a presentation on "What does it mean to be in a deanery in 2017?" The planned speaker was unable to attend so Lynn Chapman presented some information on the history of Deaneries and their intended purpose.

The Deanery Walk, Tea and Evening worship took place at St. Michael and All Angels, Bunwell on Sunday 30th July. This was a nice occasion and was very much enjoyed by those who went.

In October we met at St Marys Church, Saxlingham. Here we took part in a workshop called Mapping The Deanery. This involved us mapping out what we in our Benefice had to offer the Deanery.

At each meeting the Synod closed with a short act of worship.

Rosemary Sanford (Brooke Deanery Synod Rep)

Fabric

Early in the year the PCC was approached by the War Graves commission to put a plaque in the church yard to indicate the presence of war graves. The PCC chose to put the plaque on the church notice board. At the time the PCC decided the church notice board had become overshadowed by the Yew trees at the north side of the church and hence it was decided to move the board nearer the gate to make it more visible. At the present this is in the faculty stage.

Also during the year the PCC attempted to gain a faculty to have broken and leaning grave stones in the north side of the church yard relocated so that the conservation area could be safely and easily managed. Unfortunately the DAC chose to reject the application.

The church and its surroundings continue to be in good order and looked after by the wider community.

Tom Edwards

Other Church Activities

Social Events

Harvest supper 22nd September, fairly well attended. At the Carol Service on Monday 18th December after the service a Buffet was served and appreciated by the congregation.

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 dealing with advertisers and collecting their contributions.

Finance Report

At the end of December 2017 the Business account balance was £8,915.71 and the Current account £694.47. 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 2017

Balance 2016:	£9,550.42	Parish Share:	£2,643.00
Standing Orders:	£1,082.00	Children's Society:	£137.00
Collections:	£1,357.85	Insurance:	£1,369.63
Soup Lunch:	£160.00	Deanery Subs:	£7.00
Newsletter Adverts:	£210.00	Wine:	£12.00
Newsletter Subs:	£69.00	Electricity:	£289.62
Church Box:	£52.45	CCLI Licence:	£36.00
Donations:	£250.00	Advert Fees to Seething & Mundham:	£120.00
Marquee Hire:	£30.00	Lynn's Expenses:	£665.70
Tax Refund:	£1,107.72	Photocopier:	£80.07
Harvest Supper:	£530.00	All Hallows Hospital:	£73.00
Car Treasure Hunt:	£90.00	Royal British Legion:	£34.10
Gamble Charity:	£150.00	Christian Aid:	£62.00
Summer Concert:	£384.30	Norfolk Churches Trust:	£30.00
Interest	£1.56	Balance Current: £694.47	
VAT Return (Windows):	£144.00	Business: £8915.71	£9,610.18
	£15,169.30		£15,169.30

I confirm that I have examined the books and found them to be correct:

Date:

Signature: