



PARISH PROFILE

REEPHAM & WENSUM VALLEY
BENEFICE



WELCOME FROM THE BISHOP OF LYNN



Thank you for your interest in the post of Priest-in-Charge of Reepham and welcome to the Diocese of Norwich.

Whether you have ministered in a rural or market town area before or not, you will find here a warm welcome in a diocese which is not only pastoral and relational but also developing its mission in new and exciting ways.

The Reepham benefice in its current form has recently been created from a larger team ministry as the Archdeacon and I worked with the benefice and its neighbour to create three smaller benefices from two large ones. Our Diocesan Vision is to be Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic, and we believe that this vision can be more easily fulfilled in a benefice in which God can be worshipped in church and beyond, loving and caring relationships can be formed and the communities of the parishes are served.

The Diocese has embraced the national church's three strategic aims and we are currently focusing on developing a younger and more diverse church, with a parish system revitalised for mission so that churches can reach and serve everyone in their community.

We believe that this is the kind of mission which will resonate with our rural benefices and enable us to realise our own priority areas. You can find out more about these in the accompanying PDF, *Our Life Together*. The hopes and aspirations of the benefice are very much in line with those of the wider diocese, another reason that our life here is harmonious and mutually supportive.

As you read through this profile, you will find more information about the benefice and its constituent parishes. If there are questions to which you cannot find the answer, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Archdeacon. May the Lord direct your heart and mind as you prayerfully consider whether you are being called to this role and to minister with and among us.

With grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Lynn', written in a cursive style.

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

The Diocese of Norwich is committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within our church community. Your first responsibility as Priest in Charge will be to lead the delivery of that commitment.

Thank you for reading this parish profile and for considering the role of Priest-in-Charge of this benefice.

The Reepham and Wensum Valley Benefice is located in a beautiful corner of Norfolk centred on the small town of Reepham. It is made up of eight parishes, each

with its own identity. We believe we offer a wonderful opportunity for the right priest both to work with us as we are today and to help us grow a fresh and vibrant future.

Three things we want you to know:

We are joyful. We know rural ministry can be challenging but we love our community and believe we have strong foundations on which to build.

We are hopeful. In the meetings we had to prepare this document we looked at our situation today and considered what we could be. We all agreed that we would give strong support to our new Priest-in-Charge and encourage them in bringing a fresh vision to our churches.

We are prayerful and trust that God will help us as we discern the right way forward.

We want to be clear about the opportunity:

We have eight churches and church communities all with their own identity and needs.

The benefice we share is relatively new and we think we could do more to make it cohesive.

Our congregations are ageing, and we know that we must do things differently to encourage new disciples to join us, but we want to preserve what we find meaningful and special in our worship today.

We are open to change but want sensitive leadership as we tackle that – we want someone who can ‘foster’ our growth.

For us we see growth as being both numerical, in greater numbers joining, but also in the depth of our faith.

Finally, we know that approaching a new role can be daunting. We want you to understand that this will be a two-way process, for you to have as many questions of us as we will have of you. We hope that this profile gives you some sense of who we are: friendly, hopeful and looking for leadership.

We look forward to meeting you!



“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Our heartfelt hope is that, together with you, we can build up God’s kingdom in this wonderful corner of the world.

OUR NEW PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

On these pages we describe the characteristics and skills we hope for in our next Priest-in-Charge.

We understand that we are looking for someone who actually exists and that none of us is a simple check list of 'essential' or 'desirable' qualities. So what follows are some thoughts about the characteristics which might suit the particular situation here in the Reepham and Wensum Valley Benefice.

IN FAITH

Of course you will have a strong faith. We would appreciate someone who is a calm and reassuring presence. We enjoy thoughtful and intelligent preaching from someone who relishes sharing the gospel. We pray for someone who will help us individually develop our own faith and belief and who will encourage us to 'go deeper'.

We understand that everyone has their personal vocation and 'style' and we don't believe that we should set out what that might be but hope to discern what will be right in conversation with you.

IN PERSON

You will be looking after eight separate churches, and we know that is not possible alone. There will be many to help you, but you will need to be good at delegating tasks and building a team from the retired priests and lay volunteers to work together.

In our discussions the words 'calm and unflappable' came up – the benefice has a lot of moving parts, and you will need to be able to keep on top of them to ensure that the pattern of the year is maintained. Many of us are anxious about the future and hope for someone who is positive and 'can do' in their approach.

You will be instinctively collegiate, skilled in bringing people together, listening to a range of views and then distilling those down to some concrete actions.

We welcome someone who can develop a fresh vision for the benefice and who will be able to 'hold' that

vision and make it count. If we are to change and grow, then we will need a clear pathway to be set out and someone to guide us clearly along it. Confident leadership will be important.

Part of this will be good communication. We hope you would be able to use all kinds of techniques to spread the gospel from 'in person' to digital and we would be very interested to hear how you have achieved this before. We need to find new disciples and build up our congregations so this is a role for someone who enjoys reaching out to new people in fresh ways.

We hope you will have strong pastoral instincts. We feel we have a strong pastoral community and have developed good pastoral support networks which are part of a generally supportive community in the area. We would welcome your contribution to this.

*We are looking for a builder
not a maintainer*

IN VISION

We hope you will have a vision for a rural benefice, which is large and measures ten miles from its northernmost church, Thurning, to Weston Longville in the South.

We hope for breadth – as a benefice of many congregations and not a single church serving a single community (if such exists) – then you will be comfortable with many styles of worship, valuing them all.

We are ready for fresh thinking. We know we won't find change comfortable (who does?) but we will engage with a positive vision and welcome someone who is prepared to lead us proactively in considering what a great rural benefice could look like. We recognise that there may need to be new structures and new approaches to worship and discipleship for us to thrive in the future.

In our discussions we perceived that to develop our Christian community we will need to develop links to

two key groups. The first is families with children at school. We have excellent schools in the benefice and want to work more closely with them. The second is among the newly retired who have moved to the area and are often looking to 'get involved' in the church and other community activities. Building pathways towards Christ will be essential.

IN EXPECTATION

This is a very rural and dispersed benefice. It would be an advantage to really enjoy the countryside – there is a quite a lot to cover!

You will understand that after the rigours of COVID and a vacancy it has been hard work to reconstitute the wider church community and you will have the energy and enthusiasm to take this further. This is a role for a builder not a maintainer.

IN SUMMARY

We hope you will:

- Listen and work with us to discern a fresh vision and priorities for the benefice.
- Forge a team from across the benefice - both clergy and lay - to help deliver that vision.
- Discern the gifts each has to bring and equip all to contribute to our plan.
- Develop a fresh ministry for children and young people drawing them towards faith through activities and teaching.
- Create pathways into the church community for people of all ages, considering especially those newly retired and newcomers to the benefice.
- Weave the life of the church into the fabric of the local community and ensure that church activities become a natural expression of that community.
- Encourage a joy in the Christian life in our benefice.
- Respect and work with the variety of traditions of worship within the benefice whilst encouraging a fresh approach where appropriate.

REEPHAM AND THE WENSUM VALLEY

This is a particularly beautiful part of England, rural but within easy reach of Norwich offering all the facilities of a large city and good transport links to London.

In fact, we were very pleased to be identified by *The Sunday Times* this year as one of the 25 best places to live in Britain. They based their judgement on Reepham's very strong community, its thriving independent retailers, its location close to the coast and some excellent schools including the Ofsted 'Outstanding' Sixth Form.

The Times' summary was glowing: "Reepham ticks all the boxes, nestled between the Bure and Wensum valleys. It has great independent shops and cafés, gorgeous Georgian homes and a traditional market square, plus plenty of sports and social clubs — including Norfolk's first padel club. Yet it's the community that gets top billing."

The benefice is quite long from north to south and relatively narrow across. Reepham is much the biggest settlement but Great Witchingham, sitting astride the A1067 into Norwich is a growing community. The

majority of the area is farmed and one of the largest employers in the area, the Bernard Matthews turkey plant in Great Witchingham recently closed. So, whilst the benefice is relatively wealthy there are a number of issues around job insecurity, pressure on farmers, rural isolation and an ageing population. The Priest-in-Charge and the churches are an important part of the pastoral and social provision in the area and much valued for this.

Despite being at the heart of a rural benefice Reepham is actually very well placed. It is equidistant between the coast and the City of Norwich. Sheringham or Cley can be reached in 30 minutes and Norwich Station is 35 minutes away. Norwich Airport is 20 minutes away with regular daily flights to Schiphol Airport and its global connections and Ryanair now has low cost destinations as well. Norwich station has hourly services to London, Cambridge and the Midlands and with the A11 and A47 in easy reach longer trips by car are easy too.



"The community is what drives this place," says Tom Crisp, 41, director of the RFestival. "Someone who moved into the town from London told me she had been blown away by how friendly people are. She is still getting used to the fact that everyone says hello."



“The village community is keen to help maintain the popularity and accessibility of the church. It will always play a significant role in our lives.”

Jason

SCHOOLS

“The College is a vibrant and dynamic community where pupils receive first-rate teaching within a culture of high expectations and excellent pastoral care.”

Helen McGuinness, Director, Reepham College

We know that very few young people in the benefice regularly come to church and would be very interested to hear from you about your ideas for youth ministry.

The benefice has always had good links with the schools and we hope this will continue and develop further and that you will be at the heart of this.

We strongly believe that the future of our benefice

depends on opening the church up to younger people in ways they will find attractive and accessible. With 560 pupils of primary age in the benefice and a well-respected secondary school with Sixth Form there is great potential to build and grow in this area.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Reepham Primary School has 210 pupils and is part of the Synergy multi-academy trust. Great Witchingham Church of England Primary School has 73 pupils on its roll and highlights its strong links with the church in its website. It is part of the Eden Federation of Church Schools along with Cawston School which also takes quite a few pupils from the benefice. It is hoped that the new incumbent will be prepared to take on a governance role. The most vibrant current link in the benefit is in Great Witchingham with this church with parishioners undertaking ‘Open the book’ sessions reading and acting out biblical stories with the pupils – which is always very popular and lively!

“I want to especially say thank you to my English teacher for helping push me in my English and my two awesome maths teachers for helping me through the times in maths when I sat there like a goldfish wondering how I was supposed to understand algebra!”

Charlotte Year 7

SECONDARY AND SIXTH FORM

Reepham High School has 1,031 students on the roll. It prides itself on being an inclusive, warm and welcoming community with delightful students and supportive parents and carers. It fosters strong relationships between students and staff and offers a curriculum that is both broad and balanced. It has an attached Sixth Form College which is among the top 25% of schools in the country and very well respected locally.



WHAT WE OFFER

We have considered carefully what we can offer to support someone coming to join us and what blessings the benefice already offers.

The Church community is built on a foundation of a good number of committed volunteers who work hard. We have a number of retired clergy and licenced lay ministers who contribute a great deal to our corporate life. We also have some experienced and capable church wardens who ensure that our churches are in good condition and are surprisingly flexible and well equipped for large medieval buildings.

Each parish has a strong core of fellowship around the church. We have been very resilient through the challenges of the last few years.

We have a good profile within the community. Major church events are well attended as are other events

in church. Our buildings are visible and clearly at the physical heart of our communities. We are part of what makes the area so special.

We are open to new ideas and new ways of worship. We have tried many different things from Café Church, in Reepham (which is very popular) to pet services, traditional worship including evensong with music and outdoor services.

In an area where there is an ageing population we believe we have a robust pastoral structure and support each other within the church with inclusive warmth.

In addition to this the Diocese has a very effective Parish Support Team with a deep ethic of service to the Diocese as a whole and we encourage clergy and parishes to get to know them personally.

The Diocese commitment to you will include:

- maintaining your home to a high standard
- support for clergy rest days, including encouragement to take a further day in addition every month
- 36 days annual leave
- opportunities for study days termly
- £150 per year towards the cost of retreat
- annual ministerial development review to reflect on your ministry and wellbeing
- confidential counselling services

A STRONG TEAM IN SUPPORT

| RETIRED CLERGY | LLMS | AWAS |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| The Venerable Arthur Hawes Canon Peter Halls Rev Tim Weston | Jane McLarty Helena Crockford Sue Page (PTO) | Julie Dacre Richard Cooke |

You will also be part of a strong Deanery Chapter led by the Rural Dean, Andrew Whitehead from the neighbouring benefice.

The Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd Graham Usher says:

“The Diocese of Norwich is committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults to worship and grow in Christ safely. I take that commitment very seriously and believe that making our churches safe for all is everyone’s responsibility.”

We share this commitment and ask that all our church leaders put safeguarding at the heart of their ministry.

THE RECTORY

The Rectory is an attractive modern home located in the centre of Reepham.

It has a good sized garden and is five minutes' walk from the town square. The ground floor has a large living room with a proper open fire, a separate dining room with a kitchen and the usual utility spaces. On the first

floor there are five bedrooms with the largest en-suite and a family bathroom. There is a good office with a separate entrance, plenty of parking and a large garage. It is double glazed throughout and has oil central heating.

GROUND FLOOR

- Entrance Hallway
- UPVC half glazed front door, Parquet flooring, 1 radiator
- Dining Room - 3.66m x 3.71m (12'00 x 12'02)
- UPVC double glazed window, carpet, radiator
- WC - 0.94m x 2.82m (3'01 x 9'03)
- UPVC double glazed window, vinyl, radiator, toilet and sink, built-in shelving
- Living Room - 4.24m x 7.54m (13'11 x 24'09)
- UPVC double glazed window, carpet, radiators, patio doors to garden, open fireplace
- Kitchen - 3.71m x 3.63m (12'02 x 11'11)
- UPVC double glazed window, vinyl, radiator, range of white base and wall units
- Utility - 2.82m x 2.26m (9'03 x 7'05)
- UPVC double glazed window, vinyl, radiator, butlers sink, wall unit. UPVC half glazed door into the garden
- Office / Study
- UPVC double glazed door, double aspect UPVC window
- WC - vinyl, radiator, toilet and sink

FIRST FLOOR

- Landing
- UPVC double glazed window, carpet, radiator
- Bedroom One - 4.24m x 3.73m (13'11 x 12'03)
- UPVC double glazed window, carpet, radiator
- Bedroom Two - 3.71m x 3.20m (12'02 x 10'06)
- UPVC double glazed window, carpet, radiator, built-in wardrobe
- Bathroom - 2.41m x 2.41m (7'11 x 7'11)
- UPVC double glazed window, vinyl, radiator toilet, sink with vanity, shower over the bath
- Bedroom Three - 3.73m x 3.61m (12'03 x 11'10)
- UPVC double glazed window, carpet, radiator, built-in wardrobe, sink
- Bedroom Four - 3.63m x 2.54m (11'11 x 8'04)
- UPVC double glazed window, carpet, radiator
- Bedroom Five - 4.45m x 5.05m (14'07 x 16'07)
- UPVC double glazed window, carpet, radiator
- En Suite - 1.96m x 2.24m (6'05 x 7'04)
- UPVC double glazed window, vinyl, radiator, shower, toilet, sink with vanity



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR





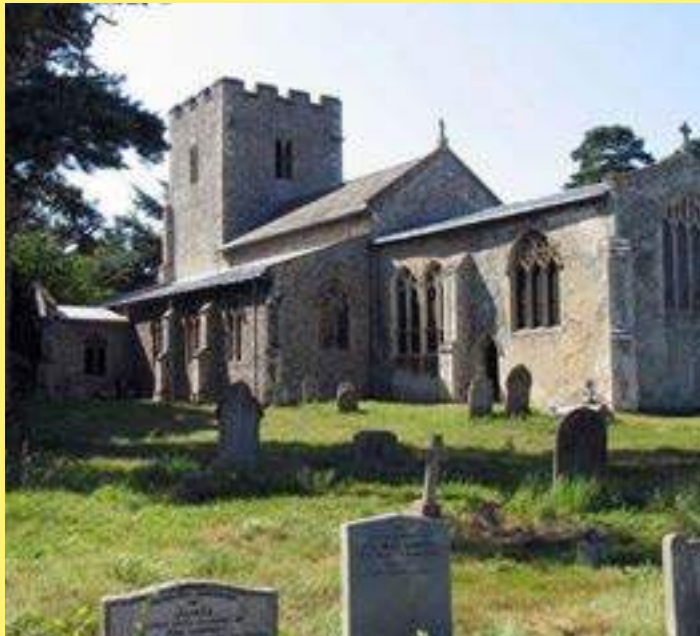
REEPHAM



ATTLEBRIDGE WITH ALDERFORD



GREAT WITCHINGHAM



SWANNINGTON



THURNING



WESTON LONGVILLE WITH MORTON-ON-THE-HILL



SALLE



WOOD DALLING

GATHERED HERE

OUR PARISH
COMMUNITIES

REEPHAM & WENSUM VALLEY
BENEFACTORS





St Mary's
St Michael's

IN OUTLINE:

- Parish population: 2,670
- % population of the benefice: 56%
- Parish share paid (2024): £28,514
- Parish share % paid (2024): 100%
- Two Holy Communion and two Cafe church services every month
- Two linked churches in the centre of a thriving market town
- Lots of local initiatives especially Eco Church
- We have a heart for outreach to our community

REEPHAM

ABOUT US

Our two linked churches are right in the middle of Reepham, a stone's throw from the Georgian Market Place, with public footpaths running through the churchyard. St Mary's is a traditional church with pews and a sense of history, while St Michael's has been converted into a modern hall with kitchen/toilet facilities. It is well used by both the church (for café church, winter services and social events) and by the wider community. The third church is now a ruin. So we are three churches in one! The congregation is outward looking, and enjoy a variety of styles of worship. We have a particular interest in the environment, and have recently won a Silver Eco Church Award, and are now working towards our Gold Award; we are also a Fair Trade Church. We have close associations with the Methodist Church, who also have a church building in Reepham.

THE 'HOME TEAM'

We have one retired clergy person and two LLMs. Rosie, our churchwarden is supported by an active PCC. We have teams heading up finance, hospitality and Eco Church.

THE CHURCH FABRIC

With two churches and one ruined church in the same churchyard, there is a lot to look after! However, we have an excellent Fabric Officer, well supported by the PCC, and the churches are generally in good repair. We have a rolling programme of fund raising, so we keep our heads above water. We are increasing the biodiversity of the churchyard which is closed for burials and maintained by Broadland District Council.

OUR 'BEST SERVICE OF THE YEAR'

We are proud of Café Church – this is our most recent innovation and is a popular service held twice a month. It is an open and informal service in St Michael's with modern music and a relaxed atmosphere which attracts congregations of between 30 and 40 people, and is an ideal venue for people on the fringe or families with young children.

THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PARISH

There are many good things about the parish! The town is thriving with many independent shops, two pubs and several clubs/societies, many of which support the church. Our previous Rectors have always had good relationships with the Primary, High School and Sixth Form College. The Lions hold an annual Christmas Tree festival in St Mary's which coincides with a Festival of Light in the Market Place, and is enjoyed by many. The Christmas Carol service attracts many people on the fringes and we hold two very busy Christingle services on Christmas Eve.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE

To encourage more young families to come regularly, and thereby increase our congregation. To maintain our giving, so that we can continue to pay 100% parish share for the foreseeable future. To deepen our faith and to proclaim the Gospel.

WE'D LIKE TO MEET SOMEONE:

Who would encourage and work with us in outreach to our community.

ATTLEBRIDGE WITH ALDERFORD

ABOUT US

We are actually two churches!

St Andrews, Attlebridge: Though smaller than some of the other churches in the Wensum valley group, our church sits in a prominent open position and offers a light, clean, and tidy space with a warm and welcoming atmosphere. We encourage visitors to pause and enjoy the peace of the building, with tea and coffee available throughout the week as a simple gesture of hospitality.

St John the Baptist, Alderford: A Grade II Listed building. Also, a small, light church but with no electricity or heating.

THE 'HOME TEAM'

We have a dedicated team: Alison (treasurer / admin), Janice (secretary/electoral roll officer) and Julie (SGO, Churchwarden), together we make up the PCC.

THE CHURCH FABRIC

St Andrews and St John the Baptist are both fairly well maintained and weatherproof. Neither church has toilets or a kitchen facility.

OUR 'BEST SERVICE OF THE YEAR'

We are very proud of our 'Open the Book' Sunday – A special service celebrating the power of storytelling in worship, particularly enjoyed by families and children. But we have a really full calendar of services and events such as an Art & Produce Show – A showcase of local creativity and homegrown talent, celebrating the best of our community's artistic and horticultural skills. Our Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve – A well-attended cherished tradition marking the heart of our Christmas

celebrations, welcoming all to rejoice in the birth of Christ. But most important of all is our Holy Communion or Family Worship held every third Sunday, followed by a warm gathering over tea, coffee, cakes, and Janice's famous cheese straws—a highlight for many!

THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PARISH

Attlebridge is a small but well-connected village, located approximately 8 miles northwest of Norwich. It sits on a regular bus route and is easily accessible from main connecting roads, making it a convenient place for residents and visitors alike.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE

The village consists of around 96 houses, and while our church has a dedicated and welcoming congregation, 94% of residents have yet to experience the joy of being part of our church community. This presents an exciting opportunity for outreach and growth as we seek to share faith, fellowship, and friendship with more of our neighbours.

WE'D LIKE TO MEET SOMEONE:

Rooted in prayer and the Word of God, they should be able to engage people in fresh and accessible ways, making the gospel relevant to those unfamiliar with church life. An evangelist – passionate about sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, reaching those currently outside the church, and encouraging a culture of invitation and growth. An Encourager – Someone who can inspire and equip both individuals and the congregation as a whole, nurturing faith, building confidence, and drawing out the gifts of others.



St Andrew (Attlebridge) St John the Baptist (Alderford)

IN OUTLINE:

- Parish population: 219
- % population of the benefice: 5%
- Parish share received (2024): £1,429
- Parish share % paid (2024): 100%
- One service a month in St Andrew's (in rotation with Great Witchingham, Swannington and Weston Longville)
- Six summer services in St John the Baptist
- A great variety of services
- Innovative events
- At the heart of a small community



St Mary's

IN OUTLINE:

- Parish population: 706
- % population of the benefice: 15%
- Parish share received (2024): £8,372
- Parish share % paid (2024): 196%
- One service a month (in rotation with Attlebridge, Swannington and Weston Longville)
- Close links with the local Church of England Primary School
- Services often in the Village Hall close to new developments

GREAT WITCHINGHAM

ABOUT US

We are a parish of two parts! Great Witchingham is a largely rural and agricultural community. But in the south of the parish is Lenwade: a thriving community on the main road into Norwich with shops, a Primary School and a bus route. The majority of the parishioners live there and enjoy services both in the parish church and Great Witchingham Village Hall which is both accessible and warm.

THE 'HOME TEAM'

We have a team of four: Angela the Church Warden, The Treasurer, Sally and the Safeguarding Officer, Pamela, together with Ewen.

THE CHURCH FABRIC

St Mary's C14 Church is in a rural setting away from the main population. It is a fairly large church in good condition, with many memorials on the walls and floor, and a Seven Sacraments Font. Baptisms and weddings are held here, with funerals and interment of ashes in the picturesque cemeteries full of wildflowers and wildlife. Many people comment on its tranquillity and lightness to sit and reflect as indicated in the visitor's book. Walkers visit our church via the 'Ten Tower Walk', stroll up from the village or Marriott's Way and when attending the graves of ancestors. The church is open 24/7 and has a roof alarm, and books and other items are for sale.

OUR 'BEST SERVICE OF THE YEAR'

We love our Christmas concert which is held in the village hall and always well attended and appreciated as the start of the Christmas season.

THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PARISH

We are lucky to have a brilliant Church of England Primary School in Lenwade whose catchment area includes Weston Longville. They have traditionally been very close to the church and have their Christingle service at St. Marys. Recent incumbents went to the School twice a month for prayers and bible stories and also initiated Messy Church, attended by several families for crafts, bible stories, food, and fun leading to increased attendance at major church festivals.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE

Our church is quite a way from the main centre of the settlement so we often use the village hall which is warm and convenient but we have to work hard to make it a place of the spirit!

WHAT WE MIGHT BE HOPING FOR

With the growing population in the new developments in Lenwade it would be ideal for the incumbent to capture parishioners' interest to spread the love of Jesus Christ. We think that growing the link with the primary school could lead to more interest in the church.

SALLE

“Salle is a very special place, not just to those who worship there, but also to those who come from near and far to wonder at its majesty”

Peter

ABOUT US

Salle is awesome. Literally. A cathedral in the fields of rural Norfolk, a grand statement of faith and aspiration, radiating tranquility. Many people, from near and far, feel a special affinity for this national treasure. It's a church for everyone, capturing the imagination and generating pride and love. In our visitors' book we read 'what a spectacular gem'; 'always find peace and reassurance here'; 'thank you for keeping it open'.

THE 'HOME TEAM'

Our Church Wardens are Roger and Joanna. A core group including Ruth, Peter, Jo, Guy and Louise keep the church open, clean and decorated, cook shepherd's pie for hungry visiting choristers and facilitate weddings, funerals, concerts and tours from students and enthusiasts. None of us lives in the parish. Friends from the Salle Estate help look after the churchyard, choreograph car parking on the big occasions, allow us to use the facilities of the Lynton White Institute nearby (toilets!) and provide us with excellent Christmas trees.

THE CHURCH FABRIC

Constant vigilance goes with the territory. As well as general maintenance and concern for leaks, there are decisions to be taken about fitness for future purposes – such as heating (Salle has none), lighting and sound systems.

OUR 'BEST SERVICE OF THE YEAR'

The recent funeral of our long-serving Church Warden, Jolyon, felt emblematic. The majestic nave was full as

family, friends and neighbours gathered to remember a good man whose life was deeply entwined with the guardianship of this building. A young solo violinist played ethereal Bach. A community choir joined us. We emerged, gratefully, to birdsong and spring sunshine.

THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PARISH

For all its 600 years, Salle church has been the defining feature of the parish. The congregation has never been big and is now tiny – but devoted. There is a special relationship with the families of the Salle agricultural estate, those who continue to plough the fields and scatter the good seed to feed us all – they gather especially at harvest festival and to sing joyful carols at Christmas. Although the Salle families are mostly not regular church attenders they are involved in the running of the church with the daily locking and unlocking. They help with tasks that inevitably crop up from time to time. Interestingly, they always refer to 'our church', which gives us optimism for the future.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE

This astonishing church is not only an extraordinary blessing but also a weighty responsibility. At a time of transition for rural churches, how do we steward this place in a sustainable way?

WE'D LIKE TO MEET SOMEONE:

Who will resonate to the glory of Salle and work with us as we seek new ways to secure its light, peace and spirituality for the benefit of future generations.



St Peter and St Paul

IN OUTLINE:

- Parish population: 107
- % population of the benefice: 2%
- Parish share received (2024): £6,126
- Parish share % paid (2024): 96%
- A supernova: Salle (pronounced 'Saul') is one of the dozen finest churches in England
- Two BCP services a month, one Holy Communion, plus either Evensong in summer or Morning Prayer in winter
- An electoral roll of 14; a legion of admirers
- A remarkable acoustic for music
- A determination to think creatively about the future while honouring our tradition



St Margaret's

IN OUTLINE:

- Parish population: 321
- % population of the benefice: 7%
- Parish share received (2024): £3,205
- Parish share % paid (2024): 100%
- Flexible pattern of services
- Building developed for wider use
- A great musical tradition
- One service a month (in rotation with Attlebridge, Great Withingham and Weston Longville)
- A flexible space substantially refurbished following a National Lottery Grant
- A focus on community use

SWANNINGTON

ABOUT US

St Margaret's is an active church, forward looking and open to new ideas. We have one Sunday service a month: half of these are lay led. By a long-standing tradition we share worship with three other parishes alternating every Sunday. We have an excellent small choir in conjunction with Weston Longville. We have two musicians including one professional.

Members of the congregation produce the Pilgrim newsletter for three parishes and join the Open the Book team that goes into Gt Withingham C of E primary academy. We work with the local play area on joint funding events - including a biennial gardens open - and collect for the Food Bank. The church is open every day and welcomes visitors. In the past year, we have hosted a luncheon club, coffee mornings, a quiz, lectures and concerts.

THE 'HOME TEAM'

We are churchwardens Pam (also organist) and Richard (also AWA), with Antoinette (choir organiser and professional organist), Sally (secretary) and Mary (ex CW and fount of all knowledge). We are well supported by spouses and friends.

THE CHURCH FABRIC

The building dates from the 14th Century but with 20th Century additions of kitchen and toilet. As the only public building in the village since the pubs and school

closed 40 years ago it has been used for community purposes as well as worship. The pews have now been replaced with moveable seating and a new heating system installed. A new sound system with hearing loop has been installed. Limited car parking is available in the churchyard with level access to the church. Plans are in hand for a disabled toilet.

OUR 'BEST SERVICE OF THE YEAR'

Best attended is the village carol service which involves many who are not regular attenders. For many 'Praise and Thought' where we bring pieces for reading and discussion is best remembered.

THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PARISH

Although Swannington is a small village with employment only in farming and horticulture and most jobs outside the village, people come together for activities and events.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE

We are a small and ageing team but we hope to draw more financial and practical support from the village as they get used to using the building. We also hope to maintain a variety of worship to appeal to as many as possible.

WE'D LIKE TO MEET SOMEONE:

Who can advise, guide and encourage us as we work to make the church more relevant to the people of the village.

THURNING

ABOUT US

Thurning has a population of 48 adults and 18 children. Most of the adults are either retired or in professional occupations – or married to professionals. The church is the only public building in the parish. The average congregation is eight adults, two children with a couple of people coming from outside the parish. We have 2 services a month which are based on the Book of Common Prayer and there is usually coffee and home-made biscuits afterwards.

THE 'HOME TEAM'

There are 4 people on the PCC; Philip, Sarah, Justina Hume (sole church warden and PCC Secretary) and Georgina (PCC Treasurer).

THE CHURCH FABRIC

Thurning is a remarkable church with a beautiful interior including an extraordinary 'three-decker' pulpit. We recently re-roofed the church at a cost of £150,000 – most of which was raised locally.

OUR 'BEST SERVICE OF THE YEAR'

This year we had a wonderful service on Palm Sunday. The church was bathed in sunlight, we sang some traditional hymns with zest, listened to a thoughtful and intelligent sermon before enjoying coffee and a conversation in the sunshine.

THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PARISH

This is a beautiful rural parish. The church is its only public building, and it is a place of inspiration and calm. Around us stand acres of fields, woods and pasture, it feels like a world away from the stresses of modern life.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE

Increasing the regular congregation.

WHAT WE MIGHT BE HOPING FOR:

Someone positive, encouraging and ready to engage with our small community. Although our present services are traditional we would be happy to have a more "modern" approach, sensitively done. Our musical accompaniment will always be organ-based – unless the music is pre-recorded.

We would particularly enjoy welcoming our new vicar informally into our own homes providing an opportunity to meet and get to know one another over a cup of coffee and engage with non-churchgoing members of our small community.



St Andrew

IN OUTLINE:

- Parish population: 64
- % population of the benefice: 1%
- Parish share received (2024): £3,205
- Parish share % paid (2024): 100%
- Two services a month
- A small but committed congregation
- A beautiful church with a traditional interior
- An oasis of peace in a busy world



WESTON LONGVILLE with MORTON-ON-THE-HILL

ABOUT US

The parishes have a combined population of about 450 scattered over a wide geographical area and apart from the usual farming businesses, the village also supports a number of small businesses including an organ builder, a vineyard and a thriving pub. Weston Park is also the home of 'Roarr' the Dinosaur Theme Park and the Royal Norwich Golf Course.

Our church is the parish church of the famous diarist Parson James Woodforde who on 15th December 1774 wrote in his diary "We had a meeting..... at New College Oxford to present a person to the Living of Weston Longville.... I was declared and presented with the presentation of the Rectory" and so began an association which would ensure that through his delightful and interesting diaries Weston Longville would no longer remain an obscure country parish. New College Oxford remains our Patron to this day.

THE 'HOME TEAM'

We have a very supportive team of retired clergy who help us ensure that we have a regular service every month in addition to the usual services at Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and our Harvest Festival. Our churchwardens are John and Marion who are supported by Margaret our Treasurer, and Tina our PCC secretary. Our bell ringers meet on a Thursday evening.

THE CHURCH FABRIC

All Saints' Church is a Grade1 Listed Church which is well known for its stunning 14th century wall paintings, and its well preserved Apostles Rood Screen. Our church has been recently restored with the help of grants from the National Churches Trust, the Wolfson Foundation and the Norfolk Churches Trust. It is a well maintained church

which is open to the public every day and we are just about to embark on the second phase of the construction of a new accessible toilet facility within the church.

OUR 'BEST SERVICE OF THE YEAR'

Our best services are usually at Christmas and Easter but every year our local school at Great Witchingham holds their Harvest Festival in our church and this is also a very special occasion attended by up to 120 adults and children.

THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PARISH

Is our village community. Weston, Attlebridge and Morton are served by a modern village hall known as the 'Hall for All' which hosts a number of community events such as choir practice on a Wednesday evening (during term time) and our annual Harvest Supper which, following in the Woodforde tradition, is regularly attended by up to 70 members of the village.

Weston Longville is a well-known tourist destination and on a national stage we have strong links with the Parson Woodforde Society - founded in 1968 to extend, share and develop knowledge of his life and the society in which he lived.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE

Our Church has always been at the heart of our parish but we are now looking for a leader who will not only lead us in prayer but help us in maintaining the church at the heart of our village community.

WE'D LIKE TO MEET SOMEONE:

With a sense of community who is positive, encouraging, and a good communicator ready to engage with everybody in the parish.

All Saints

IN OUTLINE:

- Parish population: 450
- % population of the benefice: 10%
- Parish share received (2024): £6,410
- Parish share % paid (2024): 100%
- One service a month (in rotation with Attlebridge, Great Witchingham and Swannington)
- A beautifully maintained church with a loyal congregation
- Positive plans for development
- A national identity through Parson Woodforde

WOOD DALLING

ABOUT US

We are a wonderful 'Festival Church' in a very rural settlement which is very dispersed. The church is known and valued but the regular congregations have dwindled. Our focus is on ensuring that we have a small number of really excellent and meaningful services which people come to enjoy and value. We want to explore other possibilities for the building that can help it to live and thrive.

THE 'HOME TEAM'

We have a good team of Justin and Sol (father and son) as Church Wardens and Maggie as the Treasurer.

THE CHURCH FABRIC

St Andrew's has been really well cared for by the previous Church Warden and team (Thank you Jonathan!) over twenty years so is in very good condition. We have new lighting, heating, a toilet and a kitchen. We have everything ready to go!

OUR 'BEST SERVICE OF THE YEAR'

Is not actually in the church. The local farmer, Peter, arranges a wonderful harvest service in a barn full of freshly gathered grain....harvest festival really means something in Wood Dalling.

THE BEST THING ABOUT THE PARISH

There is a real community in the parish with a great newsletter, active village hall committee and lots of dog walkers! We think we have something to build on for the future if we can reintroduce people to services they understand and want to attend.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WE FACE

Persuading people to attend Holy Communion at 9.00 am on a Sunday morning.

WE'D LIKE TO MEET SOMEONE:

Who is full of ideas for re-engaging people with the church and is a good and open collaborator.



St Andrew

IN OUTLINE:

- Parish population: 205
- % population of the benefice: 4%
- Parish share received (2024): –
- Parish share % paid (2024): 0%
- A Festival Church
- One service a month between March and October
- A brilliant Advent Service
- A small congregation of around 10 but with a plan for growth
- A centre for music, arts and events

ROLE DESCRIPTION

– PRIEST-IN-CHARGE, REEPHAM AND WENSUM VALLEY BENEFICE

1. DETAILS OF THE POST:

Role Title: Priest-in-Charge
Name of benefice: Reepham and Wensum Valley
Deanery: Ingworth & Sparham
Archdeaconry: Lynn

2. WIDER VISION AND CONTEXT:

The vision for mission and ministry in the Diocese of Norwich, is for us to be

**Transformed by Christ: Prayerful,
Pastoral and Prophetic.**

Full details <https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/about/about-vision/>

The Bishop's Senior Staff have agreed to implement the national Church's strategic aims and bold outcomes, prioritising 'Growing Younger and More Diverse' as we create 'A parish system revitalised for mission so that churches can reach and serve everyone in their communities'.

3. LOCAL VISION AND CONTEXT

The benefice is made up of the parishes of Reepham (population 2,670), Attlebridge with Alderford (219), Great Witchingham (706), Salle (107), Swannington (321), Thurning (64), Weston Longville with Morton-

on-the-Hill (380) and Wood Dalling (205). The overall resident population is 4,672.

There are three schools within the benefice: Reepham Primary (roll 210), Great Witchingham Church of England Primary (roll 73) and Reepham High School (roll 1,031).

The vision of the benefice is to make Jesus known at the Heart of the Community. The parishes seek to work collaboratively in their commitment to growth in numbers, growth in depth of faith and weaving the church into the heart of the local communities. They seek to be joyful, hopeful and prayerful.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

General:

- A. To exercise the cure of souls shared with the bishop in this benefice in collaboration with your colleagues and to have regard to the responsibilities of clergy as set out in the Canons, the Ordinal (*see overleaf), the Code of Professional Conduct of the Clergy, **Guidance for Clergy (formerly Clergy handbook) - Diocese of Norwich**, the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing **Clergy wellbeing - Diocese of Norwich** and other relevant legislation.

Specific:

- Listen and work with the benefice to discern a fresh vision and priorities
- Forge a team from across the benefice, both clergy and lay, to help deliver that vision
- Discern the gifts each has to bring and equip all to contribute to the plan
- Develop a fresh ministry for children and young people, drawing them towards faith through activities and teaching
- Create pathways into the church community for people of all ages, considering especially those newly retired and newcomers to the benefice
- Weave the life of the church into the fabric of the local community and ensure that church activities become a natural expression of that community
- Encourage a joy in the Christian life in the benefice

5. KEY CONTACTS

| Groups & Committees | Parish | Support Structures |
|---------------------|--|---|
| PCCs | Churchwardens | Rural Dean: Revd Andrew Whitehead |
| Deanery Chapter | Ministry Team: 3 Clergy with PTO – Ven Arthur Hawes, Canon Peter Halls, Revd Tim Weston 2 Licensed Lay Ministers – Jane McClarty, Helena Crockford 1 Licensed Lay Minister with PTO – Sue Page 2 Authorised Worship Assistants – Julie Dacre, Richard Cooke | Archdeacon: Ven Catherine Dobson |
| Deanery Synod | Heads of Reepham Primary, Reepham High and Great Witchingham Church of England Schools | Bishop of Lynn: Rt Revd Dr Jane Steen |
| | Parish Administrator | Parish Support Team - Diocese of Norwich |

6. DIOCESAN NEW INCUMBENTS PROGRAMME

The Diocesan Mission & Ministry department offers two training events for those new to incumbency in the Diocese. Both are residential courses, one on skills for incumbency and one on new incumbency, more focused on person in role.

1. *From the Ordinal

'Priests are called to be servants and shepherds among the people to whom they are sent.

With their Bishop and fellow ministers, they are to proclaim the word of the Lord and to watch for the signs of God's new creation.

They are to be messengers, watchmen and stewards of the Lord; they are to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for his family, to search for his children in the wilderness of this world's temptations, and to guide them through its confusions, that they may be saved through Christ for ever.

Formed by the word, they are to call their hearers to repentance and to declare in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins.

With all God's people, they are to tell the story of God's love.

They are to baptize new disciples in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and to walk with them in the way of Christ, nurturing them in the faith.

They are to unfold the Scriptures, to preach the word in season and out of season, and to declare the mighty acts of God.

They are to preside at the Lord's table and lead his people in worship, offering with them a spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

They are to bless the people in God's name.

The Archdeacons of the Diocese are also reinstating the diocesan new incumbents' induction programme following the pandemic.

They are to resist evil, support the weak, defend the poor, and intercede for all in need.

They are to minister to the sick and prepare the dying for their death.

Guided by the Spirit, they are to discern and foster the gifts of all God's people, that the whole Church may be built up in unity and faith.'

'In the name of our Lord we bid you remember the greatness of the trust that is now to be committed to your charge.

Remember always with thanksgiving that the treasure now to be entrusted to you is Christ's own flock, bought by the shedding of his blood on the cross.

It is to him that you will render account for your stewardship of his people.

You cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength, but only by the grace and power of God. Pray therefore that your heart may daily be enlarged and your understanding of the Scriptures enlightened.

Pray earnestly for the gift of the Holy Spirit.'

Common Worship Ordination Services | The Church of England

REEPHAM & WENSUM VALLEY
BENEFICE

