

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Parish of Cromer
7.30 pm on Thursday 25 April 2024 at St Martin's**

It will be assumed that all the enclosed paperwork has been read in advance of the meeting. You are strongly encouraged to submit any questions in advance, and at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Agenda 2024

- 1) Welcome & opening prayer.**
- 2) Minutes of the APCM of 27 April 2023 (page 2) & matters arising**
- 3) Election of Churchwardens for the next year**
- 4) Electoral Roll report**
- 5) Elections and resolutions of the APCM:**
 - **Election to PCC** (3 people to serve for 3 years)
- 6) Vicar's reflections**
- 7) Annual reports (page 5 onwards)**

An opportunity to respond with questions, comments, encouragements and ideas.

You are strongly encouraged to submit any questions in advance, and at least 24 hours before the meeting.

- 8) Treasurer's report and Financial Statements**

You are strongly encouraged to submit any questions in advance, and at least 24 hours before the meeting.

- 9) Appointment of Independent Examiner**

- 10) Matters raised by the church membership**

An opportunity to raise questions, concerns, encouragements and ideas regarding the life of Cromer Church, and to request future PCC discussion of particular items.

- 11) Closing Prayer**

CROMER PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL – MINUTES OF THE APCM ON 27 APRIL 2023 AT 7.30 IN ST MARTIN'S

The meeting was attended by more than 60 members of the church family.

Apologies were received from Tim and Frances Britton, Nick and Meg Claridge, Anne Cottingham, Joy Gates, Shay Nash, Tony and Jacky Peacock and Joyce Richardson.

1. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

The meeting was chaired by the Vicar, Revd Will Warren, who welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting opened with sung worship led by Simon Purslow and David and Alison Orsborne. A time of prayer followed.

2. MINUTES OF THE APCM 28 MAY 2022 AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the APCM of 28 May 2022 were **agreed** as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

3. ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS FOR THE NEXT YEAR

Two nominations were received – Ivan Kimble and David Loades. There being only two nominations, no election was necessary, and Ivan Kimble and David Loades would serve as Churchwardens for 2023/2024.

Mary Howard prayed for Ivan and David.

Jackie Austin was thanked for serving as Churchwarden for the last 4 years and was presented with a gift.

4. ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

The Electoral Roll Officer, Glyn Purland, reported that there were 291 people on the Roll. This is an increase from the previous year.

2 people have died and their names were removed

Glyn was thanked for his encouraging report.

5. ELECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE PCC

a) ELECTION TO DEANERY SYNOD

There were 5 vacancies to serve on Deanery Synod until 2026.5 nominations were received so no election was necessary, and David Anderson, Anne Cottingham, John Hodgkinson, Mary Howard and David Orsborne were duly elected.

b) ELECTION TO PCC

One nomination was received for a casual vacancy to serve for one year. No election was necessary, and Judith Anderson was duly elected.

The Vicar prayed for those who had been newly elected..

6. VICAR'S REFLECTIONS

- a) We have started a sermon series on Hebrews, in which Paul admonishes his readers not to fall away. This is particularly relevant when we find things hard going because of physical or spiritual weariness.
- b) The Vicar believes that we haven't done some of the things we intended to. However, this is a reminder that God's timing is not our timing! We have much to be really thankful for.

Our Vision

Our purpose is to love Jesus and to share his love with others
Drawing in • Building up • Going out to see lives and communities transformed by Jesus.

Looking ahead

- a) The appointment of an Associate Vicar remains a priority. We need to keep praying Someone is still needed in that role, but the job description may need some tweaking, with a possibility of interviews in July. If the Lord is wanting us to do something else, he will clearly show us.
- b) The Vicar wants to explore some new expressions of worship. It is good to see children and families returning but there is more to be done. We are living in a culture where Christianity no longer has a prominent place. There is work to be done in joining up BeachFest families with Sunday worship.
- c) Discipleship – growing more like Jesus: this tends to be a weakness in our church. This could be built up through Sunday teaching and in Small Groups. After Christmas, it is hoped to run a whole-church Discipleship Course written by Tim Chester.

Contending for our faith

- a) The decision of our bishops to approve the blessing of same-sex marriages will impact our church. The majority of our church family will see this as a rejection of God's will. We are in a real spiritual battle.
- b) The Vicar is Vice Chair of the Norwich Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship and would value our prayers that the Lord will work in power.

- c) We need to think how, as a church, we can be a safe and welcoming place for everyone while adhering to Gospel truth.
- d) Implications include how we will steward our resources. This isn't the right time to consider the future of our buildings.
- e) God is the Lord of our church.

The Vicar thanked the Wardens, Treasurer and PCC Secretary, all who served on PCC in 2022/2023 and Staff Team.

7. ANNUAL REPORTS

The reports were received.

8. TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

- a) The Treasurer had worked for the last 2 years, aiming to produce reports which were succinct and easy to follow.
- b) To avoid significant bank charges, the Treasurer is decreasing the amount of transactions through NatWest and putting as many as possible through Barclays. A third account is being opened with Lloyds for this purpose, and it is hoped that bank charges will be less in next year's accounts.
- c) 57 people have signed up for the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS).
- d) It was good to have such a positive report from our accounts.

9. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Hignett's as Independent Examiner for 2023.

10. MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

- a) Notices at St Martin's: the events in question had been publicised in the Update.
- b) Double glazing at St Martin's: PCC agreed to the proposal in February, a quotation was approved in March and the work has been put in hand.
- c) APCM reports: the PCC Secretary had put an item in the Update asking leaders of ministries to send her brief reports of their work. The responsibility to respond was on the ministry leaders.
- d) Prayer ministry after services: it is hoped to re-start this soon.
- e) CC Toddlers is going well with 30 children every week. The mums enjoy joining in with the songs and a group of older children enjoy the stories.

- f) BeachFest: it is hoped that people might come forward to lead one or more sessions. It is something to be prayed into.
- g) Roughton and Felbrigg: at the moment the arrangement is very informal, but we have good relationships with them. Clarity is needed from the Diocese regarding the legal position, including patronage.
- h) A request was made that the volume of the music on Sundays could be lessened, to allow conversation before the service.
- i) Those involved in Mustard Seed and Monday Meals were congratulated for doing a great job.
- j) Paul Rosier asked if there would be specific teaching on Living in Love and Faith and was anxious that the congregation should support the Vicar. The Vicar replied that a number of people had raised this and that he was thinking of setting up a mid-week group. He thanked those who had written to the Bishop.
- k) The laying on of hands had been suspended because of Covid but would be resumed in May.

A time of prayer followed.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 8.43 pm.

Vicar's Report 2024

"The one who stands firm to the end will be saved" (Matthew 10v22)

In the tenth chapter of his gospel, Matthew records for us the great mission charge that the Lord Jesus gave his disciples to spread the good news of the Kingdom. He is very clear that He does not promise anyone an easy ride. But if they will only bear the cost, then they can be sure that one day they will wear the crown.

At the time of writing, the General Synod is meeting to continue to work through the consequences of its decision in November to continue to implement plans to change the Church's historic position on marriage and sexuality. As a church, we have responded at a local level, and we prayerfully await wider developments. Whatever the outcome, we hold to Jesus' promise that those who hold fast to Him and His teaching will receive His salvation.

As a church we believe God has given us the vision to extend His kingdom by loving Jesus and sharing His love with others, that lives might be transformed by Him. The reports that accompany this share more fully how this has happened in the past year, but the following are some of the highlights:

Drawing in

Alongside the regular preaching of the gospel in our Sunday meetings, we continue to proclaim the good news of Jesus in different ways throughout the year. We have just completed another Christianity Explored course, which helps participants to engage with the challenge of Jesus through the gospel of Mark. Over the past year, we have held several Sunday “guest” services, which has provided an opportunity to invite friends and neighbours to church for a service especially aimed at outsiders, and we have been encouraged to regularly see a good number of visitors. We pray that they would encounter Jesus and be drawn deeper into the fellowship of his church through what they encounter.

In a similar vein, it was heartening to see attendance at Christmas services and events return to pre-pandemic numbers, and to welcome a very high proportion of visitors. A new initiative for this year was “Carols in the Churchyard”, which provided an opportunity on the last Saturday before Christmas for shoppers to hear the Christmas message proclaimed in song and word, and also to receive practical love in the form of a hot mince pie! Over seventy participated, and we look forward to this growing next year.

Although Beachfest was unable to take place this year, planning for summer 2024 is already well under way, and we pray that the Lord will use it as in previous years to help children and families encounter Christ.

At St Martin’s, Mustard Seed continues to go from strength to strength, serving our local community with hot food and fellowship. To this has been added since September Mustard Seed Plus, which has introduced opportunities to engage with the Bible for children, teenagers and adults.

Although not of an explicitly spiritual nature, in January we began a significant work on renovating the parish church, involving installation of a new lighting and sound system, as well as redistribution fans. We hope that these improvements will enhance the welcome we offer, and provide a more comfortable environment for people to encounter the living God in our corporate gatherings.

Building up

As always, the foundation of our corporate discipleship rests on the weekly exposition of Scripture in our Sunday gatherings. This year, we have grappled with the glorious truths of the finished work of Christ in the Letter to the Hebrews, considered the “I am” sayings of the Lord Jesus from John’s Gospel, heard Isaiah’s challenge to the world to recognise the living God, and continued to work through Matthew’s witness to the identity of Jesus. On Sunday evenings at the Gathering, we have been reflecting on the Psalms of Ascent, and have just begun a new series exploring lessons from the life of the prophet Elijah. I am always heartened to hear that the labour spent on preaching is appreciated, and that there is such an appetite for hearing God’s Word in our church family. I am also very grateful for all those who share in the preaching task, and give time to prayerful preparation in this vital work.

Alongside the weekly adult teaching, our CCKids ministry continues to meet and open up the Bible to our children and young people. We are so grateful to the team who faithfully plan and prepare every week, and who provide a fun and faithful space for growing young disciples. An exciting development has been the Youth Alpha which has been running alongside CCKids on Sunday mornings for our teenagers. We hope that this will help to ground our young people in a personal faith in an increasingly challenging world in which to be a follower of Jesus.

To help deepen our adult discipleship, this term we have launched a new monthly meeting called "Roots," aiming to offer space to for deeper teaching and group discussion than a regular Sunday service. Initially, we are tackling some of the core doctrinal themes of the Bible. In addition to this, we will be starting a whole-church discipleship initiative after Easter that will link both Sunday mornings and small groups that I hope will help all of us venture further into the gospel of Jesus and its application to our lives.

In September, we held a service of sea baptisms followed by confirmations, where six church members were confirmed by the Bishop of Lynn. After several years of prayer and waiting, we were excited to welcome Revd Julia Chamberlin as our Associate Vicar in December. Julia is holding special responsibility for our work with children and families in the benefice, as well as overseeing St Martin's and Roughton and Felbrigg, and we look forward to seeing work in these areas developing under her leadership.

Sending out

As a church, we have a strong heritage of supporting mission work both at home and overseas. This year, we have continued this tradition by supporting a variety of mission partners working in many different continents and areas, and have also hosted several of their representatives to raise awareness of their work.

In September, we said goodbye to the Rogers family as Ben moved to take up a new post as Associate Vicar at Crossroads Church in Earlham, and also Anglican chaplain to the University of East Anglia. We are extremely grateful to them for all that they have brought during their time with us. In December, we also marked the retirement of Revd Jennie Hodgkinson as our Assistant Minister, as well as John Hodgkinson's retirement as Cornerstone manager. Jennie and John have made an immeasurable contribution to the life of Cromer Church, and we wish them well in the next chapter of their lives. In January we welcomed Revd Joanna Haywood as our new curate, arriving from serving in the Trunch benefice to complete her curacy with us, and she is already settling in well.

Julia and Joanna's arrivals mean that our clergy team is now at full strength, and we look to the year to come with great anticipation of all that God will do. I am very thankful for everyone who contributes to our common life, whether in ways seen or unseen, paid or unpaid. I am especially grateful to our churchwardens Ivan Kimble and David Loades, our PCC secretary Mary Howard, and Lesley, Doug, Anna and Jo on the staff team for all they do to support the work of Cromer Church. Together we celebrate all that the Lord has done, and continue to trust Him for the future as He builds His kingdom in Cromer

Revd William Warren

PCC Secretary's Report

The PCC met 10 times in 2023, including an extraordinary meeting in April to discuss advice for evangelical churches responding to the bishops' proposals regarding Living in Love and Faith.

The Church Life and Growth item on each agenda looks in depth at key aspects of church life. In 2023 this included Mission Partners, the Vision, the final accounts, catering at St Martin's, use of church buildings, Living in Love and Faith, organ recitals, improvements to the Parish Church, Kintsugi Hope, church development tool and the Living Out survey.

As well as an update on the Electoral Roll, each meeting receives reports and recommendations from the Standing and Finance Committee, the Treasurer, Leadership Teams, the Safeguarding and Health and Safety Leads and Diocesan and Deanery Synods (when they have met in the preceding month). PCC also receives reports on the General Synod from Caroline Herbert, a Diocesan representative.

The Treasurer's Report is always a main item on the PCC Agenda. The PCC are trustees and, as such, have a duty to be good stewards of our finances. As a PCC, we work hard to achieve this and the Treasurer is to be commended for his diligence and for providing accounts that are easy to read.

Standing and Finance is the steering committee of PCC and is prescribed by Church Representation Rules. In order to make the best use of PCC time and to maximize efficiency and good governance the Standing and Finance Committee meets monthly to look at recommendations from the previous meeting and from the Leadership Teams, to ensure that items requiring further work are picked up, and to draw up the PCC agenda.

The Leadership Teams carry out in-depth work in areas where they have expertise and interest, before making recommendations to PCC. All PCC members are expected to serve on a Leadership Team and others, not on PCC, may be co-opted where relevant. Our present structure now comprises:

- Communications
- Youth
- Fabric
- Mission

Attendance was excellent throughout the year and members have worked collegially. I am very grateful to members for their commitment and faithfulness.

The PCC has complied in 2023 in all respects with the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding as required by s5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016.

Mary Howard, PCC Secretary

Cromer Church Electoral Roll Report for 2024 APCM

There were 291 people on the Electoral Roll at the 2023 APCM.

During the year 5 names have been removed from the Roll:

4 people have died and their names have been removed from the Roll

1 person has moved from the Parish and their name has been removed from the Roll

During the year 7 people have been added to the Roll.

The total number of people on the Electoral Roll at the date of this report is 293

**Glyn Purland
Electoral Roll Officer
22nd February 2024**

Finance

. The PCC is holding sufficient funds in reserve to continue in operation for the foreseeable future. Total unrestricted funds £404871.

Income

General funds have benefitted from two legacies totalling £65500.

The Parish Giving Scheme contributes 61% of planned giving with Standing Orders giving 28% and Envelopes 11%.

The Bookstall and Cornerstone both exceeded their income projections and provided net profits of £7300 and £18500. This is an outstanding effort and I thank the volunteers for their hard work during the year.

The Investment with NS&I was withdrawn and placed in a 6 Month Term Deposit with Lloyds Bank. As ongoing projects evolve, I plan to place more excess funds on 6 month term which will mean an expiry every 3 months rolling to ensure cash flow is not affected.

Expenditure

Diocesan Parish Share was paid in full, with £960 being paid to us by the Diocese for funerals held at a crematorium.

Staff salaries were over budget due to the higher than expected annual rise in the Church of England minimum living wage and the requirement for the church to pay towards pension costs for two of our employees.

Church Utility Bills were lower than expected. The heating systems in all of our buildings need to be under regular review to make sure they continue to be the most efficient options.

Bank Charges. Cromer PCC now holds bank accounts with Nat West, Barclays and Lloyds to limit the amount of charges we need to pay. I am having to carefully manage the amount of cash paid into Barclays and Lloyds to prevent us exceeding their charging

threshold. There are 62 regular givers still paying by standing order. If you are one of those, please switch to the **Parish Giving Scheme** so we can reduce that 62 to 1 transaction.

We are also facing a problem with bank closures. Only Nat West has a bank in town which we have been informed will be closing at some future point. This will cause us a major problem with the handling of cash, so if you are a regular giver, please sign up for the **Parish Giving Scheme** to reduce the amount of cash we need to physically pay into the bank

Doug Tuthill, PCC Treasurer

Fabric Report

This report is a brief summary of works carried out to the buildings, either owned by Comer Church, or for which the church is responsible, during the calendar year of 2023. This report does not cover the day to day repair works and maintenance which is considerable.

Parish Church

The works carried out during the year are:-

- Restoration of lead glazed window to toilet, following vandalistic damage - insurance claim covered part of the cost.
- Regular cleaning of the lead gutters to roof and associated minor repairs.
- Replacement of lighting to Nave and Chancel with modern LED.
- Final design and tendering for the above.
- Final design, specification and costs for the new destractification fans including hoists.
- New accessible toilet alarms fitted.
- New water heater fitted in the main toilet.
- Lighting made safe in the church lounge after a light fitting failed. Work carried out for a new design for the lounge lighting.
- Render repairs and redecoration in lime wash to areas at high level, accessible from the scaffolding erected for the relighting scheme.
- Glass balustrade to the step to the bookstall.
- Servicing of main heating, together with the gas-fired boiler servicing to the heating in the lounge and toilets.

St Martin's

Work continues to maintain the building in a good state of repair by keeping on top of minor defects as they arise.

- A counter top was installed across the back of the stage area at the request of the Mustard Seed Team and replacement taps were installed in the kitchen hand wash sink.
- As a result of the above, several 13amp sockets were installed in the Hall. Additional electrical work including the fitting of an alarm to the accessible toilet, a smoke alarm installed in the kitchen and new PIR control to the existing main door outside light installed. Other minor electrical works took place as part of routine maintenance.
- The sound system in the worship area was upgraded to include wireless microphones and a new sound desk.
- A new double-glazed window at the rear of the worship area was installed, largely funded by the legacy from Beryl Graveling.
- Three gas heaters in the worship area and one in the Hall were replaced following their failure to pass the annual inspection.
- Repairs to the electrical heaters in the lounge caused by vents being blocked.
- New electrical control switch fitted to the boiler.

- **Parish Hall**
-
- Works were completed to facilitate making the Hall ready for services held here whilst the church is closed for major works - PA and AV equipment.
- A new water heater was installed in the front ladies toilet.
- A new water heater fitted in the toilet adjacent to the rear school room.
- A gas heater replaced on the west side of the main hall.
- An exterior flue guard was replaced on an existing heater on the west side of the main hall.
- New emergency lights were installed after failure of some in the system. System retested and passed.
- Minor repairs and replacements to electrical sockets and switched fused spurs in the cafe and rear schoolroom.
- A new temperature-controlled tap was fitted in the accessible toilet.
- Alarm fitted in the disabled toilet.

Meadow Close

- Servicing of the central heating boiler.
- other minor repairs managed by the letting agents.

Generally

The overall condition of the buildings continues to be good. It is our aim and hope to pass our buildings onto the next generation in better condition than we received them. The scale and complexity of our buildings make this a challenging aspiration.

The Fabric Leadership Team, ably chaired by Simon Purslow, meets quarterly to discuss the needs of our buildings and to plan for the future. It prepares recommendations for PCC for the works needed to enable the good stewardship of our buildings to continue. The members of the Fabric Leadership Team are Nick Claridge, David Anderson, Dave Walker, John Hodgkinson, Ivan Kimble and David Loades. Notes of the meeting are taken by Mary Howard.

David Loades
April 2024

Repps Deanery Synod

Repps Deanery Synod 2023

Deanery Synod aims to promote Mission in the Deanery. Our Deanery, Repps, extends from Mundesley to Sheringham, plus some inland rural parishes including Roughton and Felbrigg. As well as the Licensed Clergy, Cromer has 5 lay representatives.

In 2023, Repps continued working alongside Holt Deanery with Revd Richard Lawry of Glaven Valley Benefice as Rural Dean and Revd Will Warren as Assistant Rural Dean.

There were 3 Joint Synods:

- 8 March 2023 at Holt, when we had a question and answer session with Archdeacon Catherine Dobson
- 16 July, Deanery Evensong at Blakeney
- 12 October 2023, at Mundesley with presentations from Clare Chapman, Community Connector, NNDC and Revd Julia Chamberlin, Norwich Diocesan Children, Youth and Families Team

2023 was a Deanery election year and those elected from Cromer were David Anderson, Anne Cottingham, John Hodgkinson, Mary Howard and David Orsborne.

Mary Howard

Safeguarding

Safeguarding Report APCM 2024

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk in the Cromer Church family is of the utmost importance. PCC complies with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' guidance in relation to safeguarding, Notices are displayed in each building and the correct practices are followed. These documents are reviewed annually, and the entries updated in the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard.

We are currently working at Level 3 of the Dashboard with a number of policies and actions which will be updated in the next few months. We will then be able to move to the next level.

The Church of England's Safeguarding training programme continues to be rolled out. There are now five training modules which are appropriate for different levels of engagement. The Diocese are now undertaking some training face to face for people who don't have access to the internet. It is important that everyone working with vulnerable groups of people should do the relevant sections of the training. All leaders of ministries need to encourage their team members to complete the training.

There have been no reportable incidents since the last APCM.

There are 50 names on the Cromer DBS list. Several people have more than one role which needs a DBS check. The list does not include the Clergy, retired clergy and those with Permission to Officiate who are checked by the Diocese.

Next Steps

We have worked hard to move forward in making Cromer Church a safer place for all and in every event that we deliver. Our aim for the few months is to ensure that everyone on our list has undertaken the appropriate levels of training.

Safeguarding needs to become an integral part in everything we do and in all our relationships throughout our church family. The responsibility for that lies with each one of us.

Alison Orsborne and Sue Brocklehurst
February 2024

Church Life and Growth

Small Groups

At the time of writing there are 15 small groups, with a total of 144 attenders plus associates who cannot attend but still are reckoned as members of a group. 2 groups meet on Mondays, 4 on Tuesdays, 6 on Wednesdays, 2 on Thursdays, and 1 alternates between Wednesdays and Thursdays. Most of the groups discuss the Bible reading of the Sunday morning service, but some use books or courses which are particularly appropriate for their group. In addition members support each other in prayer, and the groups are valuable means of exercising pastoral care. Not all members are members of this church, and several live outside Cromer.

In the past the group leaders met together once a term or so to review and look forward; this has not happened during the past year, but a meeting is planned for the beginning of next term. The teaching on Sunday mornings will follow Tim Chester's course of Christian discipleship entitled 'Life with Jesus'.

Tim and Frances have been co-ordinating the small groups for the past 8 years or so. The then curate, Peter Herbert, asked us to take over the co-ordination from him. We would be delighted to hand over this responsibility to someone else now!!

Praise God for the ways our small groups have provided fellowship and support for so many over the past year.

Pray that more small groups can be formed to provide easier opportunities for more people to benefit from belonging to a group.

Tim and Frances Britton

Rota and Coordinator for Holiday Ministry 2023

Thank you to all our volunteers, for their support and maintaining to be on duty from Monday until Thursday from the middle of May until the end of September.

The importance of a person being at the door welcoming visitors, is an inviting start to the Church, this also applies to the overseeing of the book and gift stall.

Everyone in the team was helpful and willing displaying their personal skills. Thank you.

I am aware that many volunteers have had a difficult year, and it is our responsibility to support and help and if possible be able to fill in at short notice.

We have had new volunteers start during the year, and have said goodbye to Margaret Smith who has moved.

Near the end of the season it was good to get together for an informal tea, to meet others on the team.

There were many encouraging comments in the visitors book.

This coming season I thank Janet and Roger who are taking on the coordination role, and with Gods help and guidance we pray for another successful year that the rota is filled, and by meeting and talking to our many visitors makes each visitor feel welcome.

Joyce Richardson

Book, Gift and Card stall

It has been a good year which appears to have gone smoothly, with lots of appreciation from many people who visit especially to be able to buy a Christian message.

Looking in cathedral shops I am surprised at the price they are charging. Prices have gone up, but I try and keep the cost equal or below online sites.

We kept to our budget, and exceeded our income . All sales.

Income £16.159

Expenditure £9.151

Stock approx. £3,000

We are happy to give more details regarding our suppliers and expenditure if you contact Glyn (books) Joyce (gifts and cards)

A special thank you to members of Craft to share that make the “ Cross in the pocket,” which are very popular. The cards now available at St Martins ,the 1st year has gone well.

Book Sales

The book stall offers a variety of new Christian books for adults, young people and children, together with good quality previously read books.

In 2023 we sold 310 new books including more than 40 bibles. Unsurprisingly, July and August were our peak months for sales, but books are sold throughout the year as we encourage all who come into church to take away a book for themselves ,or as a gift to help grow their bible knowledge and faith in our Lord Jesus. Glyn Purland

Our aim; to maintain a good variety of Christian books especially bibles, greetings cards and gifts that speak of God’s word to pass on to others with Christian Love. Thank you.

Joyce Richardson and Glyn Purland

Cornerstone

Cornerstone café in the church will open on Tuesday 28th May and will be open every week Tuesday to Thursday 10AM to 4PM until Thursday 26th September.

Cornerstone last year was very much appreciated by locals and visitors to the town and proved to be a very successful year, having good conversations, and sometimes praying with people.

I am very grateful for the volunteers that have already put their names forward to Sue Brocklehurst who will be organising the weekly rota for me, many volunteers have already put their name on the rota and there are others that have enquired about volunteering and who are yet to be interviewed and trained.

I am also grateful for church family members who have spoken words of encouragement to me and offered to support me in my new role as Cafe manager.

I would appreciate your prayers for opportunities to always have time to talk with visitors and locals. I would also value your prayers for me as I take on this new role as cafe manager, praying that I would make the right decisions for the benefit of the church and all who enjoy using the cafe .

Ray Loten

Audio-Visual Team at the Parish Church

The audio-visual team operates the sound desk, **manages the livestream for those who can't worship with us in church** and shows **the on-screen words and images for services and other events**. **During 2023, a team of nine people volunteered to do this at our main services with several others running the systems for weddings, funerals and other events.**

Their commitment and technical expertise make a significant contribution to our worship. They give freely of their time and talents, and we are blessed by having a group of skilled people willing to serve God in this way.

We receive many appreciative comments (and some suggestions for improvement!). We welcome feedback and try to meet the needs of our congregations, our musicians and those who lead services or preach.

We've continued to develop our expertise in using the equipment and we've particularly enjoyed having the new screens, which have improved visibility for everyone.

An item for praise and thanksgiving

- We thank God for our audio-visual team, for all they do to help services run smoothly and effectively and for making them accessible for those who can't get to church.

An item for prayer

- We pray that God will help our audio-visual team to continue to work well together, attract and train new recruits and operate our systems in a way that brings glory to God and helps people draw closer to Him.

David Orsborne

April 2024

Musicians at the Parish Church

We are blessed to have a group of 18 musicians who give freely of their time and (considerable) talents to lead the music at the 10.30 and 6.30 services at the Parish Church. During 2023, we also supported the musicians at St Martin's for a few months, when their resources were particularly stretched.

The team is led by Simon Purslow, Jon Mardlin and David Orsborne, and we are fortunate to have such a large group of skilled people willing to serve God in this way.

Our aim is to harness the power of music to help people worship God. The musicians receive many appreciative comments about this (and some suggestions for improvement!) and we try to respond to these in a way that meets the needs of our congregations and helps service leaders and preachers in their roles.

We welcome musicians of any age and would love to see more people joining in as singers or instrumentalists with this important ministry.

An item for praise and thanksgiving

- We thank God for our musicians and praise Him for the beauty and power of music that can lift and inspire, communicate and touch the heart where words alone fail.

An item for prayer

- We pray that God will help our musicians lead well, attract new members to the team, and continue to develop their skills in a way that brings glory to God and helps people draw closer to Him in worship.

David Orsborne

April 2024

Music Ministry at St Martin's

Last year was challenging for us, with John Atfield gradually being unable to join us as he waited for his major heart operation. This was successfully performed in the Autumn. It was a very difficult and worrying time for all, but we praise our Heavenly Father for keeping John safe and restored to health, and able to return to the piano by Christmas.

Thank you to Andrew McCandlish and Paul Rosier who supported us on the piano, and also to Claire Warren playing one week. Thanks to those from the Parish band who stepped in to cover our holidays.

Thank you as always to Dave Walker and Diane Hartley on the sound desk. Dave organised the introduction of our new Sound System upgrade last September, making setting up so much easier now. We are very grateful for his hard work.

Since Christmas, things have settled down, and we are back to our regular group of Don Wilson, the Attfields, the Browns, plus Andrew on the organ. Our aim and prayer, is always to sing and play to the best of our abilities, and to aid the congregation in their worship to God.

Items of Praise:

- * The success of John Attfield's operation and recovery.
- * The new sound system
- * The way God continues to lead and guide us through music and song.

Items for Prayer:

- * We still need someone to learn how to set up the equipment to cover absences and assist on occasions.
- * New volunteers who would be interested in being committed to working with us. Please speak to Lynda if you feel God is calling you with your gift.
- * Pray for Anne as she still waits for her operation.
- * We would all appreciate prayer, as the years take their toll on our energy levels.

Lynda & Mike Brown - Leaders of Music at St Martin's

Open the Book – Cromer Junior School

The team of eleven members continues to participate in weekly Wednesday afternoon assemblies, narrating or taking on character roles in Bible stories, adding a quiet reflection and an invitation to join in a prayer. We participate on a rota basis and it's good to have had two new members join in the autumn. The children love to be involved actively in the stories.

In September the Bible Society launched a new programme for Open the Book - 'The Storytelling Bible', with introduction and conclusion materials. It contains consecutive stories, throughout the whole Bible and consequently we can share a greater range of stories following a three-year timeline.

We appreciate the many props available, made by members of the church, which bring the stories to life and thank all who have created them.

The Junior School carol service was in the church, led by Will, with Open the Book sharing the Christmas story. At Christmas, once again, Cromer Church gifted a book from the Bible Society to every child in the school. Easter stories, were presented, very movingly, at the school by the team.

In February there was a get-together, assisted by Rev Julia Chamberlin, with the teams from Suffield Park Infants, Roughton and Overstrand schools to share and support each other.

Prayer points:

Gratitude for the opportunity and welcome we receive throughout the whole school year.

Pray that 'the seeds sown' in the lives of children will be built on.

Frances Britton

Open the Book – Suffield Park Infants School

We continue to take the assembly at the infants school on a fortnightly basis. The school is very welcoming and the children look forward to the storytelling. We are thankful the school is keen to explore links with our churches and we helped the children make spring gardens last year. In addition the reception year visited St Martin's Church and were treated to a special OTB presentation. The links continued when Year 2 children visited the Parish Church during the Christmas Tree Festival. They were shown around the church, with special reference to baptism, and made a Christmas wreath. We also gave each school child a Christmas story book.

We would like to place on record our gratitude to Anne Atfield, who has been leading the group since OTB began going into the school. Paul Neale and Janet Rosier have taken over as joint leaders, with Janet liaising with the school and Paul producing the scripts for the presentations. There are seven other members of the team, but not all members can attend each session, so we pray for new members to join us.

Along with other teams, we have experienced difficulty with the new OTB material produced by the Bible Society, which is more relevant to children older than those aged 4-7. We had a zoom training session and Bible Society were informed of our concerns. They have agreed we may use words more suitable for our setting and add dialogue to the narration to bring it alive. Nevertheless we would feel more supported, if age appropriate material had been produced in the first place. Stories began this school year with creation, Abraham and other Old Testament events and more recently have included the miracles of Jesus, the lost sheep, Zacchaeus and the Easter story.

Paul Neale and Janet Rosier

Women's Ministry

Monthly activities are organised for Women's Wellbeing and are open to all. The numbers have been increasing as church family members invite friends to join us.

Over the last year we have had walks at Felbrigg, one including a visit to St Margaret's church for the flower festival - and another in the rain! Also, two local history walks around Cromer, learning about the people commemorated by the blue plaques and, more recently looking at the Heritage boards. A walk around the church with Alison Osborne learning about the history of the building was our event in May. In November we had a Christmas craft day, thanks to Sue Brocklehurst for helping with this, and in December a short walk along the promenade and pier followed by coffee at Cornerstone. We have enjoyed two

continental breakfasts, thanks to Jackie Austin for the catering, followed by indoor curling. We also enjoyed visiting St Martins for coffee following a walk through the woods to Suffield Park.

Thank you to everyone who has helped organise various events and to all those who have joined us. Please pray for more helpers to organise activities other than the walks as there are those who enjoy coming along to these but are unable to come on the walks.

Look out for the new events and please bring a friend.

Brenda Stibbons

Monday Meals and Mustard Seed

Thursday Drop In

We are really getting to know the people who come. The clothes exchange once a month brings new people in each time. We have a small team of willing helpers and are encouraged by Louise Cox, the community worker, and hopefully soon the Citizens Advice people on a regular basis.

Mustard seed meals

We serve on average 64 meals each Monday. At the moment it would be good to welcome some more elderly folk at 2pm. We take 6 meals out to people in their homes. We have a wonderful team of helpers for which we are enormously grateful and blessed. It is a great privilege to be a part of this.

Mustard seed plus

This follows the meals. The younger children have a session in the church, the older children in the lounge and the mums in the hall. These are evolving groups but we have the assurance that God is at work and we want to go His way. Please thank God for what he is doing, for all the volunteer helpers and pray for His guidance to. Know how to progress.

Ann Graveling

CCKids

In a new poll conducted by the Church of England, of the over 8000 people who responded, '64% stated that they became Christian between the ages of 0-4, 13% from 5-10 years old, 8% 11-18, and just 5% thereafter.' These figures show just how important our children's work is and just how vital it is that we as a church family commit to praying for children to come to faith. In order to become more fully equipped and to ensure we don't stand still, several of the team have or are undergoing the following training:

- 1 All Inclusive? - Urban Saints course hosted by The `Lighthouse, Sheringham on how we can be a more inclusive CCKids group.
- 2) Enrolment on 'Catalyst30K course by two members of the CCKids team. This course is 'part of a national church initiative to equip 30k new children and youth workers to help the church meet its vision of becoming younger and more diverse' for volunteer and paid children's workers. Norwich Diocese is a pilot diocese for this course and we are delighted that we have had a chance to develop our skills and reflect on our practice in CCKIDS.
- 3) One Big Day Conference- 'A day of teaching, resourcing and equipping for anyone involved in ministry with children, young people and families'

. We have steady numbers coming into CCKids each week and they have become a very precious unit, yet we long for more and more children to hear and respond to the Gospel, knowing Jesus as their personal friend and Saviour. So we have high expectations of what God can do, and are excited by Simon's encounter with Jesus in Luke 5.

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." 5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.

On a more practical note, major purchases for this year have included CCKIDS fleeces, new toys for the church lounge, a new washable rug and some sensory toys to support children and families with additional needs. The new layout of the Church lounge has created a more welcoming and inviting space, and we have had many favourable comments by parents. The number of children now enjoying the space, says it all!

CC Kids Team

CC Toddlers

We had a visit from one of the congregation a few weeks ago and it was a real blessing to hear her say that, despite the noise level, there was a real sense of peace in the room. Praise the Lord that His presence is palpable at CCToddlers.

We have been given a large amount of baby clothes, as well as maternity and breastfeeding clothes. These have been well received by the adults who have enjoyed rummaging through and finding things of use to them. I have suggested that if the parents and carers have clothes their children have grown out of, that they might like to bring them along for other parents.

Jane will be back with us after Easter, please pray that she doesn't overdo it. Fiona has left us, but we now have Sara Holman-Howes and Victoria Blogg who are regular helpers and Eileen Woodfield has been helping out this term while Jane has been out of action, which has been a real blessing. Both Eileen and Fiona have said that if we are short on team that they would do an occasional morning, which is brilliant!

The Christmas sessions where we told the Christmas story went very well, with the older children taking much more notice than previously. For Palm Sunday and Easter I did stories which I got from Care for the Family. A small group of older children were very

attentive and most of the parents seemed to be engaged as well. I will be trying to do stories more often – please pray that I can find appropriate stories.

We are trying to have some sort of craft activity each week as long as we have sufficient leaders. Jane, Sara and Victoria are all enthusiastic about doing this, but please pray that they will be able to take on the organisation of these activities as I don't have time.

The other thing I find hard to do is sorting something to put in the weekly update on a regular basis. Again, please pray that, between us, we can keep the rest of the church informed about what is happening.

Thank you for your prayers and support.

Caroline Ashworth

Mission Partners

Michelle Proctor

Michelle is now the only individual mission partner supported by this church - all the others are organisations. Michelle has committed herself to long term service with SIM at Mukinge hospital in Zambia; such dedicated service deserves our dedicated support.

Mukinge hospital is a Christian hospital which seeks to provide the best possible care with fairly limited resources to people living within a large area of western Zambia, and at the same time to share the gospel of Jesus Christ by word as well as deed. The hospital employs three chaplains, and the staff are also able to share and pray with their patients. Michelle started in paediatric care, but has since become a trained anaesthetist. As such, she is often on call to work in the theatre; but she also enjoys the times when she can get involved in looking after babies and sharing with their families.

Michelle also has duties looking after volunteers and visitors coming to the hospital, and caring for other SIM mission partners in the hospital and beyond.

Thank God for the anaesthetic help received so far this year, and pray for more anaesthetists to be appointed from May onwards so that the busy operating theatres can keep going!

Tim Britton

Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS)–

CPAS exists to help every person in the UK and Republic of Ireland to hear and discover the good news of Jesus Christ through the ministry of local churches. They are Patrons to 690 churches, providing them with resources and from the beginning of their formation

have organized Residential Holidays for young people between 8 and 18 years old where they can explore being a follower of Jesus in a very safe environment.

In the summer of 2023 they ran 60 holidays for 2,880 children in 31 venues with 2,348 volunteer helpers. Alarming figures show that right now, half of young people are not in church with two-thirds of churches having fewer than five children in their congregation and with finances being stretched in most households CPAS have launched an appeal to raise enough money to provide 1,000 children with a bursary so they can attend a CPAS holiday.

Two resources recently launched shows the diversity of help CPAS give. Firstly an innovative joint project between CPAS and Church House Publishing has produced "The Thrive Collection". With most Anglican Churches in the UK now in groups called Multi-Parish Benefices. This collection is a proven and targeted resource developed specifically to help them release their potential. Another resource is "Navigating Leadership as a Local Minister" which provides on-the-job-training for leaders of Fresh Expression or Church Plants who may not be ordained or paid and may have received little leadership training.

Please give thanks for all who share in the CPAS Mission whether staff, patronage clergy, regular intercessor, a trustee or staff.

Please pray for a good response to the appeal for money to help provide bursaries for 1,000 young people to attend Venturer or Falcon Holidays.

Vivienne Benford

Hope into Action

The charity had a change in 2023 when the founder, Ed Walker, handed over the reins to a new CEO, Jon Kuhrt. Jon lives in London and has worked in homelessness for 30 years, for four of which he was adviser to the government on rough sleeping.

In the past year, 20 new homes were opened, which is more than have ever opened in a calendar year. The geographical reach of the charity also increased into Northern Ireland when a church in Belfast welcomed tenants into a newly opened house.

Churches generally work on a franchise system. There are currently 30 franchises in the country, and this year the charity has plans for four new locations.

However, we in Cromer are so fortunate to have the support of the Norwich office and its friendly and enthusiastic staff. This means that if we decide to become further involved, we do not need to open a franchise. This also means that the staff have not far to travel to visit us. In November they came to both the Parish Church and to St Martin's to talk about their work, and they are due to return for a meeting in April to talk in more detail and answer questions. Give thanks that we can benefit from this support, and that so much work is already happening in Norwich to help the homeless. There are currently 9 houses in Norwich, and others around Norfolk.

Let's pray that the charity's work can continue to increase and spread the love of God. We all know that the need to house the homeless has become acute. Let's also pray for our local office and for us to be guided by God regarding possible next steps for our Church.

Katherine Checketts

London City Mission

London City Mission are experiencing many encouragements and challenges at present. They are grateful for our renewed support, in prayer and giving.

The 65 missionaries and 22 associates are engaged in a vast variety of ministries and are partnering with 75 churches across London, equipping Christians to share the Gospel effectively.

They are involved in children's and youth work, in school assemblies and Bible clubs, holiday clubs and camps, mums' and toddler groups, caring for trafficked women,(such as offering free hair styling and manicures!) and sharing the love of Jesus with them. There are also English Language classes. There are gyms and football clubs for needy young men,. There is ministry in care homes and clubs for the elderly. There is outreach among Muslims and other religious groupings.

Very important is the work of the Webber Street Centre for the homeless. There daily hot meals are provided as well as showers and fresh clothes and especially friendship! The centre caters for 1,000 guests a year. This year LCM is committing £500,000 to update the Centre, long overdue!

Needless to say all these ministries are accompanied by the faithful and loving sharing of the Good News if Jesus!

The regular door to door ministry and running of Book tables continues, offering the Scriptures and tracts in a vast array of languages, to meet the needs and spiritual hunger of folk from every people group under the sun! For every year huge numbers from all over the globe are flocking to London, in search of employment, fulfilment, prosperity or simply refuge, but often instead experience destitution, exploitation , rejection and loneliness.

This is the huge challenge LCM seeks to meet every day. The financial resources are stretched to the limit . The missionaries themselves come from a diversity of ethnic groups which enables them to get alongside the needy people they seek to help. 1 in 2 Londoners don't know any Christians, so friendship evangelism is vital! And encouragingly many people are turning to Christ!

Jesus' commission was to 'Preach the Gospel to every Nation', and in London 'every nation' is on the doorstep !

What a challenge, what an opportunity!

Elizabeth Bridger

The Bible Society

We believe the Bible is God's gift to the world. We want everyone to discover its message for themselves.

Because of that, we translate the Bible and make it accessible in people's heart languages. We bring it into public spaces where its voice can be heard, for instance through the National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast or The Pitch film fund. We tell its stories, for instance through the Open the Book programme with primary-age children. We encourage people who've never thought the Bible was for them to explore it for themselves and see life through a different lens.

In many parts of the world, the key barrier to people engaging with the Bible is availability. At home, it's simply that many people don't think the Bible is relevant to them. We're determined to change that, and we're working across society to help people recognise the value of the Bible.

We're developing resources that help local churches to engage more deeply with Scripture and sending thousands of volunteers into primary schools to share Bible stories with a generation almost entirely unfamiliar with them. And in politics, the media and the arts we're bringing the Bible to life in fresh, exciting and relevant ways.

Pray for:

- Our Open the Book teams
- Providing peoples overseas and their indigenous populations with bibles in their own language.
- Supplying media and materials to help new Christians develop their faith.
- The leadership teams of the Bible Society.

David Anderson

Mission Without Borders

MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS' vision is to reach people for Christ through responding to the practical. Emotional and spiritual needs of poor and vulnerable people in six Eastern European countries where they work: Ukraine, Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania. MWB is focussed on building lasting relationships with people, in partnership with churches in their communities, by helping families lift themselves out of poverty. In each country MWB has programmes to help families and children thrive, including providing educational support through after school clubs and scholarships, giving humanitarian relief, caring for the elderly and disabled and running summer camps for children and refugees.

MWB staff and volunteers in Ukraine, Romania, Moldova and Bulgaria have supported families fleeing the war and taken food and hygiene parcels to those trapped by the fighting. By working in partnership with 345 churches, supported by over 1000 volunteers, funded by donors and upheld in prayer, it is estimated 85,000 families have been helped in 212 communities, 35,000 refugees helped with accommodation, 46 trucks with 25pprox. 96,000 food and hygiene parcels sent, 156,000 meals served and 26,000 Bibles and other Christian literature distributed. MWB coordinators in Ukraine are under extreme pressure supporting families traumatised by the war. We are asked to pray for the families they work

with, especially those with fathers on the front line of the army, to thank God for loving acts of service done in his name which has brought people from the east and west together in unity, to thank God that the area of Rivne has been relatively safe from attack but to pray for an end to the war and that God would lead Russia towards peace and reconciliation.

The bi-monthly MWB 'Partnering in Prayer' leaflets in our church buildings are informative. May I encourage you to make use of them!

Anne Attfield

North Norfolk Branch of Good News for Everyone

Our Branch has four volunteers who love Lord and wish to see many people in our locality have access to the Scriptures and come to saving faith in the finished work of Christ.

Praise God, He supplies all our needs and thanks to the generosity of members, Friends, and churches we are able to purchase Bibles, New Testaments and different pictorial magazines containing scriptures and often a Gospel.

Over the School academic year, we hope to deliver Youth New Testaments to all year 7 students attending secondary schools in our area we have almost visited all the schools; only Fakenham and Reepham schools have not replied and North Walsham school has declined the offer. We usually spent £1500 in purchasing these Testaments. Of course this year we have yet to finish the task so cannot give an exact sum.

Please pray that these young people will be interested enough to open the scriptures and read them or at least keep them until inspired to do so.

In May we shall visit all hotels and B&Bs in North Norfolk and offer to place Bibles in guest rooms. In future, we will revisit all the residential homes to offer Large Print New Testaments to the residents. As you can imagine, it's a huge task and we need more help.

Praise God He prompted Jenny Syder to join the team and she will be busy helping in this work.

We are also involved in evangelistic work: we have joined Christian Farming Link to offer New Testaments to Aylsham Show visitors. We have already purchased 200 Testaments ready for the August show.

We welcome anyone who loves the Lord to join us in this work.

Jenny Jacquier. Branch Chairman

Open Doors

Over the past year:

- 11/2 million people received Bibles and Christian literature.
- 31/2 million received Biblical training and support through "Standing Strong in the Storm" seminars.

- 3/4 million received practical aid and instruction in how to set up small businesses to support their families
- Many Christians have been supported by Open Doors in the law courts as they face false charges, and subsequent prison sentences.
- Prayer is central to the work of Open Doors.
- Regular prayer webinars, and prayer breakfasts are arranged.

Praise.

Over 100 MPs attended this year's World Watch launch in parliament in January

Prayer.

Forthcoming elections in India in April / May will affect Christians already persecuted there, as it is 10 on the World Watch list.

Judith Anderson

Christians Against Poverty

C.A.P. is of course primarily a debt counselling organisation and has since it began in 2010 has brought 20,000 in Britain out of debt. It also has helped so many folk with budgeting, finding jobs and also through their workers led many of their clients to personal faith in Christ. However it has recently felt emboldened to be more involved in politics, so that they not only help those caught up in debt, but also focus on the causes of poverty.

Did you know that at this time some 14 million folk are living in poverty (not having enough money to feed and house a family) here in the UK. 54% of people have to skip meals every month and 1 in 10 feel life is not worth living (poll by YouGov/CAP polling in Sept. 2023)? So it is requesting our Government that Universal Credit should be increased so that all can afford the basics.

Through local churches CAP hopes to impact communities in both practical and spiritual ways. Undergirding all their work is prayer. The CAP staff meet every day to pray together.

During this past year Sally Bossingham, Cromer Church member, and employed by CAP, gave a very inspiring talk during October when there was a focus on the work of CAP.

We feel it is important to keep CAP at the forefront of people's minds at a time when many folk are struggling with debt and financial and spiritual needs.

So please pray for the work of CAP and for a local debt counselling centre to be established in the Cromer area, so we can refer those in need to such a centre.

Jess and Anne Mary Stubenbord