

Linton Team of Churches Profile

Setting the Scene

Welcome to our Team Profile!

We are a group of five parishes in south-east Cambridgeshire, close to the borders of Suffolk and Essex, and with a combined population of just over 6,200. Linton, with about three quarters of the benefice's population, is the largest settlement, situated approximately 10 miles from Cambridge.

Formerly mainly farming communities, the village residents now have diverse occupations, with some employment in local businesses. Many commute to nearby towns - Haverhill, Cambridge, Saffron Walden and Newmarket; others travel to London for work.



Linton water tower - Linton's landmark

Worship in each parish centres on its medieval church. Information is provided in the individual profiles which follow. The team currently has a loose series of associations, rather than a tightly integrated working pattern. The new Team Rector will be part of a Ministerial Team, which includes a House for Duty Team Vicar, an Associate Priest, a retired priest with PTO and four LLMs. This group meets regularly, for ordained and lay ministers to support each other. PCCs operate separately, although churchwardens across the benefice meet occasionally.

Pastorally the Team Rector, supported by the Associate Priest, takes responsibility for Linton and Bartlow, and the Team Vicar for Horseheath, Castle Camps and Shudy Camps. Services are organised on a similar basis with the occasional Team service. For example, during August, Compline by candlelight is held in Shudy Camps. People often travel to one of the other villages to support each church's community events. In past years we have held a team social event in one of the five parishes, raising money for a central benefice fund, which goes towards paying for the costs of the clergy travelling about the benefice.

There are five schools, two of which (Castle Camps Primary School and Linton Infant School) are Church of England schools, each involved with its local community. Linton also has a Junior School, and a Village College for students between 11 and 16; its catchment area encompasses all five villages. The Granta School is a community special school. There are three excellent and highly regarded sixth form colleges in Cambridge.

The Health Centre in Linton is well-equipped and serves several local villages including those in the Linton Team. Other local facilities vary across the five parishes: Shudy Camps, for example, has no shop, pub or community facility besides the church, whilst Linton supports a small but well-stocked Co-op supermarket, a variety of small shops (including a pharmacy, Post Office, chiropodist, optician, dentists, hair stylists and bakeries), a coffee shop and three pubs. There is a frequent bus service between Cambridge and Haverhill running through Linton and Horseheath.

Our Vision

Although we are separate parishes, each with its own character and distinctiveness, we share a common vision, to become ever more grounded in God, who creates, redeems and sustains. At the same time, we endeavour to become more embedded in the fabric, lives and consciousness of the communities we serve.

The Person we're seeking (Person Profile)

Year 2 children at Linton Infant School were asked what they would like the new Rector to be like. Their responses, shown in the diagram on the following page, were perceptive and insightful. In essence, in order to help us fulfil our vision, we seek a person who:

- will offer constructive challenge, and enable us to be bold in our witness and our vision, and with the experience to help realise our potential;
- enjoys working collaboratively with clergy and laity of all ages, listens effectively, leads and offers inspiration, to support the teams that are already in place;
- feels at ease with people within and outside the church, engages pastorally in our diverse communities, and is accessible and perceptive;
- develops and refines our gifts and skills to sustain and extend God's work in our communities;
- is courageous in preaching the gospel openly, truthfully and cheerfully; someone who is an inspirational teacher and good communicator;
- has some experience of rural ministry and an understanding of how rural life is changing;
- is comfortable with different styles of worship and sensitive to the worship needs of different communities;
- is willing and able to travel between different churches in the benefice.

In return, **we can offer you:**

- A strong and enthusiastic Ministerial Team to support and enable you in your ministry.
- Committed laity in each parish, who underpin the life and mission of the churches in their communities.
- A warm welcome, hospitality, caring and prayerful support, through good times and bad.
- A modern, four-bedroomed house with garden, close to the Recreation Ground and less than 10 minutes' walk from the church in Linton.

Please would readers note that we would have loved to illustrate this Profile with more photos of people – but we do not yet have the necessary consents in place under GDPR.

Someone who
speaks clearly
so I can hear.

Teach us
new songs
and actions.

Peace and quiet
are important so
we can hear.

We want them to do
Zoom services if we
cannot come to church.

Tell us stories
where we are
involved.

Can they be
funny and
sometimes
laughing?

What would you
like the new
Team Rector to
be like?

We would like to
see them in school

Can we keep
Nicola?

We would like them to say
prayers, and we liked when
they sang the Blessing for us.

Someone who lets us be
involved.

We like lighting the candles,
reading, the stories and
singing.

Someone who will
vary church, keeping
it fun and
interesting.

Bring stories to life by
dressing up and acting
them.

We liked the story when the
sheep went missing.

We would like to have an
activity for during or
after the service, perhaps a
picture to colour.

St Mary the Virgin, Linton

Mission

Our Mission at St Mary's is encapsulated in the phrase 'Rooted in God. Rooted in Community'. It sums up Our Mission Action Plan (please see Appendix). The Plan has run its five-year course, and will be reimagined so as to make our mission more tangible.

We want to reach those parts of our village that have little or no contact with church. We aim to become more accessible, inclusive and representative of all those living in our parish. We aspire to be an inclusive church, open and welcoming, regardless of gender, class, age, ethnicity, sexuality or (dis)ability. It is crucial that our new incumbent not only shares that vision, but is able and willing to guide and work with us to realise that aspiration.

Worship

St. Mary's Linton is a sacramental, forward-thinking, liberal-minded church. Vestments are used at main services, with occasional use of incense. We have diversified our pattern of worship style in recent years to try to draw in those with little experience of church. This is consistent with our aim of being open and welcoming to everyone. We celebrate and affirm every person and try not to discriminate. Lay people participate fully in services and we have begun to celebrate particular aspects of Ministry at some Sunday morning services. An audio-visual system is used to enrich our services.



Pattern of Worship

Our current pattern of gathered worship on a Sunday is as follows:

- 8 am: BCP Holy Communion
- 10 am: CW Holy Communion (except 4th Sunday)
- 10 am: Together with God (4th Sunday)
- 3 pm: Messy Church (3rd Sunday)

'Together with God' is a 'service of the Word' led by LLMs Cathy and Nicola. Here a particular welcome is extended to families of recently baptised children. Themed activity bags were offered to children attending other 10 o'clock services, a practice we hope to resume following the pandemic. A small group of parents is also currently helping to re-style the Children's Area in church. Messy Church, which is lay-led, was limited to occasional meetings in the churchyard during the pandemic, but has now resumed in-person services.

St. Mary's has a rich and much valued musical tradition. We have a number of gifted musicians who support worship and there is a two-manual organ of quality for which we have an ongoing restoration project. The adult choir sings on most Sundays, with a music group leading the singing on the fourth Sunday each month. David, our enthusiastic and talented Director of Music, organist and choirmaster, chooses a wide range of styles of hymns and songs for services as well as anthems and seasonal material for the choir to sing. We hold choral evening services at key festivals, and team services once or twice a year.

Bell ringing is an important part of our worship. We have a good ring of six bells and an enthusiastic group of ringers. Weekly bell-ringing practices take place and Sunday services are announced by bells, as are the major festivals.

Other regular services include a weekly school service (see page 6) and a Thursday morning CW Communion service. Communion services are held monthly for residents at Symonds House Nursing Home and fortnightly at Nichols Court Retirement accommodation. One evening a month, 'Space for the Spirit', a quiet reflective service with a different theme each time, is lay-led. Daily offices are at the discretion of the incumbent.

Seasonal Services



Annual Remembrance Service, Linton Cemetery

We bring members of the community together to celebrate festivals, such as a joyful village Carol Service at the beginning of Christmas week, while Remembrance Sunday and All Souls are quieter and more reflective. Advent is marked by a choir-led evening Service of Light, whilst lay-led daily morning prayer and reflection take place throughout the seasons of Advent and Lent. In 2019, 143 attended services on Easter Day. Midnight Mass and Christmas Day saw 326 attendances, the number of communicants being about 40%.

The average Sunday attendance is difficult to estimate because of the diversity of worship we now offer. We deliver paper copies of the 10 am service with a printed talk to about twenty households each week for those who are sheltering or housebound. Altogether we estimate that we're in touch with about 80 people each Sunday.

Discipleship, Prayer and Study

For many, discipleship is rooted in private devotion and corporate worship centred around the Eucharist. There are also study groups which meet each week throughout the year. In Lent this year we looked at how various individuals and groups understood the Bible, with each sermon followed by an in-depth exploration of the topic in the study groups across the Team. The understanding gained provided the basis for groups to go on and study the 'Living in Love and Faith' course during the summer.

Prayer is central to the life of St Mary's and there is a parish prayer meeting on the first Saturday of each month. Meanwhile, activities such as Make Lunch Linton (see below) have prayer supporters in the congregation.

Life Events

As the parish church, we are here to serve the community through each life event, from the thanksgiving for a new child, to the celebration of a marriage, and finally to saying farewell at the loss of a loved one. Normally we average about 10 baptisms a year, 5 weddings and 15 funerals. Local clergy also take a number of cremation services.

Baptisms are an important way we connect with families, with Gill, our ALM Baptism Minister, supporting the clergy in preparing families and maintaining contact with them.

Children and Youth

Children and Families Ministry

Children and their families are important to St Mary's church family, although there are currently few children in church on a Sunday morning. We have embraced the Church of England's 'Growing Faith' vision to enable faith formation and growth in partnership with local schools and the children's households. There is a strong mission aspect to the work led by Sarah, our Children and Families Minister. Key aspects of this Ministry are as follows:



- Tots in Tow is a church-led group for pre-school children, toddlers and babies and their carers. It meets weekly during term-time in the Village Hall and offers friendship and support to adults and a safe place to play for the children.
- Tots Plus brings stories and song to residents in sheltered housing. The vision is to link young families and older generations together, creating mutual respect and care.
- Make Lunch Linton is a new venture offering a fun morning of activities followed by a hot lunch for families who face food insecurity and so might struggle during the school holidays.

- Messy Church meets monthly on a Sunday afternoon. People of all ages share the experience of creatively exploring a Bible story, including a time of worship and followed by a shared tea.
- Baby Steps is a five-week course for new parents looking at the spiritual nurture of young children. It includes play, songs and story, and translates the vocabulary of faith into language used in parenting.
- Friday School service is a busy and sometimes noisy time when we welcome the whole of Linton Infant School and the children's carers to worship. This is followed by coffee, cake, and a chance to chat.

Youth Ministry

- Children from Year 5 upwards are welcomed at St Mary's Youth Group (SMYG) where they are challenged to apply Bible teaching and church tradition to their lives. Michael, our Associate Priest, is currently leading the group in exploring confirmation, and preparing to serve as young leaders.
- St Mary's contributes substantial funding towards the support of a full-time Youth Worker supplied by Romsey Mill, a Christian charity in Cambridge. Youth work is co-ordinated in Linton by the Beacon Youth Trust. Alongside its Christian orientation, there is a secular focus, financially supported by Linton Parish Council.
- There is opportunity to develop links with Youthinc, the Deanery's youth group, which we support financially in the appointment of a youth worker. As yet, these links are somewhat tenuous.

Other Aspects of Ministry

Besides working with children, youth and families, St Mary's is involved in several other activities. For example:



- An active and well-supported **Events Committee** organises social events which foster outreach within the community and also raise funds for the church. Pre-Covid, large-scale events such as Flower Festivals, Scarecrow Festivals and Stand-Up Comedy nights were held; more recently a Vintage Tea and a Village Photo Trail competition both proved very popular.
- The **Mothers' Union** branch has 30 members. It meets monthly, often with visiting speakers, and most members are actively involved in church life.
- We have a commitment to reaching out to the wider world through our support for Christian Aid Week over many years, and by responding in practical ways in times of crisis. A small

group joined together to collect clothing for refugees in camps in Calais, for example, and a new group has recently been convened to explore ways of responding to the crisis in Afghanistan.

- The parish is also heavily involved with the **Granta Deanery**, with the treasurer, lay chair and secretary currently coming from our congregation.
- Our main contact with **Linton Free Church** is through Christian youth work and our shared Trusteeship of the Beacon Youth Trust. Chris, the Minister at the Church, is also part of the team leading the Friday Infant School service.

The Impact of Covid-19

All of our lives have felt the impact of Covid-19 and church life has inevitably been affected too. 'Rooted in God: Rooted in Community' requires us to be proactive and visible in the community, available and accessible to all, and centrally concerned with sharing the gospel, social justice and equality. So, although the last eighteen months have been challenging, they have also presented new opportunities for engagement and commitment.

Reaching out

- The Linton Community Help Team was set up in April 2020 and included members of the church volunteering alongside others to run a food bank or perform simple errands for villagers who needed extra help.
- At Christmas the volunteers distributed Christmas lunches, food parcels and small gifts to lonely and isolated people.
- At the same time, families with children who qualified for Pupil Premium were supplied with 'Boxes of Hope', containing food and craft activities.
- The decision to hold Tots in Tow in the pavilion garden as soon as possible was a real source of joy and encouragement for some who would otherwise not speak to another adult all-day.
- Learning to be Church outside the building also led to an Advent Trail round the village in 2020, with a different window unveiled each day of Advent to tell the Christmas story.
- A number in the village were stunned by the closure of the church building at a time they felt they needed it most. As soon as possible we re-opened the church daily for private prayer, staffed by volunteers. The many fruitful conversations which arose reminded us how beloved St Mary's is within the village, to non-church-goers as well as regular members of our congregations.



Ready for a post-pandemic tea-party



Embracing new technologies

The inability to hold normal services in church during the first lockdown meant we had to devise ways to sustain the congregations. Those leading services made a huge effort to embrace new technology. Over time we developed daily podcasts of Morning Prayer and services on Zoom or Facebook Live. Simultaneously, we connected with those unable to engage with these technologies by delivering paper copies of Sunday services. Whilst we used St Martin's voices in many services it was a real joy to hear recordings of our own choir being used.

Meanwhile, advertising 'Activity Bags' for school holidays on the village Facebook page was a great success, with numbers taking them rising steadily, enabling us to build relationships with more families than we would reach at a Friday morning school service.

Where are we now?

Our vision to be 'Rooted in God. Rooted in Community' has been something we have sought to live up to these last eighteen months. It has been a challenge, to be, and to demonstrate the truth of this in our corporate life.

The pattern of worship existing pre-pandemic has now been re-established (currently with some Covid secure measures still in place), but we haven't returned to where we were. If Covid has been a time which brought some of us closer together, it was also a time when we drifted apart. We are working hard to build and re-build relationships, but once familiar faces are no longer seen. Some have been contacted by telephone, others visited by our pastoral group, but we are still conscious of missing people within our congregation.

However, there also are many positive outcomes of the pandemic which remain in place:

- The main Sunday service is live streamed on Zoom, enabling some who are otherwise unable, to join in worship.
- Service sheets with sermons are still being delivered.
- Space for the Spirit remains on Zoom, with far more people attending each month than was the case when held in church pre-pandemic.
- Arising out of the need to meet outside, Tots Plus (page 6) continues as a community outreach opportunity, linking families with older residents.
- We are still active in helping those in need of food, both through Make Lunch Linton and continuing our practice of supporting the food bank in Haverhill.



Yet we remain conscious that there is much we wish we could do. For example, we know there is much loneliness amongst elderly people in Linton, but we currently lack the resources to help them. This has been a time when we have had to recognise that we cannot do everything that we want to do all of the time.

Where God is leading us

We believe God is calling us to be rooted in Him and in the community. There is an enormous challenge here but also a rich opportunity. We are on a journey, embracing new ways of worship and being Church, as well as continuing to value our traditions; developing fresh enterprises with the village which embody our commitment to social justice and inclusiveness.

We need a priest who will help us achieve our aspirations, but will also help us to listen more carefully to God's will, to share, reflect and challenge, to help us prioritise and be even more visible to those with whom we live, work and interact.

You will not be alone. Besides the fellowship of colleagues in the other parishes, you will have the active support of those whose work is mainly or solely focused within Linton:

- Linton's Ministry Team includes Michael, our active Associate Priest, Lesley, a retired priest and long term Linton resident with PTO, and three LLMs: Cathy (Parish Safeguarding Officer), Nicola (Chair of the Infant School Governors) and Sarah (Children and Families Minister). All make invaluable and proactive contributions in so many ways.
- There are two ALMs: Gill (Baptism Ministry) and Sue (Pastoral Ministry), also part of the Ministry Team.
- Pam is licensed as an occasional preacher and also leads on activities in support of Christian Aid.
- The PCC employs a part-time administrator, Anne, who often acts as the first point of contact for inquiries and provides secretarial support to the Rector.
- We have an engaged and committed PCC, with active committees which take lead responsibilities for digital and communications, finance, fabric, children and families and events
- A Pastoral Group acts as a focus for those in particular need of prayer or visiting, including taking Communion to housebound people.

Finance

The annual reports and accounts can be found on our website – see link provided below.

Parish Share and Fundraising

Although our Parish Share has risen over the last few years to reach £65,300, our policy has always been to pay the share in full. Most members of the congregation donate through the Parish Giving Scheme or by Standing Order. The congregation responded positively to the Gift Day in June 2021 and raised over £6,000 in one-off gifts and an increase of over £300 per month in planned giving, resulting in a total of nearly £10,000. The PCC retains reserves of around £50,000, which are being transferred into ethical investments.

Grants

The **Friends of St. Mary's** (a group comprising church and non-church people from the village) make a very substantial, ongoing contribution towards funding repairs and development work on the building. The last Quinquennial report was in 2020. We anticipate carrying out the repairs from this in 2022 alongside an ambitious project to relight the church. The Friends are willing to cover the QI costs in full and contribute to the cost of the lighting scheme, but some additional fundraising may be necessary.

The church also receives annual grants from the **Parish Council** and the **Anderson Trust**, a small Linton-based charity, for specific projects.

Giving

We are committed to giving 10% of income to charity, and last year donated just over £8,600 (a significant proportion of which is given to The Beacon Youth Trust). We also regularly support USPG and Christian Aid.

Expenses

The cost of the Team Rector's telephone and broadband package are paid by St Mary's PCC and reasonable expenses of office may also be claimed.

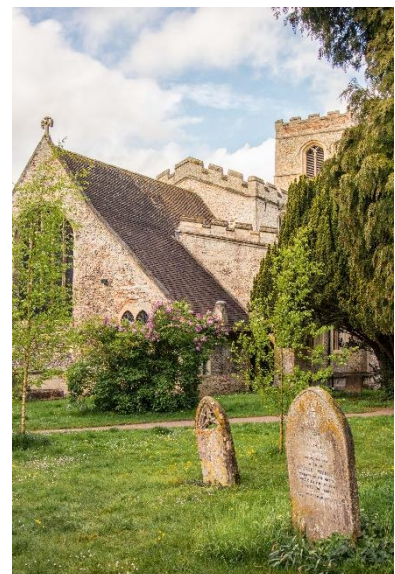
Buildings and Church Land

The **church** mainly dates from the fifteenth century but has some earlier Norman stonework, and is perpendicular in style. It has a capacity of around 200 and is faithfully looked after on a day-to-day basis by Nanette, our dedicated and committed verger. The church fabric is in good order.

The **pavilion**, constructed in 2006, lies adjacent to the church and acts as a meeting place and social centre. It accommodates about 50 people and has a toilet, kitchen and disabled access. Its garden was used by Tots in Tow and Messy Church during summer 2021.

Statutory responsibility for the maintenance of the **churchyard** was transferred to the Parish Council in 2004. Day-to-day upkeep is sustained by the 'Monday Gang' a group of volunteers from the congregation and village. Whilst closed for burials, a small area is maintained for interment of ashes. Services are occasionally held outside, and we are considering how we might make best use of the churchyard to join the Cambridgeshire Churchyard Conservation Scheme.

A **peace garden**, planned, planted and maintained by volunteers, lies to the south of the churchyard. This is well-used by the community and recently became part of the Quiet Garden Movement.



A new **rectory** was purchased by the Diocese in 2009. Located about half a mile from the church, this is a modern, four-bedroomed property with a separate entrance to a study/meeting space and toilet.

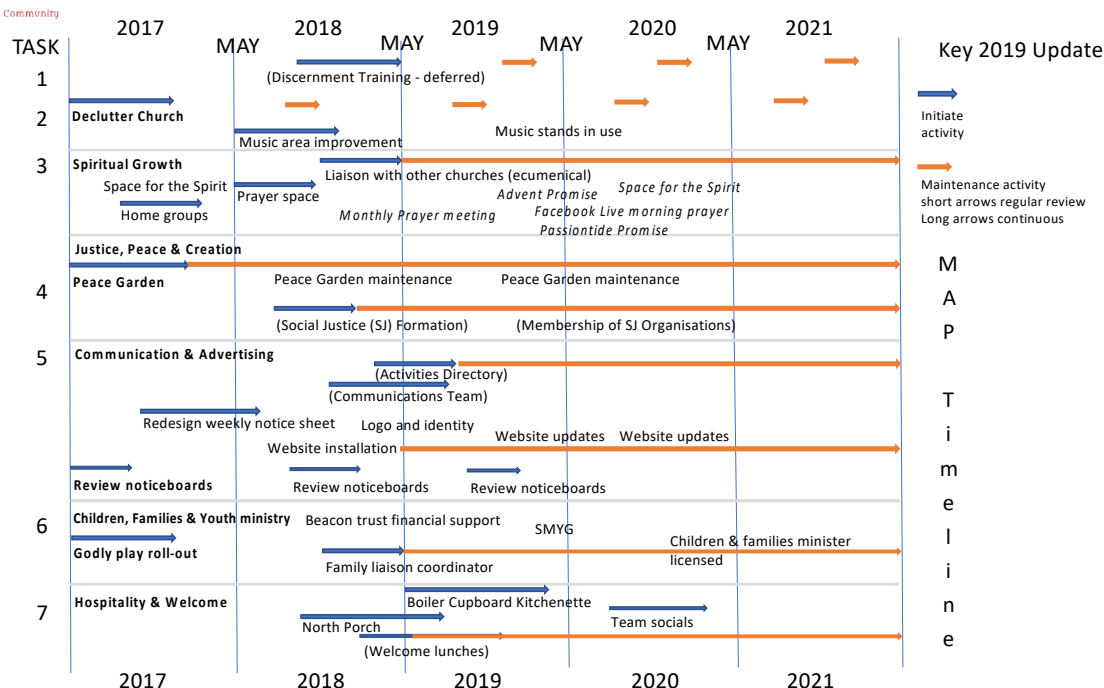
Useful links

St Mary's Church website	https://stmarylinton.churchinsight.com/
Annual Report	https://www.stmaryslinton.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?id=286752
A Church Near You	https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/13819/
The Beacon Youth Trust	https://beaconyouthtrust.org
Linton News	https://www.thelintonnews.co.uk/latest-news
Linton Parish Council website	https://linton-pc.gov.uk/

Appendix: Mission Action Plan



St Mary's, Linton MAP Timeline 2019-2020 update



St Mary's Church, Bartlow

Mission and Ministry

Although the congregation at Bartlow is small, we are faithful, loyal and very friendly. Our friendship is genuine; we are a caring and supportive fellowship. We enjoy both traditional liturgical services as well as more informal and creative family services. Services have been held outside, especially the annual pet service and last year's Carol service, both of which were well attended. Children are warmly welcomed to the family services where they are actively encouraged to be involved and activity packs are provided. Evensong is well-loved and attended by members from the other Linton Team churches.

Our pattern of services are:

- 1st Sunday - Congregation led
- 2nd Sunday - Family service
- 3rd Sunday - Evensong (BCP)
- 4th Sunday - Holy Communion (Common Worship)

There are opportunities for change and wider engagement within this small village community.

The Village Community

Bartlow is a small village of about 40 houses (106 people), and has an award winning pub/restaurant. Our village has a vibrant social life and villagers rally together to support each other in times of need. The Bartlow Village Association (BVA), runs a lottery and other fund raising events. For the past few years the BVA has run a charity walk that has raised well over £100,000 for the Linton Health Centre, many local charities and church fabric. Villagers happily help on the church cleaning and flower rotas.



The Church

St Mary's is a Grade 1 listed building, dating from around 1300 AD with later additions. The Norman Round Tower is a rarity in Cambridgeshire and houses the three original bells which were all cast and hung at the same time in 1440. In 2014 a major project was completed to conserve and restore the medieval wall paintings in the nave combined with redecoration of this area. These paintings generate a lot of interest and there is a real love of the church building from the villagers. St Mary's is on the footpath to Bartlow's famous Roman Tumuli known locally as the Three Hills; this and the church attract a lot of visitors with an interest in history.



With the help of Cambridgeshire County Council and other charitable and individual donations, a new kitchenette and WC has recently been created to enhance the amenity of the building for Church and community use. Bartlow has recently committed to the Cambridgeshire Churchyard Conservation Awards, a project which is involving the community in creating the wildlife gardens, the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of St Mary's beautiful Churchyard.

The Bishop of Ely's visit to open the new kitchenette and WC, July 2021

All Saints' Church, Castle Camps

The parish of Castle Camps lies in the S E corner of Cambridgeshire on some of the highest ground in the county, at 400 ft above sea level. It is approximately fifteen miles from Cambridge and in close proximity to the M11 motorway, Audley End Railway Station and Stansted Airport. The parish is flanked to the north and south by the counties of Suffolk and Essex, and hence by the Dioceses of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and Chelmsford respectively.

The parish church of All Saints is situated in the centre of the parish, although the main village is now three quarters of a mile away, with hamlets of Camps End and Olmstead Green on the opposite side. The building is sited within the curtilage of the historical Camps Castle boundaries. There has been a building on the site since around 1100 AD. The sister church of St Mary's Shudy Camps is a five minute drive away, and there is a United Reformed Church in the village, with whom we have shared fifth Sunday of the month services over the past few years.

The village has a population of approximately 700, of whom the working members mostly commute for regular employment. There are also some family farms.

The churches of Castle Camps, Shudy Camps and Horseheath are served by a 'house for duty' Team Vicar, currently the Revd Dr Ian Fisher, who lives in the Vicarage in Park Lane, Castle Camps. Our LLM, Lindi Kent, works alongside Ian. Eucharistic services rotate around the three village churches and on the first Sunday of the month the service is held at Linton.

Mid-week Holy Communion services were held on Wednesday mornings before lockdown, and it is hoped to revive them later in the year. A study group which had been meeting, also before lockdown, for a period of about fifteen years, is another activity we would hope to reinstate when conditions allow.

We currently have a total of 20 persons on the Electoral Roll.

In 2019 we held a series of events to commemorate 150 years since the writing of the hymn, 'O Jesus I have promised', by John Ernest Bode, then Rector of the parish, who wrote the hymn for his children's confirmation in 1869. Bode is buried in the churchyard, and is our claim to fame.

Prior to the pandemic, fund-raising events were held by the PCC, but the main fundraising thrust comes from the 'New Friends of All Saints', who independently put much time and effort into raising funds for restoration purposes.

Major works to the roof were carried out in 1987, and to the tower in 1995; in 2004 the bells received attention, and in 2007 the south-facing windows were restored. Further works have



Church Hog Roast

been carried out to the nave and the chancel in the past fifteen years. We are currently trying to update the restoration requirements listed in the quinquennial report of 2017.

There is a Garden of Rest by the church driveway, and a burial ground nearby, where the most recent graves are to be found.

Church notices, along with newsletters, are incorporated in the 'Camps Review', a quarterly publication distributed throughout the parish by volunteers. There is also a parish notice board in the High Street and a church notice board in the church porch.

To date, we have paid our quota in full.

The Primary School in the village is a Church of England Controlled school, with a roll of 140. It draws children from the local catchment area of Castle Camps, Shudy Camps and Horseheath, as well as from parts of Haverhill (four miles away). There is a place for a



Foundation Governor on the Governing Body. The school is a 'feeder' school to Linton Village College, from which children can move on to Sixth Form Colleges in Cambridge at age 16.

We held a 'Thanksgiving' service at the end of September, followed by a social event in the church grounds, to provide an extended welcome to villagers and to thank God that we are able to meet and sing together once

again with the easing of Covid restrictions. It was an opportunity to meet and share food together, as well as raising some money for church funds.

We support the Vision adopted by the Diocese of Ely, and thus, 'We pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ.'

All Saints' Church, Horseheath

Description of Parish

Horseheath is in the County of Cambridge, close to the borders of Suffolk and Essex and spanning the main A1307 road to encompass Cardinals Green. Jurisdiction lies with Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. Horseheath Parish Council are well supported by the local District Councillors. Population is 350 – 400 with no predominant occupation. There is a good spread of ages, but very little ethnic variation.

Formerly a mainly farming community, the villagers now have diverse occupations with many commuting to nearby towns; Haverhill, Cambridge, Saffron Walden and Newmarket are all within easy reach. There is some arable and pasture land, a few small businesses and a motel-type public house. There is a part-time post office but there are no shopping facilities. The village school closed some years ago and is now used as the village hall which serves as a form of community centre for various village activities.

Buildings and Churchyard



For historical information about All Saints' Parish Church, see the pamphlet available on request. The church is generally well maintained having been extensively renovated over the years and the architect's quinquennial requirements have been implemented. The churchyard is now officially closed and maintenance has been passed via the Parish Council to the South Cambridgeshire District Council. An adjacent piece of land has been

provided by the Parish Council for burials. Floodlighting was installed for the Millennium with the assistance of the Church Floodlighting Trust. More recent additions are a toilet, kitchen area installed in the Tower, underfloor heating system and a new floor. Restoration of our Bells has been undertaken to mark Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee. We have no church hall or other outbuildings and the vicarage for the Team Vicar is in Castle Camps.

Worship

The general monthly pattern is as follows:

- 1st Sunday - Sunday Club for children all ages 10 am Evensong and healing service 4 pm
- 2nd Sunday - 10 am Holy Eucharist Group Service at Castle Camps
- 3rd Sunday – 10 am Holy Eucharist Group Service at Horseheath

- 4th Sunday – 10 am Holy Eucharist Group Service at Shudy Camps

All services are based on Common Worship. Average attendance when the service is held at Horseheath is 20 and there are 17 members on the electoral role. There is a House Group that meets from time to time on Tuesday evenings.

Vesture

Non-eucharistic – surplice, scarf and hood

Eucharistic – surplice and stole

During the past ten years there have been 10 baptisms and 5 confirmations and 4 weddings.

Teaching

A Sunday Club for children has been started and the children are encouraged to join family services. Children from the village attend school in Castle Camps where the Team Vicar has an involvement. We have not sought assistance from Children's Officers. In the past Castle Camps School have used our Church for their end of term services and for other special events (such as Harvest). Unfortunately, due to cut backs in funding this has not taken place this year.

Fellowship

In a small village like Horseheath there is close fellowship between regular churchgoers, strengthened by meeting at other times than at church services. Fellowship with members of other churches in the group has also developed as a result of joint services and special occasions.

Administration

Members of the PCC assist in organising events, paperwork in connection with church projects, minutes of meetings etc.

Finance

The PCC pays parochial working expenses in full. The Parish Share has been paid in full (2015 - £4499.64; 2016 - £4797.51; 2017 - £5025.06; 2018 - £5297.37; 2019 - £5567.57; 2020 - £5816.81). There are 11 Gift Aid Registrations. The Church is fortunate in receiving income from the Horseheath Church Trust for its maintenance. The trust was set up after the sale of some land some years ago. Regular Gifts are made to the Earl Haig Fund and the Church of England's Children Society. Donations to other suitable causes are made on an individual basis. There are no Liabilities and the last set of accounts are available on request.

Ministry

Whilst the Team Vicar is the primary leader of worship, the Team Rector and other qualified leaders play an important part in leading worship at Horseheath from time to time. We are fortunate that a very competent lay reader and other clergy are based in the Linton Group and their contribution is greatly appreciated. There is a commitment to collaborative ministry.

Ecumenical

There are no other places of worship in the village.

Wider Church

There is participation in Deanery events. Our group of churches has fostered closer links between the five churches involved over the past years. We do not have links with other specific churches outside our group.

Features of Parish Life

Stewardship has been discussed by the PCC and encouraged among the membership. We have not had a recent Flower Festival, but do have an annual Summer Fete, which is our main fund-raising event during the year. In addition we hold coffee mornings, seasonal bazaars and other activities, in the church and in the village hall, to try to involve as many people as possible within the parish, and generally speaking all these are well supported.

The Future

In common with most other parishes, we would very much like to bring other people in the village into the fellowship of the church. We do get excellent congregations at the Annual Carol Service, when the church is full, and better than average attendance at Easter, Harvest and Christingle Services (the latter being one service which usually attracts some younger folk). We ought to be able to build on this. The issue of a monthly newsletter 'The Venture/Connection' distributed to each house in the village is a useful vehicle for information and invitation to join in the fellowship of the church and this should be continued.

St. Mary's Church, Shudy Camps

The Village and Church

The congregation includes local people from Shudy Camps and the surrounding villages of Castle Camps, Horseheath and beyond. Shudy Camps is a scattered rural community, with few young families and little employment in the village. There are three farms in the parish and the largest employer is the Quaker run therapeutic community for young men at Glebe House.

We have a 10 am Eucharist on 4th Sunday in rotation with the other parishes. Occasionally evening services are held. A series of 4/5 evening Complines in Summer draws a broad congregation, including Linton church goers.



The Church is the only communal meeting place in the village, open daily, and receives support from committed Christians and non-church goers with strong emotional ties to the church and surrounding area. For instance, the boys from Glebe House help to maintain the churchyard.

Facilities include a small kitchen, storage, a disabled toilet, and oil central heating. This 13th Century Grade 2* listed Church was restored in the 19th Century. Details of more recent repairs are outlined in the Quinquennial report. The church has a substantial open churchyard.

There are two Church Wardens, a treasurer and an organist.

Fellowship

The PCC organises various events throughout the year, the annual harvest supper is very popular with villagers, and café church events are held 4/5 each year, which also includes a short religious service in the chancel, for those who wish to join in. The annual Christmas concert is organised by parishioners and includes a professional opera singer. The church is also the polling station for voting during elections.

Finance

The church relies on donations from the community and income from fund raising events such as the Harvest supper and café church. The building is also used for local Parish Council meetings. Reaching out to the community, organising more social activities, and encouraging locals to make use of the building, is aimed at providing much needed funds.