

## ST PETER'S CHURCH COCKFIELD - REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2023

2023 was a globally tumultuous year with wars in Ukraine, Gaza and Israel, Sudan and other conflicts throughout the world. In addition 2023 was a year when the perils of climate change became much more real in Europe with more extreme weather events. However, St Peter's continues to be a great example of stability and continuity in the (now larger) Cockfield Benefice. The church attendance of 19 adults, on a "usual" Sunday (as defined by the Church of England Statistics for Mission) and has not yet fully recovered from the disruption of the Covid pandemic years. Sadly, some stalwart members of our congregation have passed away and moved away. More positively the substantial numbers attending Easter, Mothering Sunday, Harvest and Remembrance Sunday, Advent and Christmas were very heartening. It is of special note that the attendance of parents and friends at school services and Nativity plays (both CATEY and Primary School) was excellent with more than 100 attending the School play. This is continuing good news in the face of the overall decline in church attendance regionally and nationally.

A special thank you is due to Rev Canon Sharon and the Ministry team for their dedication to the pastoral needs of our community, especially as the Benefice has grown to include Gt Whelnetham, Stanningfield and Bradfield Combust. The Churchwardens are thankful that there are always willing members of the congregation to read lessons and lead intercessions.

St Peter's is very fortunate that a willing group of ladies and gentlemen organise the rota for flower decoration, brasses, grounds & buildings maintenance etc. and who work away quietly in the background. The coffee and tea after the morning services are much appreciated and it is good that the congregation lingers long for enjoyable fellowship. Visitors always comment on the warmth of welcome they receive.

Special thanks go to the Fundraising team for their tireless work in organising the many events during the year, Coffee morning and Plant sale, Emergers Concert, Musical events, Suffolk Church singers and the ever successful Summer Lunch (by kind permission of Jeremy and Sue Cole)

Considerable maintenance work to both buildings and grounds were undertaken during the year and well supported by the village who responded to requests for work parties. The Quinquennial survey was completed with no major issues to address

St Peter's increasingly reaches out to our extended community to explain our Christian commitment not just on Sunday but every day of the week. There are Home groups, hospital and home visits to the sick and infirm. Assistance with transport is provided to those who can no longer drive to church and hospital appointment visits.

The work with families and children continues: through Cockfield Primary School in the form of weekly assemblies, Open the Book, Collective Worship and the annual Holiday Club. Messy Church is also now firmly established with numbers steadily increasing. Members of all our Benefice Churches and friends are co-ordinating or involved in different aspects of these.

St Peter's continues to be a very outward looking Parish and money is raised for local and national charities, both at times of extreme need and as part of our annual giving. The food bank collection container at the back of the Church, for those less fortunate in our local community, has been very well supported throughout the year.

This year we have contributed generously to local farming charities, Christian Aid, Royal British Legion (20% higher than 2022), Crisis at Christmas in addition to special collections at funerals for specified charities.

The occasional offices that have been undertaken this year are as follows:

Baptisms    1:    Weddings    1:    Funerals    3:    Electoral Roll 75:

Norman Kelly      David Smith  
Churchwardens