



# Profile



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

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## Foreword by the Bishop of Ely, Stephen Conway

Thank you for taking an interest in this post in the Diocese of Ely. The role of incumbent of the Ely Team is significant to the Diocese as it provides leadership of the largest church in the Diocese outside Cambridge (St Mary's Ely) and some strong village churches, as well as the ChristChurch plant. The team is engaging with Ely Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee, with the prospect that some of the villages may join another benefice, so that the incumbent based at St Mary's is able to concentrate on growing the church in Ely, as the town expands rapidly.

There will be a period whilst the pastoral scheme is in development, during which the incumbent will need to maintain a watching brief over all of the village PCCs, but day to day leadership will be exercised with the Rural Dean and Interim Priest in Charge of Ely Villages. The incumbent will need to engage with this process to ensure the best outcome for St Mary's, Christchurch and the villages.

The Diocese of Ely is committed to renewing in Christ its mission and ministry. The next stage of Deanery planning will see us focus resources on growing younger congregations and reaching further beyond our existing congregations, especially in areas of new housing. We will look to these parishes to continue to play the major role they have in the past as we engage with these challenges.

In the light of these mission priorities, we need clergy who are:

- Confident in God - rooted in prayer and scripture.
- Committed to personal holiness and striving for professional excellence.
- Adventurous and visionary, willing to see the church through the eyes of others.
- Mission-focused leaders who want to see the church deeply engaged with schools, serving the community and connecting with community organisations of all kinds.
- Resilient people who take risks, accept failure and try again.
- Empowering and enabling collaborative ministry.
- Open and willing to work with and learn from others.

We understand that the debate in Synod about the welcome of people in same sex relationships has divided and perplexed some church communities. As bishops, we are committed to supporting those clergy who would wish to welcome to their church same-sex couples in order for them to offer prayers of dedication to God and to receive God's blessing (once these prayers are permitted), as well as those who for reasons of belief and conscience are unable to do so. Likewise, we respect PCCs with these different positions. We are grateful that these parishes have opened up a generous route through difference, and we pray that candidates will feel assured that in applying for this post, they will be welcomed and supported in their leadership.

Enquiries about this post can be made to the Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech, Ven Richard Harlow, on 07415757527 or [archdeacon.handw@elydiocese.org](mailto:archdeacon.handw@elydiocese.org)



*Stephen, Bishop of Ely*



*Dagmar, Bishop of Huntingdon*



*Richard, Archdeacon of Huntingdon*

## About Ely Parish:

We are a large church (electoral roll 298), housed in a 13th Century building, whose interior was transformed last year to create a welcoming, flexible, accessible space. Our congregation is diverse in age, theological background, preferences for worship, and missional focus. Despite this we are a united body who care for each other.

Our strapline is:

***"Whoever you are, Wherever you are from, You are welcome here"***

and it is important to us that all are welcome, whatever their needs, relationship status, age, or life circumstances. Many in our congregational listening – including our Pathfinders group (ages 11-18) – described the church as "growing". Official numbers are similar to pre-Covid, however we are welcoming new people, who would consider themselves part of the church, especially in our groups throughout the week.

## Ely Parish Team and Staff

The team comprises:

Rector (Priest-in-Charge): Vacant

Team Vicar: Phil Marsh

Curate: Ruth Holmes

ChristChurch Leader: Graham Biss (LLM)

Children and Families Missioner: Vacant

Operations Coordinator: Kirsty Smith

Administrator: Elizabeth Anderson

Churchwardens: Liz Taylor and Poppy Crooks

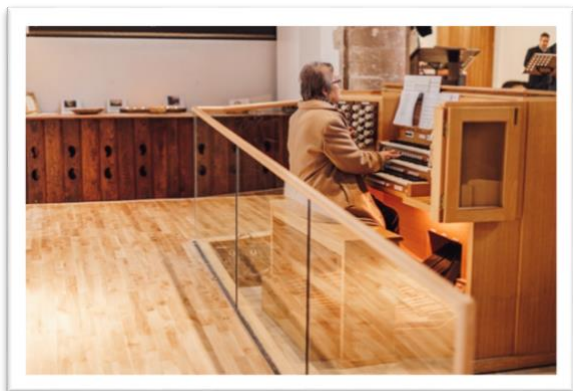
Treasurer: Piers Coutts





## Services and Groups:

St Mary's holds three services on a Sunday, one mid-week, and continues with online provision. Our congregational listening showed that while we are not yet fully settled into a new pattern of worship, there are often newcomers joining and growth has been seen at Nine45, at Eleven15, and at our Market Day service. People noted the sense of warmth and openness of the church, valuing hospitality after services, and noting the substantial contribution of volunteers.



The service pattern is as follows:

**Eight15:** A service of Holy Communion, average weekly attendance is 44 people. Described as “our traditional communion service”. Largely retired and older congregation. Traditional in style although a mix of backgrounds are represented. Hymns accompanied by the organ. After the service many people stay for an extended time of fellowship over coffee – and, once a month, breakfast (provided by the Nine45) - in the church rooms. Our congregational listening identified that we have a large group of mainly older people who are committed to the provision of traditional worship.

**Nine45:** An informal service which meets around tables, average weekly attendance is 68 people. This service includes Holy Communion twice a month and a breakfast service once a month. Described as “our intergenerational service”. The music is modern worship songs, led by a band. Attended by those across all ages, from babies to grandparents. Families with older primary aged and secondary aged children are well represented at this service. Our JAM Packed group in their listening session talked about how at this service they appreciate symbols and pictures to help them understand things, creative ways to pray, and talking about the Bible with adults.

**Eleven15:** Described as “Our contemporary worship service” which includes Holy Communion twice a month (plus fifth Sundays) and Ministry with Children twice a month. Average weekly attendance is 78 people. Worship is led by a band. A mix of ages are represented: those who are recently retired and families with younger children (earlier in primary school, toddlers, and babies) are particularly well represented. Our JAM Packed group in their listening session talked about the opportunity to go out and play games as part of this service. Others noted the fellowship after the service which was enjoyed, a surprise given the service is late in the morning.



**Market Day:** A well-attended (average attendance 31) and growing weekly service of Holy Communion every Thursday. This is led by retired clergy, the Rev Stephen Leke. A short, said communion service attended by mostly retired people. This is our most traditional service at St Mary's. It is followed by our coffee morning.

**Online:** Each week our preacher at Eight15 and Eleven15 records their sermon, and our worship pastor compiles this into an online offering with songs, sermon, and prayers. Our congregational listening showed us again how valuable this continues to be for some.

Since our building transformation in 2022 we have had a number of opportunities to join together for festivals and celebrations. These have included: thanksgiving for the Building Transformation Project (BTP); Christmas Carol Service; Christingle; Easter Sunday; our APCM Sunday. These services have also given an opportunity to explore different layouts e.g. banquet style tables for Christingle. Our congregational listening showed that these 'together' services are appreciated.



Midweek groups with a discipleship focus include: JAM Packed (Year 1-6); Pathfinders (Year 7-13); Homegroups with a mix of ages, both daytime and evening; Be Still (contemplative prayer service); Mothers' Union. Our congregational listening showed that we want to continue to be rooted in our discipleship as we reach into the community; we want to see these groups grow as well as our outreach activities. Morning Prayer takes place on WhatsApp Monday – Saturday, and there have been ad hoc prayer meetings. Praying together and prayer ministry are areas we would like to see develop.

Pastoral Care is coordinated by a group of Pastoral Team Leaders, currently under the oversight of Katy Coutts and Ruth Holmes (curate) alongside the ministry team. We have growing ministries around bereavement and in care homes, regular visiting and home communion, practical pastoral help, and the beginnings of a ministry to those struggling with mental well-being through Creative Minds. We are in the process of commissioning two Anna Chaplains.

We have a fair number of funerals and weddings, often supported by our retired clergy. Our baptism ministry slowed during the BTP but is picking up speed under leadership of our Team Vicar.

## ChristChurch North Ely:



Over the past seven years, St Mary's has planted ChristChurch, a daughter congregation, into the Isle of Ely primary school on one of the new housing developments. ChristChurch begins around 3.30pm on a Sunday afternoon as church members gather to set-up and pray. At 4pm everyone is invited to arrive to enjoy hospitality together and the service begins at 4.30pm. It takes place around tables and is often discussion-based or creative in style. 21 people attend ChristChurch. ChristChurch is currently engaged in a time of discernment in response to acknowledging growth has been slower than expected. Within this we have identified the fact that God has been preparing us for the missional activity which we are now starting to see bloom – someone at our first discernment event described it along the lines of “a trickle of hope followed by an explosion of missional activity”. Another person wrote: “My sense is that God wants us to realise that a small tight knit faith filled community can still be a beacon and contribute to community in our part of town”.

In our congregational listening ChristChurch is described as inclusive, safe, hospitable, a place where people feel able to explore their gifts, caring, unique, creative. There is a strong desire within ChristChurch to explore formal recognition as a fully inclusive Church through the Inclusive Church initiative, however, this would need PCC approval.



## Community

St Mary's has the big vision "to share Jesus' love with every home in Ely". Our congregational listening picked up both on the opportunity and challenge of that statement. We are developing good links with some aspects of the local community and want to see these flourish. There are also many opportunities for growth, particularly around mental well-being and new housing developments throughout the city.

### Use of our church building for the community

The recently transformed church building is being well-used for community outreach and we see this as a great opportunity. Our congregational listening identified a strong concern to see this continue and not to fade. With this, we have seen that we need to develop pastoral care, volunteer teams or paid staff, for example a caretaker, and hospitality to facilitate using the building for the community in a meaningful way.

In addition to groups mentioned above, the following have taken place in our church and church rooms:

- Under-ones group (weekly)
- Under-fives group (weekly)
- Warm / Open Space (weekly)
- Bereavement Café (monthly)
- Market Day coffee morning
- Christmas toy-bank (several days)
- Ceilidh
- Over 1000 people came through the doors in the first few days of re-opening the church
- Afternoon Tea Party
- Youth event with (large) inflatables
- Coronation screening and teas
- Concerts (several)
- Conferences (both diocese and outside groups)
- Primary school visits
- 'CSI Easter' events (several)
- Book launch event
- Mothers' Union celebration service
- Monday Club carol service
- Church regularly open for tourists and local visitors
- Bellringers ring on Sunday mornings, and practice on Fridays.



Use of the Church Rooms includes:

- Mothers' Union
- Monday Club
- Creative Minds
- External hires
- CAP Office





We have a desire to see these groups link well with our worship and discipleship, sharing faith as we build community. Our JAM Packed group want to see us incorporate concern for nature - God's creation - in what we do.

### ***Reaching into the wider Ely community***

Ely has seen a significant amount of new housing. At present, we are investing in one new development via ChristChurch but this will not serve every new home. People are now moving to Ely without family connections and so people in the new developments often lack community support. We see a role here for the church to play. There are also other areas of Ely that we do not feel we are paying attention to: newer housing near the hospital, the old RAF area, Prickwillow, and Queen Adelaide. Our congregational listening showed there is some energy to reach more into these areas.

Through the work developed by our Families and Children's Missioner we have built relationships with young



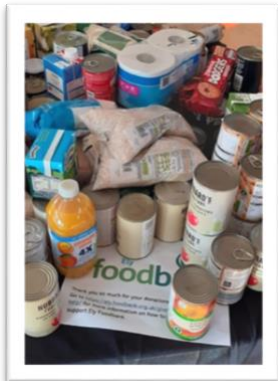
families (Under 1s and Under 5s) and with local schools. There are teams of volunteers invested in this work which will make it sustainable for the time being. Our work with St Mary's Church of England School is a focus, but we have also developed relationships with the other schools in Ely. This year, schools have joined us for Year 1 curriculum visits and for CSI Easter. Our congregational listening emphasised the desire to see this work to continue and flourish after Ruth New moves to her new role. A priority for the new incumbent will be arrangements around filling the lay position recently vacated by Ruth (Family and Children's Missioner).

ChristChurch has built strong relationships with the Isle of Ely Primary school (through governors, the Wild Garden, and the PTA), with the Orchards Care Home (where we lead a service once a month) and is developing some relationships with local residents. ChristChurch is becoming well known for serving North Ely through community events e.g. Jubilee, Coronation, Harvest, Christmas, and it feels as if we are starting to bear fruit after many years of hard work. In our congregational listening one ChristChurch person noted that: "Community-building appears to be what God is putting on our hearts".



### ***Working with others: Christians Together in Ely & Ely Deanery***

There are a number of other churches in Ely with whom we have good working relationships. We want to work



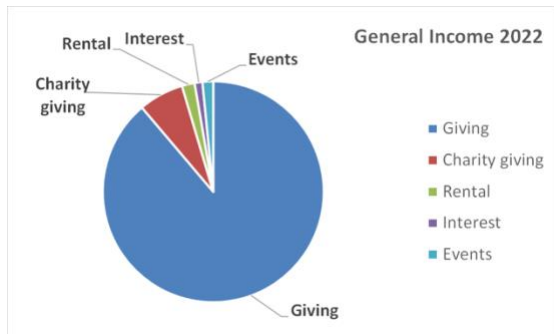
with them to "share Jesus' love with every home in Ely". Currently, our work with other churches happens through CAP, Foodbank, Ely College Chaplaincy, and through ministers praying together. At Easter we joined together for the annual Walk of Witness and there are regular prayer gatherings. Our congregation wants to see our work with other churches continue and grow.

We are a part of Ely Deanery, and part of a deanery planning process explained elsewhere in this profile. Our congregational listening showed a desire for St Mary's to continue to encourage and work with other churches in the deanery, and particularly nearby villages, no matter what develops in terms of pastoral re-organisation.



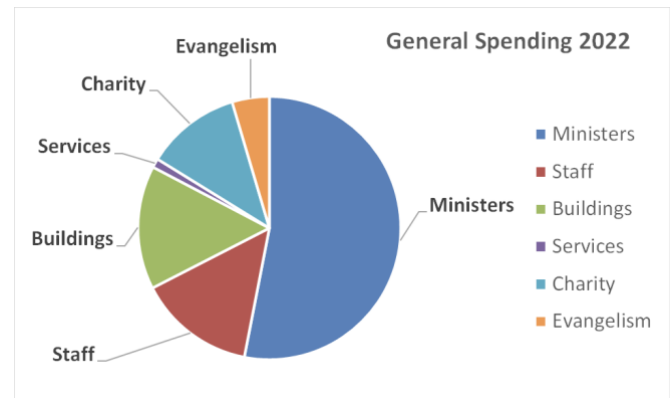
## Finances

Our 2022 accounts show that total income in 2022 was £786,015 (2021 £373,630), of which £203,467 was general (unrestricted) income and £582,549 was restricted to specific purposes.



£518,256 of this restricted income was for the BTP, £25,555 for the CAP Debt Centre, £24,440 for the 'Toilets and solar panels' project, £12,069 for charity and mission causes (including over £5,000 for aid to Ukraine); £1,000 for help with winter hardship including a planned Warm Space, £1,099 for use by our 'Monday Club', and £130 for work with children.

The largest single item in our spending was £89,551 (2021 £115,986) on the 'Ministry Share' paid to the Diocese, to cover the clergy and central church costs. Giving to our charity and mission partners was £23,936 (including our contributions to the CAP Debt Centre), of which £14,216 came from fundraising and £9,720 from general church funds. This more than met our 10% target for giving, representing 12.12% of our relevant unrestricted income being devoted to charitable giving.



## Charities

We support four main charities each year. These are recommended by our Charities Team, and currently are: Ely & District Christians Against Poverty (CAP), The Children's Society, To Kenya with Love, and Climate Stewards.

We also support a variety of appeals throughout the year, and in 2022 this included Jab Twinning and the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine appeal.

## Governance

The PCC is comprised of 26 members: three Clergy, two Churchwardens, three LLMs, three Deanery Synod representatives and 15 elected lay members. The Lay Vice-Chair and Lay Secretary are both elected lay members. The treasurer is one of the LLMs. The Lay Vice-Chair chairs the PCC meetings which occur every two months with extra meetings for any special topics. The PCC Standing Committee comprises two Clergy, two Churchwardens, Treasurer, Lay Vice-Chair and Lay Secretary. It meets in advance of each PCC meeting to prepare the agenda and manage all delegated matters.

The PCC has the following working groups and teams that progress their appointed topics and provide guidance to the overall PCC:

- Building Maintenance – looking after the building and churchyard.
- Charities Team – promoting our current charities and advising PCC on suggested charities for next year.
- Communications Working Group – standardising and broadening our communication.
- Community Engagement – guiding our engagement with the whole Ely community.
- Green Team – promoting "Eco Church" and other ecological initiatives.

## The Building



The parish church of St Mary's, Ely is set within a churchyard on St Mary's Green, St Mary's Street at the heart of the City of Ely a short distance to the west of the Cathedral and lies within the Ely Conservation Area. It is a Grade One listed building dating from about 1200.

It has an early 14th century porch, tower and a spire which forms an important landmark. There were extensive restoration works in the 19th century, in 1829 and 1876. Church rooms were built within the churchyard to the south of the church in the twentieth century.

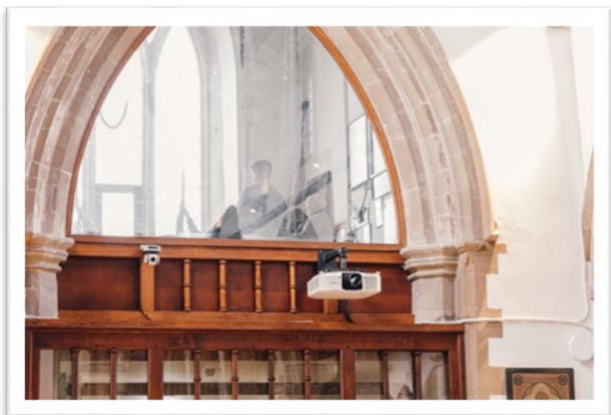
We have just finished the first phase of the BTP which has made the building more accessible, sustainable, flexible and functional and to ensure it is more easily shared with the community of Ely at whose heart it sits. You can see more about the project here:

<https://www.archangelarchitects.co.uk/work/st-marys-ely/>

The second phase will see redevelopment of the toilets, and potentially fitting solar panels on our south aisle roof.

The tower houses eight bells, regularly rung full-circle, with a ringing chamber that overlooks the nave.

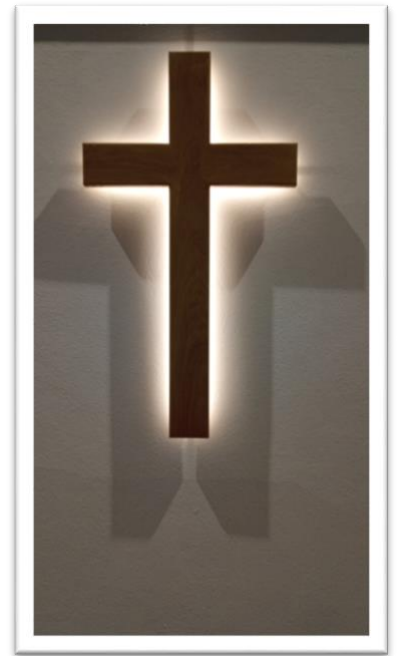
The churchyard is now 'closed' and maintained by East Cambridgeshire District Council.



## Looking to the future

As the PCC and congregations have given feedback and listened to each other, there have been many positives we want to celebrate. These include:

- Our transformed church, no longer a Sunday only building, now used seven days a week.
- Connections between missional work e.g. schools visits or Under 1s, and visits to the church building or to worship services.
- A large PCC which is united although not uniform
- Lots of lay leadership: the identification and development of people's gifts in all areas of church and community life.
- Growth of children's ministry: engagement from children and young people through Covid (e.g. via Nine45 service, JAM Packed), and continued growth since the Pandemic (e.g. Under 1s, Under 5s, Nine45, Ministry with Children at Eleven15)
- Relationships with all schools in Ely.
- A sense of 'being on the edge of something', burgeoning opportunities.
- Unity. One person wrote: "St Mary's very diverse congregation has been remarkably united".



As with any church of this size, there are a number of live issues which will need navigating, some of which are related to the above:

- Our pattern of worship. Our congregational listening identified that there are questions around timing of services, liturgy including vestments, and managing growth.
- Resourcing from within our congregations. We are blessed with many people who are gifted and their skills, talents, and passions enable us to undertake a variety of things. However, we recognise that there are many people in St Mary's and Christchurch who need encouragement to be involved. Our congregational listening identified that despite all the people we are blessed with, it can feel like we need more volunteers and resources for some areas.
- Maintaining a sense of unity. Our congregational listening identified that some groups do not feel fully part of our church family, e.g. the elderly, those who prefer a traditional style of worship, those who are single, those with physical disability or long-term illness, those who have been divorced, those who do not see themselves as 'middle class', and our teenagers.
- Our provision for children of all ages on Sundays. This predominantly relates to the Eleven15 service. Our Pathfinders in their listening session identified that they would appreciate some development of work with teens, too.
- Balance of discipleship and missional work. Our congregational listening identified much excitement and hope around missional activities, with a need to keep developing spiritual nourishment, Bible teaching, and worship.
- Navigating theological difference. Our congregational listening identified that we do have areas of division – particularly around issues of human sexuality – and will need an incumbent who can lead us through these.





Within this we have many hopes for the future. Common themes are:

- Developing hospitality: we want to see increased use of the building; growing ministries such as Open Space and Bereavement Café; more connection with each other across congregations and ministries.
- Helping all to be included: we want to better live out our claim that “Whoever you are, Wherever you are from, You are welcome here” by being a place that gives special attention to those who society can overlook e.g. being aware of mental and physical disability, those who are single, the LGBTQI community, and the elderly.
- Reaching into new areas: we want to continue to develop mission into new housing development and into parts of Ely we have overlooked so far, moving further towards “sharing Jesus’ love with every home in Ely”.

## Summary of Ely

Ely’s proximity to Cambridge – with its flourishing pharmaceutical, health, IT and education sectors - has led to it becoming a hotspot for housing and employment. What has always been a flourishing market town is now well into a new phase of significant growth which will transform Ely’s character and offers new and exciting missional opportunities for the church.

The plan is for the new developments in the North of Ely to provide housing for 10 000 additional people over the coming decade many of whom are moving into homes as we write. Two schools are planned – one is already open – new office and retail hubs are imagined and we want to make sure that church and faith are an integral part of the formation of these new communities.

In addition to Cambridge, good rail connections to London (King’s Cross 72 mins), Peterborough (35 mins) and Norwich (58 mins) make Ely a well-connected location for commuters, there are direct services to Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Ipswich, and Stansted Airport.

The city’s population has almost doubled in the last 20 years, and over the next ten years will double again to over 30 000.

Ely has a good range of facilities including primary schools, a state secondary school, a co-educational independent school, doctors’ surgeries, dentists and a small outpatient’s hospital with minor injuries unit (not A&E which is in Cambridge). There’s a new recreation park including cinema, restaurants, swimming pool and sports facilities. In town there is a library, health & fitness clubs and a sports centre. Lawn bowlers, rowers, swimmers, golfers, sailors and amateur dramatists are all catered for.

This year Ely celebrates 1350 years since St Etheldreda founded the monastery which became Ely Cathedral, attracting thousands of visitors year-round.

Other attractions include Ely Museum, Oliver Cromwell’s House (now a Tourist Information Centre), a popular riverside area, flourishing Thursday and Saturday markets, which includes a farmer’s market twice a month, and monthly Street Food Fridays over the summer.



## **Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993**

This is an official Church of England appointment and the employer is Ely Diocese. St Mary's is indiscriminate over the ordination of women, welcoming priests regardless of gender.

We are seen as an open evangelical church: "Whoever you are, wherever you are from, you are welcome here."

## **Living in Love and Faith**

Our parish awaits the outcome of the process in General Synod before coming to their own policies on the blessing of people in faithful same sex relationships. As churches (St Mary's and ChristChurch) we embrace a spectrum of theological outlook and background, we are evangelical and inclusive, radical and conservative. We will look to our next Rector to lead us and unite us as we seek to love and serve our communities and remain faithful to the tradition of faith that we have inherited. We seek generous, reasoned leadership that will show us how to hold faith and grace together in this area.

## **Housing**

The successful applicant will be offered a vicarage under the provisions of the Church Property Measure 2018.

St Mary's Vicarage is adjacent to the churchyard and was built in 1989 in the grounds of the former Vicarage. Quiet, yet in the heart of the city, it is modern, well insulated, with one single and four double bedrooms, and a separate study, small meeting room and W.C. away from the living area. There is a good sized garage, parking for two or three cars and a small back garden.



## **St Michael & All Angels, Chettisham**



Chettisham is a small Hamlet on the Northern edge of Ely with a population of approximately 150. Formerly a farming village, cottages once housed employees, some have been modernised and sold. The surrounding land is owned by the Church Commissioners and farmed by the Lee family. There is a mixture of families and retired people living in the village. Unfortunately there are no facilities in the village (no schools, shops, village hall) and no facilities in the Church. The school closed in 1934 and any children in the village are mostly schooled in Ely, The Ely foodbank has a lockup at the rear of Glovers Garage and the station was closed in 1963 due to Mr Beeching.

The Church building is a Grade II listed building. The Church was built in the 1300's and has lancet windows. On entering through the porch it is a wooden structure resting on a low stone wall. If you look to the right hand side of the porch there is some brick and stone (what looks like a seat) built between two of the buttresses, it is believed to be a rare type of penitents seat, whereby someone who has sinned would have to sit in full view of everyone and wait to be called into the church by whoever was in charge of the church to seek forgiveness of their sins. The path leading to the Church porch from the small gate is of decorated brickwork and large stones. There is an unusually large hexagonal font at the rear of the church. There are Baptism registers dating back from 1701. The vestry houses four pieces of Norman sculpture, one of which is a grotesque head. The churchyard and church are kept maintained by the Church Wardens. On the Sundays when an organist is unavailable CD's are used. Visitors always say there is a friendly, welcoming, peaceful atmosphere when they come through the door.



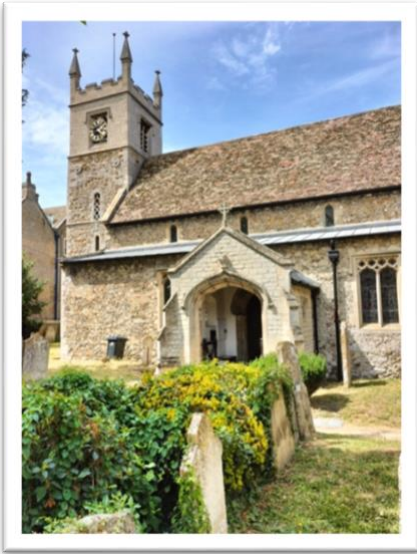
A small dedicated congregation (unfortunately much diminished in the last 20 years) come together to worship here on three Sundays a month, average attendance is 7 to 11, some have been attending this Church for many years. This number is often increased on special days. We have tried exploring activities beyond Sunday services to try to connect with the village (carols round the tree at Christmas, flower festival, quiz night) not always easy with no facilities. We would very much like to encourage local people to join us to find or renew their faith



# ST LEONARD'S

## LITTLE DOWNHAM

### St Leonard's, Little Downham



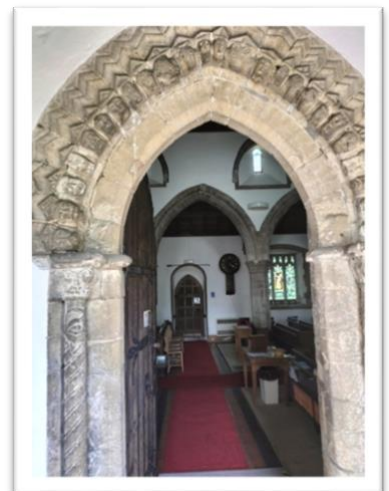
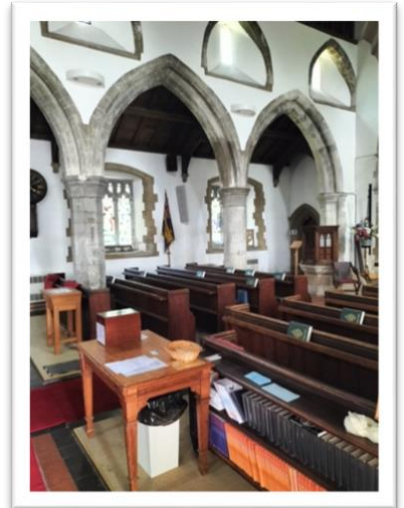
We see our village little Downham as a growing village with a mixed population. only 2 miles from Ely the village consists of a main street of older houses some dating back to the Middle Ages and numerous newer estates. The village benefits from the feoffees charity which seeks to help those in need. There is a general store, post office, village hall catering for various groups, equestrian centre, community rooms, care home and sheltered accommodation, one pub, a small hotel, a garage, and a fish and chip shop. We have a school, Downham feoffes primary academy with 160 pupils and an active pre-school. The village is surrounded by large arable farms. We see many opportunities for active and enjoyable ministry within our village. We have brownies and rainbows whose leaders are very open to be part of church life. There is a community orchard which is widely supported by a conservation group

Our church family is largely elderly, but many are active members of the church council and have a real care for the life and witness of the church. We are actively seeking to build links with local families and have recently run an Easter project which was well supported by several local families. Plans are being made to develop these connections. Some of our elderly are increasingly frail and need pastoral care and home communion. Seasonal services are well supported, and we are always seeking opportunities to engage with the village. For instance, carol singing around the village and special events. Some church members meet weekly for prayer. There is an afternoon and evening homegroup and an active toddler group. We have two retired clergy with PTO who regularly take services. One ALM who is continuing her training. We see ourselves as Open Evangelicals welcoming different styles of music and biblical preaching.

St Leonard's church is a Grade 1 listed building. It has a tower, nave with aisles, chancel and Victorian vestry.

The nave dates from the thirteenth century with alternating octagonal and round pillars. The windows are Victorian. The west wall of the nave is dominated by a Coat of Arms of George 111 . This is believed to be the second largest Coat of Arms in any church. The chancel dates from the fourteenth century as does the east window. The southern windows are Tudor. The roof is very decorative painted in the Arts and Crafts style. The lower part of the tower is Norman as is the south door arch with carved faces. The top stages of the tower are Edwardian.

The church was re-ordered in 2000 when the chancel screen was moved back to form a reredos behind the new nave altar. New 'museum style lighting' was installed with other updates.



# ST GEORGE'S

## LITTLE THETFORD

### St George's, Little Thetford

**The Village:** Little Thetford is a small village 3 miles (5 km) south of Ely, surrounded by flat fenland countryside.



During the past 10 years there have been at least four new housing developments in discrete areas of the village. Whilst these are all relatively small developments, the combined total of new properties built (28) represents an estimated 10% growth. There are strong links between St George's and the C of E Primary School, with regular whole-school assemblies held in the church on a fortnightly basis during term time. Regular mid-week community activities (not worship) are well-supported by the wider community. Events held in the church include (i) music practice –ukuleles, recorders, band (weekly), (ii) Pop In – coffee, cake and chat (weekly), (iii) National Brigade for Boys and Girls (weekly),

(iv) Dragon Club – tea, cake and chat (monthly). There is an active Village Hall Committee which also organises community events in the village hall, including a weekly Pop-Up Café.

**The Church building:** St George's Church is a 14th-century Grade II listed building. In 1751 it was recorded as a chapel of ease attached to Stretham served by the rector there. Today, the church consists of a Chancel, Nave, North Porch, and South Vestry. The 14th-century octagonal bowl font still has an original lead lining. The church is kept open during daylight hours and is used regularly during the week for a variety of activities and events. The building is accessible and has kitchen and toilet facilities with an upper room for meetings/storage. St George's has attracted resident bats and occasional swifts in residence in the roof space. There is a Friends of St George's group which raises funds for the upkeep and maintenance of the church fabric. Our challenges are not unique. We have an ancient building which is costly to maintain and difficult to heat.



**The Congregation:** Sunday Morning worship Attendance is strengthening (currently 20+ from 16)) but it remains an ageing (post retiree) congregation. Electoral Roll membership stands at 25, made up mainly of many long-standing members, who have supported St George's in a variety of roles over many years. Our youngest Confirmed member is 13; our oldest is a retired Baptist Minister age 92. We welcome several ALMs /LLMs to lead our Sunday Morning worship offering services at 10am every Sunday with Holy Communion on the 4th Sunday of the month. We have a voluntary Children and Families Worker, who runs Brigade during term time as well as leading our music groups to support Sunday worship. On Advent Sunday we had a sit down Fellowship lunch to which we invited all visiting clergy. This was repeated on Trinity Sunday and we hope to continue this practice to bring members of the congregation together in fellowship during 2023/24.





# ST JAMES' STRETHAM

## St James', Stretham



**Stretham** is a village and parish with a population of +/- 2000, 4 miles SW of Ely and 74 miles N of London. It also has bus links to nearby Cambridge. Many commuters are residents of Stretham. Stretham's main attraction is the Stretham Old Engine, built in 1831 as a Land Drainage Pumping Station, which is the only complete example in the Fens. Stretham is in a large and important arable farming area and has a growing small business sector including a pub/restaurant, a thriving Post Office/ store, a large sports/ recreation field, a thriving primary school, and St. James' Church, which took the 2023 prize for best dressed float at our Annual Feast.

Notable residents include James Brown (1709–1784), who was an English cleric & academic, and vicar of Stretham. And Jean Adamson, the creator of the Topsy and Tim books, still lives in the village.

**St. James' Church** is a grey stone building with a red tile roof, occupying a central position in the village, within a closed graveyard with beautiful gardens. The 14th century building was carefully but extensively reconstructed in 1876. The nave has central and north and south aisles and transepts. With pews and chairs for 200+.



There is a 14th century square tower topped by an octagonal spire housing 6 tuned bells at the west end of the nave. The Chancel with altar and 1876 organ is behind a mid-15th century rood screen, the East wall of which is partly 12th century and houses an 1876 stained-glass window. Another stained-glass window depicting Pilgrim's progress in the south transept. In the tower the bellringers gallery was raised to accommodate toilets and coffee servery. A glass walled room is built into the north side of the nave for children's church and meetings.



We have a **growing congregation**, approximately 25-30 adults and 5 children. Although tending to the elderly, there is an encouraging minority of younger people.

We are a friendly and welcoming church.

In liturgical worship the congregation always respond strongly. Our churchmanship is firmly evangelical. As such we encourage members of the congregation into leadership roles, including preaching and leading. As their gifts emerge through practice, they are encouraged to make use of the courses on offer.

Members of the congregation run the "Little Bears" toddler group, "Open the Book" assemblies in the primary school, a weekly Bible study home group, a knitting group, and a monthly coffee morning. Members are also involved in the WI, Bowles Club and Stretham Charity. The church also hosts the Diocesan ringing education centre, and a weekly singing group of people from the village.



# HOLY CROSS

## STUNTNEY

### Holy Cross, Stuntney

#### Stuntney

Stuntney is a popular, welcoming village on the outskirts of Ely with many local walks and wildlife. It was first identified as an eel fishing port in the Domesday Book. Stuntney's name is derived from two words meaning the steep island: its position giving superb views of Ely Cathedral. In 1986, village life changed when a bypass was opened taking traffic around the village between Ely and Newmarket. In the 1990's, the school, two pubs and a shop closed leaving an active Village Hall and Holy Cross Church.



The village sign depicts a shire horse, used for local farming.

These were kept in the village until the early 2000's. Stuntney includes Quanea and Nornea, with a few new homes built recently, giving a total of around 90 houses.



Ben's Yard, an exciting rural retail village with a 6-acre event space, will

open on the Stuntney Estate in June 2023

#### Holy Cross Church

Parishioners have worshipped in Stuntney for almost 1,000 years. In Norman times, a small church was built consisting of a nave, chancel and rough wooden bellcote. In 1876, the church was almost completely rebuilt in flint and red brick. Three of the original Norman archways were incorporated into the new design. In 1903, the foundations were found to be unsafe and the nave was again rebuilt, this time with its distinctive wooden pillars. The nave has a baronial-Gothic appearance and the chancel contains several carved pinnacles of the 14th Century removed from Ely Cathedral during the 19th Century.

Impressive stain glass windows include those in memory to the Cole Ambrose family and St Joseph along with two of the church patrons, St Mary and St John the Baptist. The Church registers for baptism, marriages and burials date from 1545. In addition, the church yard was closed in 1926 for burials.

#### Parishioners

Services are held on the second and fourth Sunday of the month. Typically, these services are attended by around 10 parishioners either living in the parish or with historical links to Stuntney. The demographic for these services is of an older generation, quite often with no children.

Other key services attract larger congregations including Easter and Christmas. Of particular importance is the celebration of Harvest Festival with the village's strong farming ties. This is a key focus for a larger part of the village. Those who attend church regularly are very proactive in supporting the needs of the church via cleaning, churchyard maintenance, PCC membership. Other parishioners, who do not attend church, also actively support via parish giving and upkeep of the churchyard.

On other Sundays, some of the parishioners attend services at St Mary's particularly the 8.15 Traditional Communion Service.

# Person Specification

## For this role we are looking for someone who:

- Demonstrates a strong personal faith.
- Ability to accept theological diversity, and appreciative of different traditions and style.
- An evangelist willing and able to share faith persuasively.
- Committed to prayer including praying for and with others.
- Someone who can accept oversight of complex churches.
- A servant hearted leader able to enable, encourage, and support others in ministry.
- A propensity to delegate rather than micro-manage.
- Someone who can spot gifts and potential within the congregation.
- Emotional intelligence.
- Able to lead biblically based teaching programme that includes life application.
- Committed to helping children and young people grow in their faith.
- A commitment to collaborate with the churches in the team, with other churches within the diocese, and across denominations.
- An effective communicator who will focus on cohesion between all congregations and churches.
- Excellent communication skills with all types of people.
- Skilled in holding space for difficult conversations and hold love across divides and disagree "well".
- Will support and defend all minority groups.

## Qualities that are desirable are:

- Experience of managing a multi-congregation church or multiple churches.
- Experience of managing a growing church.
- Life experience e.g., in a secular workplace.

To view more about each church, visit their website:

[www.stmarysely.org](http://www.stmarysely.org)

[www.christchurchely.org](http://www.christchurchely.org)

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/13954/>

[www.littledownhamchurch.org](http://www.littledownhamchurch.org)

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/13965/>

[www.stjamesstretham.org](http://www.stjamesstretham.org)

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/13964/>

