

Parish of Cromer

**Annual Meeting of Parishioners and
Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)**

Thursday 24th April 2025 at 7.30 p.m. at St Martin's

Please read through the paperwork before the meeting. You are strongly encouraged to submit any questions at least 24 hours in before the meeting.

Agenda

Welcome and opening prayer

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

- 1) **Election of Churchwardens**

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

- 1) **Minutes of the APCM held on 25th April 2024 and Matters Arising (Page 2)**
- 2) **Election of representatives of the laity to serve on PCC**
Five people to serve for three years and two people to serve for two years
- 3) **Vicar's reflections**
- 4) **Electoral Roll report (Trustees' Report Booklet (page 3) and page 5)**
- 5) **Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements**
Please submit any questions in advance, and at least 24 hours before the meeting.
- 6) **Appointment of Independent Examiner**
- 7) **Reports from Ministry and Group Leaders on the Life, Mission and Ministry of Cromer Church during 2024 (Pages 6-21)**
An opportunity to respond with questions, comments, encouragements and ideas. Please submit any questions in advance, and at least 24 hours before the meeting.
- 8) **Matters of parochial or general Church interest raised by the meeting**
An opportunity to raise questions, concerns, encouragements and ideas regarding the life of Cromer Church, and to request future PCC discussion of particular items.
- 9) **Closing Prayer**

CROMER PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE APCM ON 25 APRIL 2024 AT 7.30 IN ST MARTIN'S

The meeting was attended by more than 70 members of the church family.

Apologies were received from Caroline Ashworth, Nick and Jackie Austin, Pelham Clarke, Roger and Janet Fickling, Rosemary Harber, Chris and Jenny Jacquier, David and Jo Masters and Jane White.

1. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

The meeting was chaired by the Vicar, Revd Will Warren, who welcomed everyone to the meeting, which began with sung worship led by St Martin's Worship Group and prayer.

2. MINUTES OF THE APCM 27 APRIL 2023 AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the APCM of 27 April 2023 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 will serve as Churchwardens for 2024/2025.

The Vicar prayed for Ivan and David.

4. ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

The Electoral Roll Officer, Glyn Purland, reported that 5 people have been added to the Roll and 2 people deleted. The number following the review period is, therefore, 296 an increase from the number at last year's APCM (291).

5. ELECTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE PCC

ELECTION TO PCC

Two nominations were received for 3 vacancies to serve for 3 years. No election was necessary, and Judith Anderson and Eileen Woodfield were duly elected.

6. VICAR'S REFLECTIONS

Looking Back

- a) "And he is the head of the body, the church" (Colossians 1'18). We are the Body of Christ.
- b) We have so many things to give thanks for since the last APCM:
 - We have appointed an Associate Vicar.
 - We have started new expressions of worship (Mustard Seed Plus).
 - • BeachFest is being re-launched.

- We have started some discipleship initiatives.
- Major work has been completed in the Parish Church.

The Lord has done all these things.

Looking ahead

There are 4 areas that the Lord might be calling us to in the year ahead:

- a) Re-launching BeachFest – reverting to the original pattern of a week of events in week commencing 29 July. We long to see local families get involved.
- b) Our Welcome as a church:
 - I. We do Welcome really well.
 - II. We've had a steady stream of new people joining us.
 - III. We need to consider how we might extend our Welcome to drawing people into the life of the church. CLT is working on this.
 - IV. The Vicar is aiming to start Welcome Meals again.
 - V. If you see something that works in another church, let us know!
- c) Our buildings:
 - I. 120 people responded to the Vision Survey several years ago. Nearly every response mentioned love of our buildings, but also frustration with their fitness for purpose.
 - II. Over the last 3 months we've completed some major building projects. Is the Lord prompting us that there is more we could do? PCC is exploring this, but it is all at a very early stage.
 - III. We have people in our congregations with the relevant expertise.
 - IV. We have wonderful buildings and are stewards of them. This is something we should be praying about as a church family.
- d) To go deeper in prayer as a church.
 - I. Spurgeon described prayer as the engine room of the church. It is the Lord who builds the church.
 - II. It's easy to become spiritually complacent. We want to meet with God. It starts with the body of Christ seeking his face.
 - III. We need to grow in prayer as individuals and as a church. "A man is what he is on his knees before God, and nothing more." (Robert Murray M'Cheyne). We could substitute "the Church" for the word "man".

The Vicar thanked the Wardens, Treasurer and PCC Secretary, as well as Simon Purslow and Nick Claridge for their commitment during the recent building work. He closed his reflections with prayer.

7. ANNUAL REPORTS

It's great that we have so much going on in the life of the church.

Revd Julia Chamberlin raised the following regarding the Vicar's reflections: the original job description for the role of Associate Vicar was tweaked round discussions with Julia,

who felt a calling to Cromer. Oversight is part of her role, in as much as it is shared with the vicar and wider clergy team. Her license states that she is Associate Vicar of Cromer Benefice.

8. TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

- a) Responding to a question from Warwick Hooper, the Treasurer explained the difficulty in banking cash and the need to convince regular cash givers to convert to the Parish Giving Scheme.
- b) At some point we need a succession plan. If anyone is interested, please speak to the Treasurer.

9. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Hignett's as Independent Examiner for 2024.

10. MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Living in Love and Faith: Prayers of Blessing

- a) Jon Platten had previously submitted questions to the Vicar and the PCC. He thanked the PCC and the Vicar for their courteous responses but expressed concern that discussion by the church family was necessary.
- b) Paul Rosier had previously submitted a question. He thanked the Vicar for his response and reminded the meeting that he had requested training on this subject at the last APCM.
- c) The Vicar thanked Jon and Paul for raising these issues and said he has arranged for training from the True Freedom Trust on Saturday 11 May and would welcome Jon Platten's input.
- d) The Vicar explained that:
 - We are an evangelical church under the authority of the Bible.
 - We are not declaring independence from the Church of England but recognising that our Bishop is holding a position that is not scriptural.
 - Money: as part of our stewardship, we have to ensure that our Parish Share is not being used to support churches who hold an unscriptural position.
- e) Seb Gasse expressed concern that young people will find our stance hard to understand. However, it was explained that, of the 20 churches in the Church of England who have the most young people, 19 have expressed evangelical principles.
- f) Don Wilson spoke of same sex relationships in his family and urged people to have understanding of others.

The meeting closed with a worship song and the Grace at 8.40 pm.

Electoral Roll - Supplementary Report

NEW ELECTORAL ROLL

Since my previous report a new Electoral Roll has been prepared in accordance with the Church of England's Church Representation Rules with the following results:

- | | |
|---|------------|
| • Total Names on the Roll | 246 |
| • Number of people living outside the Parish | 63 |
| • Number of new people joining the Roll | 32 |

Glyn Purland
Electoral Roll Officer
5th April 2025

Cromer Church APCM 2025

Reports from Ministry and Group Leaders on the Life, Mission and Ministry of Cromer Church during 2024

PCC invited reports from those responsible for the following ministries, teams and groups in the life of Cromer Church: Audio Visual Team (St Martin's), Audio-Visual Team (Parish Church), BeachFest and BeachFest Extra, Bellringers, Blokes Brekky, Bookstall, Brass cleaning team, Catering tea, CC Community Choir, CC Kids, CC Toddlers, CC Youth, Choir (including the Christmas Choir), Christmas Tree Festival, Church Office, Concert Coordinators, Cornerstone Café, Counting and Banking team, Crafts2Share, First Aid team, Flower arrangers team, Gift Aid/Generous Giving, Holiday at Home, Holiday Ministry, Meeting Point, Mission Partner Champions, Mothers' Union, Music and musicians (Parish Church), Music and musicians (St Martin's), Mustard Seed and Mustard Seed Plus, Open the Book (Infant School), Open the Book (Junior School), Organ Recitals, Small Groups, Social Media, Table Tennis Group, Visiting and Pastoral Care team, Website administrator and Women's Wellbeing Ministry.

Not everyone was able to provide a report but those on the remaining pages of this booklet give a detailed and interesting insight into the life and work of Cromer Church during 2024, as recorded by those directly involved in its ministries, groups and teams. Please read them and be encouraged – and perhaps challenged – by all the ways in which the Cromer Church family reached out last year with the good news of Jesus. Those who wrote the reports would, I'm sure, be pleased to answer any questions and to tell you more about their work and how you could get involved.

The Statutory Reports capture other aspects of church life and can be found in the *Trustees' Report and Financial Statements* booklet. We're hugely grateful for all the practical service that is recorded there and in this booklet. So, to those who have served God in all the ways noted and to those who wrote the reports we say a heart-felt 'thank you'.

David Orsborne

PCC Secretary

Audio Visual Team (St Martin's)

Throughout 2024, the St Martin's AV Team continued to provide excellent support to our services ensuring that our congregation enjoys a clear and informed worship experience. I am indebted to Diane Hartley and Annette Williams for their help and support, particularly when running the desk in my absence. When we updated the AV system at St Martin's the aim was to make it simple to operate with a minimum of training. I am pleased that the system is now used at other times during the week to further enhance various ministries and activities.

Dave Walker

Audio-Visual Team (Parish Church)

For each service, the audio-visual team runs the sound desk, projects the words and images and manages the live stream. A team of eight – Dennis Broughton, David Anderson, Jon Mardlin, Chris Jacquier, Tim Morton, David Orsborne, Tony Peacock and Tim Warren - does this for our main services, with David Loades and others running the sound desk for weddings, funerals and some other events. George Carter and Bill Brodie left the team during the year and we thank them for their service. Chris Jacquier, Tim Morton, Tony Peacock and Tim Warren joined the team. The whole team showed significant commitment and technical expertise in carrying out their roles in 2024. They gave freely of their time and talents and we are fortunate to have people willing to serve God in this way. We receive many appreciative comments (and some suggestions for improvement) and we try to be responsive to these and to the needs of the congregation and those leading services. The installation of the screens marked a big step forward in improving visibility and the new speakers improved audibility and sound quality for everyone. We thank God for our audio-visual team, whose work helps ensure that services run smoothly and effectively and makes them accessible for people at home. We pray that God will help them to continue to work well together, attract new recruits and develop their skills so as to bring glory to God and help people draw closer to him at our services.

David Orsborne

BeachFest and BeachFest Extra

As a church we want to share the good news of Jesus to everyone in our community from the young to the old. BeachFest and BeachFest Extra is a great outreach opportunity to bring children and families along to the church to present the gospel in a fun and accessible way through songs, crafts, Bible stories and games. We are thankful to God for all those within the church who give their time to be part of this important work and are eager to share the love of Jesus with those around them.

As a team we have had a busy year, starting with a week-long BeachFest last July. We had a lovely sunny week of high energy fun and games using the Olympics as a theme to look at how Jesus is our ultimate champion. Since then, we have held four BeachFest Extra events (possibly 5 by the time you read this). Planning is already well underway for this summer's BeachFest which will be held between 28th July and 1st August.

An item for praise and thanksgiving

- We thank God that we can freely share the good news of Jesus on the beach and in the community around us.
- We are thankful for all the children and families who regularly attend BeachFest events.

An item for prayer

- We pray that we will harness good relationships with the families that we meet and build bridges for the gospel.

Jon and Hazel Mardlin

Bookstall, Gifts and Cards

Books

The Bookstall was closed for almost three months up until Easter 2024 while work was being undertaken in the Parish Church. Even with only nine months normal trading more new books costing over £3.00 were sold than in the previous year! It is particularly gratifying to report significant increases in the sale of new Bibles and books on prayer. The bookstall is very popular with visitors to Cromer but there was also an increase in Lent book sales to our own congregation. The bookstall exceeded its PCC income target this year and this together with the continuing closure of Christian bookshops in the area, encouraged PCC to approve an extension to the Bookstall enabling a wider range of books to be offered in 2025.

Glyn Purland

Gifts and Cards

The year started in April due to the Church closure for refurbishment. The aim is to sell and display a variety of Christian, gifts and cards, with Bible verses and messages. With each purchase spreading the gospel message. Thank you to all who have helped during the year and those who have overseen the bookstall during the holiday ministry season.

- We pray for all those who purchase and receive gifts, may they find comfort and encouragement from the scripture verses.
- With the refurbishment of the bookstall, and the closing of so many other Christian resource centres, we pray that we will provide an inviting place for those wanting to buy books, gifts and cards.

Joyce Richardson

Brass cleaning

During 2024, brass cleaning volunteer numbers greatly diminished, and we now seek new people urgently as an advert in the Weekly Update has not proved successful. The eagle lectern and the altar rail are currently cleaned by one person each (formerly two) and these are big tasks, though not done weekly. Weekly cleaning includes all the memorial brasses round the Parish Church, the brass in the chapel and the lounge, the brass in the vicar's vestry and the brass plate used for the offering.

Betty Dukes-Smith

CC Kids

Whilst we haven't seen new families join Cromer Church, we continue to get regular numbers of 8-16 to CC Kids. Most noticeably this year we have increased our number of older children/young youth and have endeavoured to keep them engaged with church wherever possible. We have also had plenty of visitors.

After three years of The Gospel Project, we changed tact to reflect the differing needs of the children coming each Sunday and have been following The Jesus StoryBook Bible curriculum with an additional exploration into Mark for our growing number of young Youth, A simplified approach was necessary as the team has been shaken quite considerably lately with illness, and other reasons for absence: it has been a very challenging year. We are extremely grateful to Dee Freeman for providing compassionate oversight for the team and for Victoria Pitkin who has become a much-valued leader. It has also been great to have more input from other members of the congregation. Gina Luckwell and Heather Kimble completed their 'Catalyst' training with Norwich Diocese (a national initiative to equip children's workers) despite everything!

We took part in the Christmas Tree festival this year and where possible have tried to involve our children in other aspects of church life such as BeachFest and Christingle. We are hoping to have some involvement in 'Thy Kingdom Come' this year.

Please continue to pray for CC KIDS. We long to see more families join Cromer Church. Thank you.

The CC KIDS Team

CC Toddlers

CCToddlers changed a bit last year. The team now consists of Caroline Ashworth, Tim Britton, Victoria Blogg and Jane Myhill, with Jonathan Anderson coming to help set up the hall. We do have a few people we can call on to help out if we are short of helpers any time. Praise the Lord that this team is really efficient and each has a role to play during the morning.

We have re-registered all our children as we had a huge register, many of whom were no longer attending. Although we have fewer children coming along, we are building up really good relationships with them and the adults, who are very willing to share how they are feeling and have chats with the team. The adults are very welcoming to new people and often care for each other's children during the morning, which is lovely to see. Praise the Lord for these great relationships and pray that this continues.

We now have tidy up time before we do story and singing, which is working well as there are fewer distractions. We are doing a Bible story each week which links with the craft activity which has been done during the morning. The children are mostly attentive, though some of the adults tend to chat during this time, which makes it a bit difficult. Please pray that we can find a way of encouraging the adults to listen as well.

One of our mums has started attending church with her two children. Please pray that she will encourage others too.

Caroline Ashworth

CC Youth

We are thankful to God that we have young people in our church that want to be part of our church community. After a short break, CC Youth resumed in December. We meet once a month for fun, games and a short Bible talk/ discussion. This term, we have been looking at the people who met Jesus and the impact that it had on their lives. We are currently small in numbers but big in joy and laughter!

Our aim is to help unpack the good news of Jesus and effectively disciple young people in their walk with Him; focusing on building relationships, helping them to understand the Bible better and learn to live out their faith in everyday life.

An item for praise and thanksgiving

- We thank God for the young people in our church and their enthusiasm to be part of this new group.

An item for prayer

- We pray that we will see more young people come along to this group.
- We pray that lives will be transformed by the love of Christ and that they will grow in their relationship with Jesus.

Jon and Hazel Mardlin

Choir (including the Christmas Choir)

The robed choir has led the singing at the traditional communion service every Sunday with enthusiasm and a high level of commitment. At the beginning of 2024 the number of hymns sung at this service was changed from two to four and this enabled a considerable increase in our hymn repertoire, both traditional and modern. The choir has also sung a number of short anthems during the distribution of communion.

For the Carols by Candlelight service the choir welcomed singers who joined specifically to take part in this annual event. During the six weekly rehearsals preparing for this service, the enlarged choir learnt a number of special carols which, combined with the traditional congregational carols, created a memorable celebration attended by a very large congregation.

Towards the end of the year we were offered a significant number of women's choir robes from a local church which no longer had need of them. As a result, we were able to replace robes which had reached the end of their useful life, having been in service for many years. Everyone in the choir is most grateful to Pam Draper who has taken responsibility for looking after our robes and ensuring that the choir always looks pristine.

Tim Moon

Christmas Tree Festival

The 2024 Tree Festival has gained momentum over recent years and the 2024 event was our biggest yet. We had forty entries in the three categories, submitted by thirty-three church and community groups. The church looked magnificent during the festival showcasing the handiwork of so many groups. It culminated in an afternoon of entertainment on the

Saturday when the church was at capacity, full of people watching the concert. We had musical contributions from individuals, small groups and choirs, including choirs from three local schools, as well as a really interesting visual presentation of times past.

The Tree Festival gives opportunities to work with people from the community, drawing them into the life of Cromer Parish Church and building up relationships by having fun and great conversations along the way. Hundreds of people visit the church during the festival and experience time in our beautiful building. We had over 1,200 visit on the Saturday alone. Visitors often browse the bookstall, enjoy refreshments or sit and soak up the atmosphere. I met a number of local 'Cromer people' at the 2024 event who told me it was the first time they had ever been in the church but had come to see the festival!

A special thank you to all those on our various ministry teams who helped at the festival.

Prayer Points

- Give thanks for the missional opportunities this festival affords
- Pray for direction on how similar events might go ahead in the future

Jackie Austin

Cornerstone

2024 has been a very successful year in the café, we managed to open every day throughout the season thanks to the amazing team of volunteers we now have, and the input from Sue Brocklehurst who managed, and has kept an eye on the rota for me. We had new volunteers join the team last year taking our total to 39 volunteers after training, which I am very grateful for.

Through the past year there has been a few changes, one which is very important to me is the willingness of Karen and Joanne to support the café in my absence and for holiday cover, this I believe is essential for the day to day running of the café.

As always, we have had the opportunity to welcome visitors and locals into the church café, and we have had many positive comments on the layout of the café, and visitors have taken photos to take back to their own churches.

If things go to plan, I am looking to open the café for the season from Tuesday May 6th through to Thursday 25th September, which means we will open a little earlier than last year.

Please pray for the work of Cornerstone and for our volunteers, and opportunities to share the good news of Jesus with visitors and locals to the church. Also pray for our amazing baking teams working so hard behind the scenes creating great food for us to sell. Many blessings.

Ray Loten

Crafts2Share

Crafts2share has just celebrated ten years of being a group. We are a fluid, open ended, inclusive group that goes well beyond crafting. We value every gift that members bring to the group and we provide an environment for these gifts to flourish. Our seventy members each receive a monthly newsletter as an important way to 'keep everyone in the loop' and to

nurture the pastoral aspect of Crafts2share. We look out for each other, offering love, support, prayers and the sharing of expertise.

Our intention when we began was quite simply to start a craft group that would be open to anyone to come and make anything they wanted to make. All completed donations would then be given away as gifts to anyone, anywhere for any reason. To this end many individuals have received a handmade card or gift over the years, and in addition we have donated to many charities, appeals, nursing homes and hospitals. Members create a huge amount of handmade donations and our cup is forever full and often running over!

We appreciate the support we receive from people who donate wool and fabric to us, and grateful too for an income from the church budget each year to help fund some items. We look forward to the next ten years.

Prayer points:

- We give thanks for the love, support and friendship we find within the group
- We pray for all those who receive a handmade gift

Jackie Austin, Diane Hartley and Anne Anderson

Cromer Church and the Cromer Peregrine Project

For the last six years there has been a pair of Peregrine Falcons breeding on the top of Cromer Church tower. They have provided an enormous attraction to many residents of the town and to the thousands of visitors who come each year. The Church has also built very good relations with the Cromer Peregrine Project, set up to provide information on the birds and a Watchpoint outside the Museum, as well as installing cameras on the roof with a live feed to a monitor in the church lounge. In recognition of the support the Church gives to the Cromer Peregrine Project a cheque for £2000 was handed over at their AGM in February last year. Also last year the Peregrine pair laid three eggs, one of which failed to hatch, and while the other two chicks were ringed, one succumbed to a disease, leaving just one chick fledging successfully. It was last seen around the tower in mid-October. A meeting was also held in April in the church lounge to give members of the church an opportunity to hear from the Cromer Peregrine Project information about Peregrine Falcons, and up to date news on the birds in Cromer.

Roger Fickling

PCC Secretary's note: Roger has decided to stand down from his liaison role with the Cromer Peregrine Project. We thank him for all his work and wish him and Janet well for the future. PCC has appointed Jonathan Anderson to be the new Cromer Church link with the Cromer Peregrine Project.

Flower Arrangers Team

Our team of five arrangers take it in turn to arrange flowers by the pulpit every fortnight. For festivals like Christmas and Easter we share out the arrangements needed around the church. (Watch out for Easter!) We're always happy to have new arrangers and apprentice arrangers! Over the last year, we've also arranged flowers for some weddings.

**Jane Sapwell, Maureen King, Christine Hopkins,
Margaret Mitchell and Alison Orsborne**

Holiday Ministry

Throughout the year, including over Christmas and Easter, there are approximately 44,000 visitors to Cromer Parish Church. Between 1st April and 27th September (and a few other times) in 2024 over 30 fantastic volunteers from the Parish Church and St Martin's church served those visitors and God, Monday to Friday from 10.30 to 3.30pm through the Holiday Ministry. This ministry is made up of two parts: - 1, serving on the Book and gift stall and 2, as a personal 'welcome' at the entrance to the church. Whatever the reason people visit Cromer Church we give them a warm welcome and are a good witness to our incredible God whom we serve.

Last year our great Holiday Ministry Coordinators were Roger and Janet Fickling, with Joyce overseeing and buying gifts and cards all with a Christian message, and Glyn overseeing and buying the Christian books (with our bookstall being the only Christian bookstall in North Norfolk). A huge thank you to all our volunteers including Roger, Janet, Joyce and Glyn. Also, we wish Roger well as he continues treatment which interrupted his work last year. This coming year Jackie and Astrid are taking on the role of holiday ministry coordinators for which we are very grateful.

Please continue to pray for the holiday ministry that it will continue to bless church visitors and be used by God.

Ivan Kimble

Meeting Point

Meeting Point, (Church Club to our 'friends'), has been running for about 30 years providing a Christian environment for those with learning needs within our Church family and the local community to socialise and join in with worship songs, Bible stories, activities and prayer. We meet every Thursday afternoon in the Parish Hall but take breaks during the end of term school holidays.

A few years ago, several of our 'associated' homes closed, scattering the residents to the four corners of Norfolk and beyond. Over recent years a number of those who came have died. Only two homes now send people to Meeting Point and currently we have 15 members. We are in the hands of the respective home Managers as to whom they allow to come.

Our team of helpers is wonderful and each fully joins in with the afternoon's activities. Without them there would be no Meeting Point.

At Meeting Point, as everywhere else, we are all getting older and without an influx of younger helpers and additional friends from the homes I anticipate that it will gradually decline. This is a few years down the line but must be considered.

So, to the prayer front:

- Thank God for the constancy of the helpers and our friends from the homes.
- Pray for the future of Meeting Point that it will continue to provide support for those with learning needs within Cromer in the years to come.

Terry Draper

Mission Partner: Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

Throughout 2024, Cromer Church continued to support Christians Against Poverty (CAP) as a Mission Partner, by financial donation and prayer through inclusion in the monthly prayer diary. There was no focus month activity in October 2024 due to the Mission Partner Champions at that time being in the process of moving out of the area.

Nationally, CAP continued to provide debt support to many people across the UK. Over 15,000 calls were made to their helpline throughout the year. In their January 2023 to March 2024 reporting period, CAP supported over 10,000 people on their journey out of debt, over 3,000 became debt free and over 100 responded to Jesus for the first time. This was achieved with the help of churches across the country, who together donated £2.5m and provided practical and prayerful support.

Claire Harber

Mission Partner Champion

Mission Partner: Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS)

CPAS, being one of our mission partners and our Patrons, hold on to the vision of enabling churches to help every person hear and discover the good news of Jesus Christ. To work towards achieving this objective they invest each year in over 3,000 Christian leaders, run training events and offer resources to help leaders, PCC's and churches grapple with everything from discerning God's direction, to nurturing new leaders, to leading in evangelism. Their strength has always been in recognizing social change as well as change within the church and reacting to it with the appropriate training and resources.

Training is varied from residential courses to on-line training to webinars. Some recent courses include a one year "Oversight Ministry Course" combined with a publication entitled "Thrive" to help leaders running Multi-Parish Benefices, a learning hub entitled "Leading Evangelism", to help Christians find their part in showing and sharing of faith and an on-line training for PCC's.

In December 2024 CPAS celebrated 100 years of running residential holidays for children and young people by holding a thanksgiving service in Coventry Cathedral. The Ventures and Falcons Holidays for 8- to 18-year-olds continue to bless nearly 4,000 young people every year and thanks to generous donations from supporters, financial assistance is now available to young people who would otherwise be unable to attend and there are also various discounts for groups. The aim of School Ventures is to transform lives and local churches.

The CPAS website gives all details regarding courses, holidays and prayer requests.

Viv Benford

Mission Partner Champion

Mission Partner: Good News for Everyone (formerly Gideons UK)

This North Norfolk Branch is committed to sharing God's word in our local community via our four volunteer members.

During 2024 we endeavoured to share the word of God with those who might never otherwise think of obtaining a copy of the scriptures for themselves.

Seafarers New Testaments were taken by many who attended the service of Thanksgiving for RNLI held in Cromer Inshore Lifeboat Station.

At the Aylsham Show, we offered scriptures and 292 New Testaments and 100 Explore magazines were accepted.

In the Church during Carnival Day, we had many evangelistic conversations with visitors and 70 New Testaments and 30 Explore magazines were taken. The Christmas services gave us another opportunity to offer the scriptures to those who attended and 70 New Testaments and 100 Explore magazines were accepted.

Annually we distribute Youth Testaments to year 7 students at the North Norfolk secondary schools. We purchase approximately 1500 Youth New Testaments (at £1.50 each).

In 2024 we endeavoured to deliver NTs to all schools. However, in the past we were able to offer the Testaments to students personally, this is now not possible as schools say they have no time for assemblies. Four schools which refused were given a pack containing a Youth Testament, Discover magazine and our contact details.

We thank God that we still have the freedom to offer His word but do pray that the scriptures are read, and lives changed.

Please pray for more volunteers.

Chris and Jennie Jacquier
Mission Partner Champions

Mission Partner: Hope into Action

In this country in the past year, homelessness rose 27%. This demonstrates that there is an acute need to help those people and to restore them to dignity and new hope for the future. In the past year, 5 new franchises opened their first homes and 17 new homes were opened.

A part of the Conference in March is giving awards to tenants who have managed to improve their circumstances, and the statistics are impressive! When they first enter a house, many tenants have a history of challenging behaviour. They are supported by a paid worker, and also by volunteer Support and Friendship groups from the local church. Over 100 tenants were put forward for awards, in categories such as maintaining tenancy, which includes getting on with co-tenants, running a home; addressing offending behaviour – 94% of tenants who had served a custodial sentence did not return to prison; recovery from addiction – 183 tenants had an addiction, 89% of them recovered; improving mental health; improving physical health; education, training and employment; and others.

In addition, 55% of tenants engaged in a Christian activity, 69% wanted to be prayed with and 16 tenants were baptised or made a commitment to the Christian faith.

Let's pray that the charity's work can continue to increase and spread the love of God through his son Jesus. We all know that the need to house the homeless has become acute.

Katharine Checketts
Mission Partner Champion

Mission Partner: London City Mission

Last September we were privileged to welcome a deputation of 2 young women from London City Mission, Johanna Briscoe and Rebecca Tortelli. On their arrival on Saturday 21st they met some of the congregation at an informal supper party. On Sunday 22nd, Johanna spoke at both morning services in the Parish Church about her work in the mission and her own testimony. She spoke with great enthusiasm and passion. Rebecca spoke at St Martin's and was also enthusiastically received. They are keen to keep in touch with us and to pay a return visit in due course.

Elizabeth Bridger
Mission Partner Champion

Mothers' Union

This has been a good year for Mothers union in Cromer, and the Lord has blessed us with some excellent speakers and increase in membership to 13, with 3 new members admitted. A local home group often boosts attendance for special events. Many of the members struggle with health and bereavement issues; but we continued to be blessed by our local Leader; Jean Steward now 93 years old.

The main event we supported was the 'Souls of our Shoes' campaign, with support and backing of the PCC. A working group of members and non-members met to pray, plan and prepare; including completing the Safeguarding course 'Raising awareness of domestic abuse' together. The display was set up first in the Parish Church for a week, constantly attended by our team of DBS checked and trained Stewards, then in St Martin's for 5 days. The results were remarkable, sadly; many talking to us of their own experience or of the experience of someone close to them. Regular comments were; 'this should be highlighted more; and in every Church... (particularly re: coercive behaviour). 'It affects men too' particularly in response to the men's shoes; and 'it's the children I worry for....' Leaflets were taken away; and still are, from toilet doors in both churches. The overall average daily footfall was 50 plus.

We have a full and varied programme for 2025 displayed in both churches and ask for prayer that locally and nationally MU goes from strength to strength in supporting positive family life, and locally, that younger women will join us.

Eileen Woodfield
Branch Secretary

Music and Musicians (Parish Church)

We are blessed to have a group of musicians who give freely of their time and talents to lead the music at the 10.30 and 6.30 services at the Parish Church. During 2024, the team also supported the musicians at St Martin's for a few months, when their resources were particularly stretched.

The team is led by Jon Mardlin, Simon Purslow and David Orsborne, and we have a large group of skilled musicians supporting them who are 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.

Jon Mardlin, David Orsborne and Simon Purslow

Music and Musicians (St Martin's)

Little has changed and we continue to be a group of musicians working together well, musically and spiritually. John Attfield plays piano, Mike Brown sings and plays guitar, and Anne Attfield, Lynda Brown and Don Wilson sing. Andrew McCandlish plays the organ and doubles up on the piano when necessary. The hymns played on the organ are a well-loved part of worship at St Martin's. Paul Rosier occasionally helps out on the piano. It has been good to have John and Anne Attfield both fully recovered and back with us.

As always, we would welcome new people to join the group and would be interested to hear from anyone who thinks they might fit in. We are very grateful to John Drury and Rachel and to Alison Orsborne who are helping when Lynda and Mike are away for six weeks. Alison also worked with us last Christmas. Thank you to Dave Walker on the sound desk, with Diane Hartley and Annette Williams.

We like to introduce new songs, chosen carefully to fit our situation at St Martins, but we also love to sing many of the good old worship songs and hymns.

Please pray that there will be others interested in learning to set up the mics and PA; and that the Lord might bring along a musically talented person or couple who love contemporary worship and who can work well with us, so that we may be able to have a rota to give each of us more flexibility.

Lynda and Mike Brown

Mustard Seed and Mustard Seed Plus

Monday meals have gone well with an average of 50 to 60 meals given each week, which includes 4 meals taken to individuals. We are starting at 1.30 now to encourage more elderly people. Under Tracy we have a really good team who are invaluable and much appreciated. After the meals the children go into the church with Rachel, Phil and Eileen, while some of the mums have a time with Joy, Ann and we have recently welcomed Tim Britton.

Thursday mornings we have been able to give toast, pastries and sometimes bacon rolls with tea and coffee. These are appreciated as is the clothes exchange once a month. Last

October, Mother's Union gave nine families a free holiday in Caister which they loved! One more family is eligible this year.

Tea and testimonies is proving to be popular and some of the mustard seed folk are beginning to come.

Praise God for all the help we have and the energy Jesus gives us. We pray that we will always go His way. We are seeing hearts softened and adults and children being more open to God. We feel God is at work.

Tracy Johnson and Ann Graveling

Open the Book (Suffield Park Infant School and Nursery)

The Infants School has revised its assembly arrangements and asked if we could visit on another day in the week. Owing to the availability of OTB team members and St Martin's Hall for rehearsing, this was not possible. Accordingly, we have had to settle for dates on a Thursday afternoon approximately every three weeks during term time. But thankfully we are still warmly welcomed and have sought other links with the school, including making Easter gardens with the younger children. In addition, Reception classes have visited St Martin's Church and Year 2 have visited the Parish Church during the Christmas Tree Festival.

Thankfully it appears that Bible Society have now accepted that the new material they produced is inappropriate for children aged 4-7 years old and we have been allowed to make use of the previous material, which is more suitable. Please pray for our team of nine people includes one new addition this year, but we can always make room for more, especially men, to keep Paul company!

The Spring term involved bible stories of Jesus from the calling of his disciples, to a very sensitive portrayal of the Easter story, which was well received. The Summer term centred on the Old Testament, with stories of Elijah, Elisha, and Joseph. The Autumn term included some of the parables of Jesus and ended with the Christmas story.

Paul Neale and Janet Rosier

Open the Book (Cromer Junior School)

The team now comprises nine members. We share Bible stories every week at the Wednesday afternoon assemblies, participating on a rota basis, taking the part of narrator or characters, adding in props or occasionally sound effects to bring the stories to life. Each story concludes with a Reflection and Invitation to pray. The children love to be involved, with actions or sounds, usually some are in costume and occasionally reading from a script or assisting with props.

We continue to work through the Open the Book Storytelling Bible, which has a programme of 90 stories.

The Junior School Carol service in church, with parents attending, was led by Joanna, with Open the Book sharing the Christmas stories.

It is wonderful to have many props and costumes made by members of Cromer Church, but new ideas arise or replacements needed, so anyone who could offer artistic or practical skills

would be much appreciated. Additional members of the team as storytellers would also be most welcome.

During 2024, the PCC agreed to support us maintain the work of OTB in the Belfry School, Overstrand. A team has been formed from both the Cromer teams. We have been warmly welcomed and participate in their Collective Worship about four times a term.

Prayer points:

- Gratitude for the opportunity to engage in mission with children and good links with local schools.
- Pray that 'the seeds of the Gospel' will take root and grow.

Frances Britton

Organ Recitals

There were 11 organ recitals in the 2024 Summer recital season and almost 1,000 people attended, an average of 87 at each event. The audience consisted of members of Cromer Church, Cromer residents and visitors to Cromer. When planning the recitals I was keen to feature organists who live in Norfolk and to offer a platform to young organists, some of whom had a connection to Cromer Parish Church. One recital featured the French horn with piano accompaniment as well as solo organ pieces.

I have always regarded the organ recitals as part of the church's missionary outreach, affording opportunities to welcome people into the church and demonstrating our core beliefs through the inclusion of prayers and a hymn; a unique feature of our recitals. I've been fortunate to be supported by a loyal team of stewards who have taken responsibility for the 'meet and greet' tasks. David Anderson and David Orsborne took responsibility for the sound desk ensuring that the audience had a close-up view of the organ console via the screens. Philip and Jane Sapwell introduced a number of the recitals and I'm also grateful to Rev. Will Warren for undertaking this task for the opening and closing recitals. Finally, David Orsborne took responsibility for much of the routine administration and given freely of his time to meet me to discuss all aspects of the recital planning.

We do not charge for admission but ask for voluntary donations to the Organ Fund and people responded generously.

Tim Moon

Social Media

Social media is a great way to connect members of Cromer Church, our wider community and to those who may not have attended church before. We are posting weekly across all accounts on Facebook, Instagram, X and Threads.

We aim to keep people informed and to engage with people in a way that is informal and friendly. The posts enable the church to invite people to events, to consider and reflect on Sunday Bible talks and to show that the Church is alive and active in sharing the good news of Jesus

An item for praise and thanksgiving

- We thank God that it has been an effective tool for widely sharing about the life of Cromer Church and the good news of Jesus.
- We thank God that there has been no negative or hostile comments on any posts.

An item for prayer

- We pray that it will develop a space to build community, foster engagement, and spread the message of Christ.

Jon and Hazel Mardlin

Table Tennis Group

We have had a great year, with numbers increasing, until now we have 16 members, with 11-14 attending on a regular basis. We have recently acquired a third new table, in addition to the two generously provided by the church (for which we are very grateful). It was always hoped that the group would be missional, reaching those outside the church, to discover that Christians can enjoy “normal” activities, and have a lot of fun, and laughter, which we certainly do, and we are seeing this coming to fruition. New members (and beginners) are always welcome.

Judith Anderson

Visiting and Pastoral Care

This year has been a busy and challenging one for the pastoral team on many fronts, as we have sought to support many of our church families, who have faced major difficulties of every kind, from serious illness, protracted times of treatment, surgery, and family concerns, to name but a few. A number of faithful church members have been called Home this year, and we have tried to walk with their families through their grief. It is such a privilege and blessing to walk alongside those suffering hard times, and to learn from them. We have an extended team of those who visit the housebound, take home communions, take services in care homes, and generally support those in need. Beyond the team, there are many in our church family who lovingly care for others in quiet, unseen ways, and we would want to recognise their kindness, and thank them. Should you feel God calling you to be part of this pastoral ministry, we would love to hear from you.

Judith Anderson

Website

The Cromer Church website is hosted by Hubb Church and during 2024 we requested them to work on a tidy-up of our site and apply a new template design for us, utilising the colour palette from our logo and branding.

The updated site also provides easily accessed information for people thinking of visiting us, as well as links to the recently recorded morning services at the Parish Church.

Jon and Hazel Mardlin have been very helpful in improving the website further, resulting in a less ‘wordy’ and more visual look to the pages. Jon continues to use his technical and graphic design expertise to enhance the pages.

Please do let me know - at the following email address - of any additions or amendments needed on the website, relating to groups and/or events that you run for our church:
web.admin@cromer-church.org.uk

Jill Salsbury
Website Administrator

Women's Wellbeing Ministry

Monthly activities are organised for Women's Wellbeing and are open to all. There is a regular group of church members and several from outside the church.

Over the last year we have had walks, including East Runton, Happy Valley and Beeston Priory ruins and Beeston Bump. We also walked around Cromer looking at sites connected with the fishing, lifeboat and coastguard heritage. In July we walked at Felbrigg, including a visit to St Margaret's church for the flower festival, which we plan to repeat this summer.

We enjoyed a continental breakfast followed by indoor curling. Due to the popularity of this Jackie Guest and Rosalind Heydon are starting a monthly curling activity where all will be welcome to join in (not just women!). We also had a Christmas craft day, with a soup lunch. We were made welcome at The Pleasaunce at Overstrand, with a walk in the gardens and a tour of the house, learning about its history and Christian Endeavour, followed by coffee and delicious cakes.

In March, we will be walking to Mustard Seed at St Martins for coffee. Our April activity, on Friday 11th, is a cream tea with craft activities, including making Easter gardens and cards.

Special thanks to all who have helped: Jackie Austin for catering, Angela Yiasimi and Jilly Boocock, and Alison Orsborne and Sue Brocklehurst for table decorations and crafting. Please pray for more helpers to organise activities. If you have any ideas, please let me know.

Brenda Stibbons