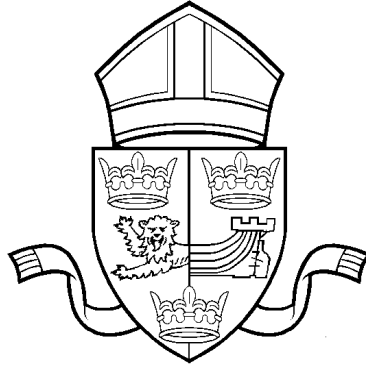


The Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich



Annual Report and Financial Statements
of
the
Parochial Church Council
of St Mary's Church
Polstead
Suffolk
For the year ended 31 December 2008

General Information

Church:	St Mary's	
Correspondence Address Postcode	Pond Street Polstead CO6 5BS	
Incumbent:	Rev. Michael Tillett	Chairman of the PCC
Wardens	Mrs Jill Lowe Mr Bill Wigglesworth	Vice Chairman of PCC
Deanery Synod Representatives	Mr Barrie Hall Mr James Sephton, Mrs Maggie Bird	
Elected Member(s):	Mrs Elsie Braybrook Mr Richard Bartlett Treasurer Mrs Maggie Bird Mr Barrie Hall Mrs Fiona Knapp Mrs Joy Mattock Secretary Mrs Myra Reid Mr James Sephton Mrs Doris Westbrook-Smith Mrs Anne Lewis	
Co-opted Members	Revd John Fowler Revd Valri Armstrong	NSM Assistant Priest OLM

The Ministry Team of the Benefice.

Those involved in leading and preaching at worship on Sundays.

Clergy	Revd Michael Tillett Revd John Fowler Revd Valri Armstrong
Readers	Mr David Rowe Mrs Elizabet Lynn Mrs Helen Mitchell Mrs Jackie Sephton (Ordinand in Training)

The Pastoral Elder Team
Involved in visiting and
Pastoral care in the Benefice
In support of the clergy

Elders	Mr Raymond Bond Miss Francis Mount Mrs Cecilia Hines Mrs Jane Addis Mrs Jean Kingsbury
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Church Electoral Roll and Statistics (as at 31st December 2008)

At the end of 2008 the electoral roll stood at 81. The average attendance is 30.

There were 6 weddings, 11 funerals in church, 1 at the crematorium, and 9 baptisms during the year.

A review of the year.

The full PCC met five times during the year in addition to the Annual Meeting.

The Standing Committee acts for the PCC when situations necessitate it doing so.

The Fabric Committee comprising Mr Bill Wigglesworth(Chairman), James Sephton and Barrie Hall have met through out the year and discussed access to the tower, heating improvements, churchyard fence, repair of church wall, extending the church yard, improvements to Wayfarers' chapel, wall paintings, the collapsed tomb, timber condition, wildflower area, the driveway leading to the church, death watch beetle in the south aisle.

Main business discussed included:

- Electoral roll revision
- Ordinand Training of Mrs Jackie Sephton.
- Harvest Festival.
- Church fabric
- Extension of Church yard.
- Polstead Music Group.
- New Communion table for south aisle.
- Revision of Church Warden's measure.
- Appointment of Mr James Sephton as elder.
- Nativity Play at Carol Service.
- Safeguarding policy for vulnerable adults and children
- Diocesan Structures Review

In addition the PCC discussed ongoing matters of administration and finance.

Worship

St Mary's choir continue to provide faithful leading to our worship.

The Benefice singing group has sung at each Benefice service. All the baptismal families were invited to attend the Gospel Oak service which was well attended despite the bad weather. There were activities for children and refreshments and it was a great success. Our thanks go to Emma and Toby Owles for their hospitality.

The 'First Sunday' services at Leavenheath, to which all churches contribute, continue to be a success.

The re-introduction of a monthly 8.00am service in the newly re-ordered south aisle chapel has been well supported.

The Christmas Midnight Communion service was held at Stoke this year. A nativity play was produced twelve children from Polstead for the Carol service. The Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Remembrance Services are exceptionally well attended.

Nurture

During the year a successful Lent course was run with the theme being The Lords' Prayer

An Alpha Course is planned for the beginning of 2009.

A home group has begun again looking at 1Corinthians and the women's fellowship continues to thrive.

Outreach

A support group has been started for the bereaved by Mr B Orris and Mrs Jane Wilson which meets on an occasional basis for fellowship fun and mutual support.

The building and the churchyard

The church fabric is generally in good condition and the church looks very well. External plaster repair above the chancel was completed. A scheme for the repair of the side aisle roof timbers was completed and will be costed as soon as funds are available. Meanwhile, the condition of the most seriously defective beam in the North aisle is being kept under review with two tell tales in place. Conservation work will also be necessary on the wall paintings this will be deferred until funds are available. The creation of safe access to the bell tower has been held up by the need to resolve problems of design and insulation from noise and cold, which we hope will be possible shortly. The repair of the collapsed Boutell tomb (with much appreciated volunteer effort) was completed in early summer. A Planning application has been submitted concerning the extension of the churchyard, where an archaeological survey will be carried out, despite the high cost. It was suggested that the wildflower area be reduced to half its current size. Members considering improvements

to the Wayfarers chapel

Fund Raising

We are very grateful to Friends of Polstead Church for the £8000.00 granted for repairs and conservation during 2008 and the pledge of extensive funds to support major conservation and repair work during 2009. Lionel and Pauline Hatch generously donated the cost of fitting the carpet to the new children's area. The church has benefited from a number of generous donations from collections at funerals during the year

Diocesan quota

The Diocesan quota for the Polstead was £15,730. For 2009, the PCC agreed no increase in the quota allocation. Polstead could have taken a reduction of £ 795 but the PCC felt it was right to keep the same as last year as this would help less well off parishes in the Deanery.

Conclusion

Our parish, indeed our benefice, would not function without everybody playing their part. We should say thank you to church wardens, treasurers, secretaries, readers, Elders, choir singers, bell ringers, servers, lesson readers, intercessors, prayers, flower arrangers, cleaners, linen ironers and many others, but most of all the God without whose blessing, strength and power we can do nothing!

_____(Chairman)
4th April 2009