

The GGM Benefice of Parishes in the Diocese of Norwich

Forward into 2024 and beyond...

The Order of Angels – 15th Century stained glass at Harpley, St Lawrence.



Benefice Profile 2024 – Team Rector
www.ggmbenefice.uk



The Gayton, Grimston, Great Massingham & District Team Benefice

Ten Churches – One Faith – Together

Serving the people and villages of Ashwicken with Leziate & Bawsey, Congham, East Walton, Gayton, Gayton Thorpe, Great Massingham and Little Massingham, Grimston, Harpley and Roydon.

All our Churches are very special as are the people in them. We worship together and have fun together and occasionally shed a few tears together. Our services are as varied as our Churches but we all have one Faith and one God.

Our Benefice Prayer

“We have come together, shared together, and prayed together.
Remembering the past and anticipating the future.
Lord receive our thanks and praise.
For the work and witness of those who have gone before us.
The faith that sustained them, the vision that inspired them.
For the part you call us to play in our Church’s continuing story.
Lord, receive our thanks and praise.
Lord bind us more closely together and unite us in the work of
kingdom in our communities.
For the fun and fellowship we share in Christ.
The support and encouragement; the strength and inspiration.
Lord, receive our thanks and praise.
Loving God, we commit ourselves afresh to the service of our Churches.
Give us faith and courage, a spirit of adventure and a willingness
to follow where you would lead.
Take what we are and direct what we would be.
For we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”



**Our prayers are with you as you consider your next move.
Thank you for taking your time to read these pages.**

Statement from the Bishop



The Rt Revd Dr Jane Steen

Thank you for your interest in the post of Team Rector of Gayton, Grimston, Massingham and District. I add my prayers to those of the Benefice, that when you read this, your heart will be warmed by what you read, and that the Spirit leads you to want to find out more.

There is plenty of information in this profile about the benefice, and more about the wider diocese in my accompanying letter. If God is calling you to be the next incumbent here, you will come to a place of beauty, faith and love. You will join a diocese eagerly seeking to be transformed by Christ and to live lives which are prayerful, pastoral, and prophetic. You will be part of an active deanery and within easy access of beautiful country, a forward-looking town and glorious coast.

We look forward very much to hearing from you.

The Benefice

Set in the beautiful rural county of Norfolk, the Benefice is part of Lynn Deanery in the Diocese of Norwich.

In 2012 there was a significant reorganisation by the Diocese when Gayton and Grimston Benefices merged and then part of the Great Massingham Benefice was added in 2014. Since then, the ten parishes have collaborated and co-ordinated, coming together to know each other well over the intervening period.

We now have a vacancy and are seeking a special person to come and lead our Mission Team in growing our Church here.

Our Needs

Could you fill this space?

As a benefice, we support each other and are not inward looking but rather outward facing. Mission and outreach are a priority as together we seek to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

We are moving forward in this vacancy in the Lord's strength but we need someone to lead us in our spiritual journey. Someone with a heart for rural ministry with all its blessings and challenges.

We are seeking someone to lead us with vision, work with us in recognising the potential, helping to develop a strategy for worship and pastoral care, so that we all grow together.



The Task

We are praying for a priest who will:

- Lead us in mission and outreach as we seek to live out our calling to share the good news of Jesus Christ
- Discern, encourage and equip vocations
- Help us build on our relationships with our 5 village schools
- Enable the benefice to engage with ways of deepening faith and discipleship
- Develop a strategy for pastoral care
- Lead worship with flexibility, building on connections between the church and the agricultural year
- Encourage us to work across the benefice, while maintaining our individual identities.

What we offer

- A warm and welcoming community
- A comfortable family home in beautiful countryside and wonderful quality of life
- A mutually supportive group of parishes
- A dedicated and hardworking lay ministry
- Experienced and committed Churchwardens and PCCs.
- A variety and diversity of worship.
- Strong connections with our 5 village schools
- Great potential for personal and spiritual growth.
- A commitment to the care and well-being of our clergy.

The challenges ahead

- To understand that our congregations are aging and we must encourage new members.
- To love and value the existing congregations while supporting and enabling the introduction of new patterns of worship.
- To engage with the community to encourage worship.
- To create new teams to develop mission.
- To encourage giving that we might continue our ability to meet our costs, fully paying our Benefice Share and maintain our beautiful Churches.

The person we pray for

Our new Incumbent will be prayerful and spiritual and will:

- Encourage us to work more closely as a Benefice whilst maintaining our individual village identities
- Be a good communicator and have good people skills
- Be enthusiastic and organised
- Be able to relate well with the children and young people and be pro-active in creating or assisting with youth activities
- Build on existing relationships within our schools.
- Be an inspiring TEAM leader and nurture the skills of others within the Benefice
- Be prepared to be flexible as to styles and venues of worship
- Be a competent administrator who has good computer skills and practical use of social media.

Our Faith

Mission Statement

Our mission is to serve God and encourage a life with God across all our parishes.

We have a variety of services across all our churches on Sundays - Holy Communion, a Book of Common Prayer Communion, Sung Eucharist, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, Prayer and Praise, Family services and a Celtic style service. Two midweek Communion services are held each month. Lay members are involved in readings, prayers and song.

We have one organist who plays at various Church services and at other times recorded music is used.

In addition to the festival services, we have averaged 6 Weddings, 36 funerals (incl ashes interment and services at Mintlyn Crematorium) and 14 baptisms. (individuals not necessarily occasions) each year.

We have celebrated 4 confirmations of young people and adults in recent years.

There is a close contact with all our schools with assemblies and special school services held in Church, particularly at Harvest and Christmas, with pupils, teachers, parents and grandparents attending.

During Covid, we organised interactive "Zoom" Church, holding live services on line with up to 50 participants.

Services Pattern in the Benefice

1st Wednesday

9.00am St Lawrence **Harpley**
Holy Communion

1st Sunday

8.30 am All Saints **Roydon**
Holy Communion

9.30am St Lawrence **Harpley**
Family Service Lay

10.30am St Botolph **Grimston**
Holy Communion

10.30am St Andrew **Lt Massingham**
Songs of Praise Lay

2nd Sunday

8.30am St Andrew **Congham**
Holy Communion

10.30am St Andrew **Lt Massingham**
Morning Prayer Lay

10.30am St Nicholas **Gayton**
Holy Communion

10.30am St Mary **Gt Massingham**
Songs of Praise Lay

3rd Wednesday

9.00am St Botolph **Grimston**
Holy Communion

3rd Sunday

9.30am St Lawrence **Harpley**
Sung Eucharist

10.30am St Botolph **Grimston**
Morning Praise Lay

10.30am St Mary **Gt Massingham**
Holy Communion

4th Sunday

8.30am All Saints **Ashwicken**
Holy Communion
alternates with **East Walton**

10.30am St Nicholas **Gayton**
Holy Communion

10.30am St Mary **Gt Massingham**
Family Service Lay

10.30am St Andrew **Lt Massingham**
Holy Communion

3.00 pm St Mary **Gayton Thorpe**
Celtic Service Lay

5th Sunday

10.30 am Alternate locations
Group Holy Communion

Bible study groups are held regularly and especially at Advent and Easter. Usually two groups are on offer meeting in parishioner's homes with about ten or more taking part in each.

The Mission Team and Pccs

Each Church has its own dedicated PCC with experienced Churchwardens. There is a feeling that some PCCs could combine to create a single PCC for a small group of Churches.

The mission team has one non-stipendiary assistant priest living in Gayton, and a Licensed Lay Minister and 5 Authorised Worship Assistants - one living in Grimston, two living in Harpley, one in Great Massingham and one living in Little Massingham. They are very involved with managing and organising services.

There are also several very active Lay members and volunteers ready to encourage and support.



Assistant Priest; The Revd Sue Martin

I have always been a Christian; God has been my light and inspiration all my life. My professional background is in education, as a headteacher and advisor in primary schools. In 2010, I followed God's calling and became ordained. In 2011 I led the development of partnership working in diverse children's faith groups with the Church of England's Near Neighbours Team in the Diocese of Southwark. Around 2014 I became a hospital and hospice chaplain in West Norfolk. West Norfolk has been my home since childhood. It is a joy to have returned, living out God's calling to ministry in our churches and communities. I lead on Holy Communion and other services across the benefice, support our church schools with Collective Worship and am a Bishop's Governor at Ashwicken School. In my professional life I continue to work with schools in the UK and abroad. I have a huge interest in pilgrimage journeying to places such as the Holy Land and Papua New Guinea, where I continue this involvement at a diocesan level.



Reader (LLM – Licensed Lay Minister): Joy Smith

Psalm 30 verse 5 "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Well that's how I got my name; my father was training to become a Vicar and that was the psalm the morning I was born. I first came to Norfolk in 1960 when my father became Rector of a small village in south Norfolk called Woodrising, we then moved to Ashwicken in 1970, where we lived until my father died in 1982. I moved with my mother into King's Lynn but when I got married in 1988 moved back to the countryside and now live in Grimston. I have been involved with the church all my life and I became a Reader/Lay Minister in 1991. The Lord has worked in many ways in my life but he has always remained close to my Celtic heart.



AWA (Authorised Worship Assistant) : Jan Willson

I have lived in Pott Row for over 30 years, having come back to live in the village where my mother and grandmother were born, so I could be termed almost "local". I have loved my Lord and my Church for many years, and have enjoyed being part of St Botolph's Church family. I seem to have been on the PCC for ever, and Church warden for not quite so long! Last year I obeyed my Lord and agreed to become an Authorised Worship Assistant. It is so lovely to be able to support the ministry team and help with the services, and I am enjoying my new role very much - although I still have so much to learn and constantly pray for God's guidance.



AWA (Authorised Worship Assistant) : Kim Frazer

I live with my husband in Great Massingham. Before we moved to Norfolk my husband and I attended an Assemblies of God, Pentecostal Chapel. Moving to a new house, and a new County was quite a transition but moving to a new church was a real challenge. My husband and I had assumed that we would drive out of our village to find our new church but the Lord spoke to each of us, independently and told us that he had placed us here and we were not to drive past the church in the village. So we attend St. Mary's in Great Massingham and are part of the PCC. My husband is the church treasurer and I have the privilege of being an AWA. Rural ministry has its challenges but its blessings too and we hold fast to the Lord's promise: DEUTERONOMY 31:8 "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." Amen!



AWA's (Authorised Worship Assistants) : Jerry Brown and Lucy Brown

I am married to Lucy and we have 4 grown-up children. My father came from a strong Methodist tradition. I admire the social conscience of Methodism. On marrying Lucy, I joined the Church of England. My faith has been strengthened by our many visits to the Taize community. I am committed to church unity and a simple faith. I believe strongly that our church needs to become ever more inclusive - welcoming people of all ages and all persuasions.

I am married to Jerry. My father was an Anglican priest, my mother comes from a family of priests. I grew up in a very busy vicarage and Christianity has always been central to my life. I love children and I am committed to working with them. I run the children's workshops in Harpley church and am the church warden there. My faith is a living faith. I believe in an inclusive church where all feel welcome

Where we are

The gently rolling countryside of Norfolk has inaccurately been described as flat but there is great scenic interest from woodland, forests, rolling chalklands, coastline and the watery patchwork of the Norfolk Broads. This landscape is filled with ancient churches (about 640), windmills and picturesque villages with their village signs and thatched and cobbled cottages.

You can reach the very beautiful North Norfolk coast within half an hour by car. It is a popular area for bird watching, sailing (inland and sea) and other water based sports are all enjoyed at various points along the coast. There are also plenty of great beaches for peace and tranquillity and popular holiday resorts at Hunstanton and at Cromer (shown below).

There are good walks too along the Norfolk Coastal Path and Peddars Way and visits to Gardens and Stately homes (Sandringham and Blickling featured) and we must not forget all our charming villages. These are just a few of the highlights of our glorious county with its wide vistas, clean air and starry skies.

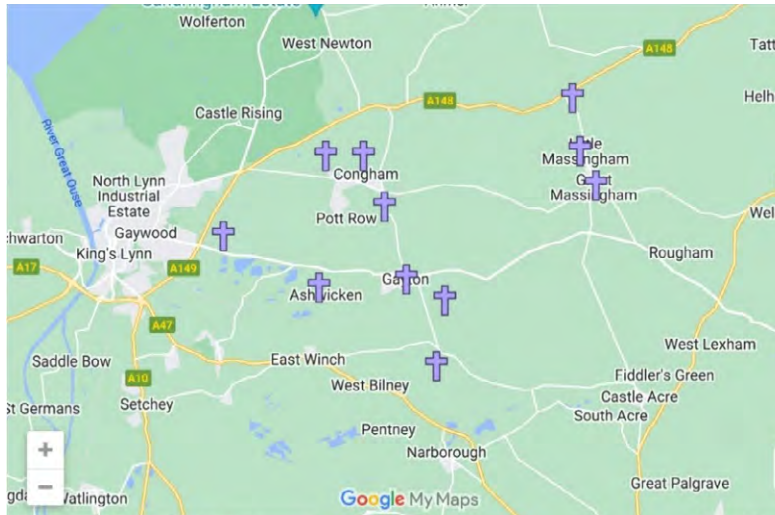
The county population is just about 1 million with 24% over 64 years and 15% under 15 years.



(all photographs are Creative Commons Licenced)

Our Villages

The benefice covers around 35 square miles with about 5500 people living in the area of which around 100 are regular Church attenders



The ten parishes run between the A148 to the north, and the B1145 to the south.

Our parishes are very rural. There are 3 main albeit small villages in the Benefice at Gayton, Grimston and Great Massingham with the remainder smaller villages and hamlets.

All have beautiful medieval Churches and within the Benefice we have 5 schools – 4 are Church of England Schools and one State Primary school and also a Montessori Nursery School.

Gayton is a growing village with £6 million invested last year in a new School building – The Gayton Church of England Primary Academy which includes a Nursery School.

In the last few years, Ashwicken School was also rebuilt at £3m.

Within the Benefice there are two Medical Centres, a variety of shops and facilities, and various clubs and associations.

Focus on Great Massingham

The Sunday Times and the Daily Telegraph have both voted Great Massingham as one of the best places to live.

The newspapers praised the village's "bucolic charm" with its "jumble of mellow, pantile-roofed buildings" around the well-known green and duck pond.

It recommended the award-winning pub, The Dabbling Duck, recently named in the Good Food Guide and the village shop which sells local artisan produce.



Our Village Magazines & Web Site

We publish 3 village magazines edited and delivered by volunteers.

“The Voice” covers the Gayton area, “The Village Link” for the Grimston area and “The Mallard” for Gt Massingham and Little Massingham. There is an additional newsletter to cover Harpley.

All are regular monthly editions (but 10 times a year) and distributed FREE to every household. In each there is Church news and diary but also all village news from the various Parish Councils, Schools, Clubs and Societies. The main magazines are financed by local advertising that produces a surplus used to help Church funds.

The Benefice web site is at www.ggmbenefice.uk. It has been active for 8 years and updated daily with News and Events and diary of all services. It also has a great deal of information on all our Churches with histories and photographs, who we all are and what we do – marriages, funerals, baptisms etc. and how to contact us. It averages 300+ hits per month with more at Christmas and Easter.



www.ggmbenefice.uk

The Rectory



The Rectory is situated in Grimston, down a quiet lane only 100 yards from St Botolph's Church. It stands in its own plot surrounded by fields at back and sides. It is not overlooked and in a tranquil location – yet within walking distance of the village shop and Health Centre.

A garage and ample parking to the front and a westerly facing garden at the back laid mostly to grass. The house is oil central heated with double glazing and parquet flooring on the ground floor.

There is:

- A welcoming hallway with a separate lavatory.
- A spacious light living room with an open fire and patio doors to the garden. There are multiple sockets and TV point.
- A large dual aspect study.
- A good sized dining room.
- A well lit kitchen with good storage, including a separate pantry/wine store, and with space for table and chairs.
- A corridor then gives access to the rear gardens and also to a utility room with sink, a boot room, an additional lavatory and internal doorway into the garage.
- Upstairs there are 4 large double bedrooms with built in wardrobes, a family bathroom with a shower and bath and hand basin. There is a separate lavatory and adjacent a large airing cupboard.
- Outside there is a small shed and log store.



Our Churches and Churchyards

Norfolk is “blessed” with one of the highest number of mediaeval Churches in the world – over 650 churches – and each one is a treasure in its own right.

Our own Churches are loved and revered and have been at the centre of village life for 600 years and more. They are all listed and vary from the simplicity of All Saints, Ashwicken - “Our Church in the Fields” - to the magnificence of St Lawrence, Harpley. Sir Simon Jenkins wrote this in his book of “England’s Thousand Best Churches” - “A superb work of decorated Gothic craftsmanship, with some splendid bench-ends carvings, depicting bears, monkeys, mythical beasts and bishops”

East Anglia is also home to 124 of the 185 “Round Tower Churches” in this country with just a handful elsewhere in the world. We have two – at St Mary’s, Gayton Thorpe and St Mary’s, East Walton. They date back to Saxon times and the whole area is steeped in history. Recent archaeological digs locally have discovered evidence of Saxons and Romans.

The Romans and Saxons used the Icknield and Peddars Way, as do modern day pilgrims and tourists. Both pass close to/by our Churches.

Despite the age of our Churches, all are in a “good” condition. In the last few years major refurbishment has taken place at several Churches, with grant assistance, and recent bequests have allowed significant improvements to be made.

More details of these are in the Parish Profiles in section 3.

Focus on East Walton

A medieval gold seal which shows an elephant carrying a castle on its back is only the third of its kind recorded by the British Museum. Found in East Walton it is thought to date from between 1250 and 1350. This “rare portrayal”, carved into a gemstone has a Latin inscription - “armed with a shield, the outlaw dragon is harmful”



“Few people in medieval England would have seen a live elephant,” said Beverley Nenk, curator at the British Museum. “The image may have been based on reports of these fabulous and exotic creatures from travellers or pilgrims returning from the East or from the Crusades, or from descriptions and images in bestiaries and other manuscripts.”

Conservation

Our Churchyards are many hundreds of years old and have been and are lovingly cared for. They are places of peace and solace and dignity.

A churchyard is also much more than a garden around a church. It is a burial ground, but also a place of quiet reflection and recreation, a habitat for rare plant and animal species, and the setting of the church building. The good management of a churchyard needs to take into account a range of issues, from the burial rights of parishioners to the wildlife management of the churchyard.

Some of our Churches are already actively engaged in conservation schemes and hope that their Churchyards can become a haven for wildlife yet still have that tidy, cared and loved for appearance that we all expect. The two purposes can be brought together to create a beautiful place where people can rest and reflect. Areas where wildflowers are left to flourish are great places for bees and butterflies to thrive, but also add beauty for all to enjoy.

A panel from the Millenium window at Ashwicken featuring an almanac of flowers

Bats are also a vital part of our native wildlife and part of God's creation. Several of our Churches, in common with many in Norfolk, are bat roosting sites. They have long used Churches to roost, with the same roost being used by generations of bats and Harpley Church has the only maternal colony of Serotine bats in Norfolk.

Gayton Thorpe has one of the largest colonies of pipistrelle bats in Norfolk, with over 800 Common and Soprano Pipistrelles using the church. The churches have been working with Phil Parker, a local bat ecologist for many years to manage their bats. The project has helped to install new roosting space in the rafters, including relining the space with safe materials, added a wall top box in the nave eaves and built more boxes in the surrounding churchyard trees.

Our Congregations

Our congregations are warm and friendly and fully supportive of their Parish Churches.

We have joint full Benefice group services regularly as we are all brothers and sisters in Christ – though some are distant cousins.

Nevertheless we generally mix together and enjoy and support each other's fund raising efforts. Covid was a great hindrance to all our activities – worship and fellowship but we are back on course now and resuming all the good things we do in our parishes.

These are many and various from Coffee Mornings to Concerts, Arts & Crafts and Antiques, Bring & Buy, Christmas Tree Festivals, Parish Walks, Lambing Day, Tractor Rally, Fetes and Flowers.

Whether it is trips to the tower and bell ringing in Grimston or participating in Congham's internationally renowned Snail Race or having a "Bit of a Do" in Roydon or joining together on coach trips out – it is all about FUN.



Our Schools

There are Church of England Schools in Ashwicken, Gayton, Great Massingham, Harpley and a state primary school at Grimston/Pott Row.

Holly Meadows Primary School in Pott Row (Grimston) - 135 pupils. OFSTED GOOD
www.hollymeadows.norfolk.sch.uk

Ashwicken Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School – 112 pupils. OFSTED GOOD
www.ashwickenschool.co.uk

Gayton Church of England Primary Academy – 159 pupils. OFSTED GOOD
www.gaytonprimary.co.uk

Great Massingham CofE Primary School – 66 pupils. OFSTED GOOD
www.gmhfed.norfolk.sch.uk

Harpley CofE VC Primary School – 52 pupils. OFSTED GOOD
www.gmhfed.norfolk.sch.uk

Harpley and Great Massingham Schools are Federated with a shared vision - The Lord says, 'I will instruct you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.' Psalm 32:8
All are regularly visited by Clergy and Lay members and welcomed into our Churches especially at Harvest and Christmas for their own dedicated services.

Gayton School's ethos "The school works together in a Christian community to be ready to learn, respectful of everyone and safe to flourish. We challenge each other to be the best that we can be in mind, body and spirit to achieve more than we ever thought possible."



Gayton Church of England Primary Academy is part of the Diocese of Norfolk Education and Academies Trust. Opened in 2022 at a cost of £6m

Safeguarding

The Church is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its ministry and mission, promoting a safer culture and the welfare of every child, young person and adult. As such, the Church has robust policies, procedures and guidelines in place, to ensure good practice throughout. We have a dedicated Benefice Safeguarding Officer, Mrs Rachel Mellor: 01553 636644.

We are also committed to the care and wellbeing of our Clergy.

Finances

Covid, of course, had a very detrimental effect on all Church finances. Nevertheless, we have paid about 90% of Share these last few years – in excess of £50,000 each year as well as all the overheads of 10 Church buildings – insurance, electricity, water, repairs etc.

It will be a challenge to meet the Parish Share in the future, but we appreciate the importance of doing so. We are open to working with our new Rector to find ways forward.

Two PCC's, Gayton and Grimston are in receipt of large legacies which are specifically restricted to "Mission" not for Buildings and not for Share. We hope that this will help fund sustainable growth and long term viability.

The Deanery

We are part of the Lynn Deanery of about 60,000 people.

The Deanery includes 21 Churches in 7 Benefices and four of the 7 CofE schools are in our Benefice.

We very much welcome all the help and guidance we receive from our Rural Dean, The Revd Karlene Kerr, and our Archdeacon, The Venerable Catherine Dobson and the Bishop of Lynn, The Rt Revd Dr Jane Steen.

All Saints, Ashwicken with Leziate & Bawsey

“Our Church in the Fields”



All Saints, Church Lane, Ashwicken, PE32 1LN
What3Words: training.correctly.approach
Grade II* listed – open Dawn to Dusk everyday
Village population: 800
Electoral Roll: 14 Congregation Av.: 8
2023 Weddings: 0 Baptisms: 1 Funerals: 3
Confirmation: 1

Contacts

Steve Williamson

Churchwarden
01553 636413
Stephenwilliamson001@gmail.com



Celebrating 700 years as a place of worship in 2016

There is a regular bi-monthly BCP Holy Communion service held at 8.30 am and we hold informal outdoor services to celebrate Ascension, Michaelmas and Remembrance. The Church is also used for Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals and at Christmas.

The rural villages of Ashwicken, Leziate, Bawsey and Mintlyn are situated just outside Kings Lynn. The population of the villages is about 800 with the majority of people working in King's Lynn but there is a mill and mineral extraction works and 3 to 4 farms.

The parish is distinctly divided with Ashwicken classed as a village and Leziate a hamlet with Mintlyn and Bawsey disappeared villages. There are no shops or pubs but there is a Parish Council, who look after the Churchyard, and a Village Hall.

The parish is distinctly divided with Ashwicken classed as a village and Leziate a hamlet with Mintlyn and Bawsey disappeared villages. There are no shops or pubs but there is a Parish Council, who look after the Churchyard, and a Village Hall.

The parish is very polarised geographically and socially with some very expensive housing but at Bawsey there is a residential caravan site. Generally the local population is elderly with about 30% over 65 years.

The village services are held at All Saints' Church Ashwicken, which is a beautiful small church in good repair but without toilet or kitchen facilities.

There are 14 on the electoral roll and it is known locally as the "Our Church in the Fields" as during the enclosures the village disappeared and it now stands on its own. Unfortunately the congregation is small given the size of population (average of about 8) and because of that the finances do suffer.

Focus on Baptism - The Ashwicken Shell

A simple scallop shell for our simple rural Church. Cast in solid silver from a real shell it is intrinsically beautiful and tactile, softly reflecting all the care that has gone into its inception and the glory to be found in nature. It is a symbol that is used throughout the church today, representing the living and moving water of baptism which blesses our living and moving in the Spirit of God. In baptism we are entering a life-long pilgrimage to follow in the Way of Jesus. It is not a one-day event; it is the beginning of a pilgrimage. It is "The Way."



Both Mintlyn and Bawsey churches are ruins in our Parish; but where very little is left of Mintlyn Church, St James of Bawsey is a local landmark as it overlooks King's Lynn by-pass.

It is maintained by English Heritage.

A Harvest Festival service is held there and it is the start of one of our Parish Walks.

In the village, in 2015, work began on building a brand new CofE VA Primary School for £2.5m and demolishing the old school dating back over 100 years. It is rated "Good" by OFSTED and at present has over 120 pupils of which approx. 20% are from the village, 30% from villages around the area and 50% from King's Lynn. We maintain close links with the school who visit Church for their own services at Harvest and Christmas.

"We hope to build up involvement with the school and encourage, pupils, teachers and parents."

St Andrew, Congham



St Andrew, St Andrew's Lane, Congham,
PE32 1DT
What3Words: recover.mastering.health
Grade II* listed 13c restored 1873 and 2023.
The Church is warm and welcoming and is
open every day.
Village population: 250
Electoral Roll: 15 Congregation Av.: 16
2023 Weddings: 2 Baptisms: 0 Funerals: 1

Contacts

Mrs Helen Lilley
Churchwarden
01485 600153

Mrs Hilary Scase
Churchwarden
01485 600650

At St Andrew's Holy Communion is celebrated once a month using Common Worship at 8.30 am. There is a time of fellowship following the service. Average attendance is 16. Recently there has also been Evensong once a month. At Christmas there is a Rotary Carol Service and well-supported village Carol Service which attracts in excess of 70 people.

In 2023 there has been two weddings and an Interment of Ashes.

Congham is one of the smaller villages in the Benefice with a population of 250. The C13th Grade 2* church is in the older part of this peaceful village, near cottages and a thriving pub, The Anvil. Across the fields is the rest of the village consisting mostly of newer bungalows, the cricket ground and a country house hotel, Congham Hall.

The cricket field is the venue for a quirky but much loved and internationally renowned annual event – The World Snail Racing Championships.

There is a strong PCC of six people including two churchwardens, secretary and treasurer (all long-serving) and a regular organist. We play an active part in supporting the Benefice, have sound finances and always pay our proportion of the Parish Share in full.

Our beautiful church and churchyard have been well maintained over the years. Some of the pews were removed to create a social area in 2017. A small functional kitchen was installed and outside lavatory provided.

Recently the church received a large legacy and the building has been lovingly and comprehensively refurbished with a new roof, restored bell and east windows and complete re-wiring. New energy efficient heating and lighting systems have been installed along with a sound system and hearing aid loop, high-speed broadband wi-fi and provision for live streaming.

Focus on Holy Communion

At Congham, the reredos is a carved tableau of grape vines with the legend "I Am the True Vine." with the Alpha and Omega symbols

It is very fitting, then, that in the village there is Congham Vineyard producing and selling some very fine wines.



All of our Churches celebrate Holy Communion and at least one Church will hold this service every week and there are also two mid week services each month in either Harpley or Grimston Churches.

Holy Communion has taken place in our Churches for centuries past and amazingly the chalices used to hold the wine from hundreds of years ago are still in use today. They are a real link with all who have gone before us in faith and devotion to God.

"Our challenge is to further reach out to the community we serve, especially younger people and families and to encourage them to actively participate in the life of the church."

St Mary, East Walton



St Mary, Church Lane, East Walton, PE32 1PP
What3Words: reckoned. various. Swan
Grade 1 listed – open Dawn to Dusk everyday.
Village population: fewer than 100
Electoral Roll: 7 Congregation Av.: 10
2023 Weddings: 0 Baptisms: 0 Funerals: 0

Contact

Bill Lewis

Churchwarden
01760 339024
billandrachel@btconnect.com



There is a regular bimonthly Holy Communion service at 8.30 am and occasional services at other times.

St Mary's East Walton has a well-supported PCC and 2 established Church Wardens in place. The village community is about 40 homes situated in the midst of West Acre Estate rewilding project. There are no shops but there is a Montessori school that was the nursery school choice for Prince George in 2016.

The Saxon church is historic and small and in 2019 had a considerable amount of building refurbishment take place with Lottery Grant assistance. Parish finances are sound for the foreseeable future.

Various benefice events from meetings to walks take place and it holds a notably well supported Christmas Carol Service as well as an Easter Service with Donkeys in attendance. Outside of the Church the village is known for its spectacular Bonfire Night!

Focus on Easter

Holy week is always a very special time and at the start on Palm Sunday East Walton holds a special service with resident donkeys, Jimmy and Timmy, in attendance.

All our Churches have services through the Easter week from the sombre Good Friday service to the celebratory Easter Day. We generally also run 1 or 2 Lent courses across the Benefice.



St Mary, Gayton Thorpe



St Mary, Gayton Thorpe, PE32 1PN
What3Words: sides.subtitles.dreams
Grade 1 listed – open Dawn to Dusk everyday
Village population: fewer than 100.
Electoral Roll: 5 Congregation Av.: 8
2023 Weddings: 0 Baptisms: 0 Funerals: 0

Contact

Sarah Kerkham

Churchwarden

01553 636253

scmac_26@hotmail.com



Gayton Thorpe is a small hamlet with no shops etc. It has a monthly afternoon Celtic style service. The church is simple and peaceful and lends itself to this contemplative service. Although there is a great fondness for the church building within the village, services are on the whole poorly attended by residents though the annual Carols by Candlelight is very well supported.

The church is mainly Saxon with a Norman addition to the top of the tower. It is in reasonable repair and has had significant grant funded repair to the tower and roof in the recent past. We have also been part of the recent Heritage Lottery funded “Bats in Churches” project, as we host a large maternity roost of common pipistrelles and a smaller roost of soprano pipistrelles.

“We hope for someone to lead engaging and thoughtful worship for the community, using a variety of liturgy and a range of styles”

St Nicholas, Gayton



St Nicholas, Lynn Road, Gayton,
King's Lynn, PE32 1PF
What3Words: doctors.home.eggplants
Grade 1 listed – open Dawn to Dusk everyday.
Village population: 1500
Electoral Roll: 14 Congregation Av.: 27
2023 Weddings: 0 Baptisms 1: Funerals: 1

Contact

Mr S Watkinson

Churchwarden
01553 636629
stanwatkinson1@gmail.com



There are two services each month at 10.30 am and occasional services at other times. The Church is also used for Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals and all other Festival times – with a packed house of villagers for Christingle.

Gayton is a large growing village seven miles from King's Lynn and set in rural countryside on the B1145.

We have a new primary school with 161 children currently on the roll. A nursery school is in the school grounds. The school have organised services in Church at Harvest and Christmas.

There is a very thriving local pub The Crown. There is a petrol station/garage including the village shop incorporating a Post office with banking facilities. There is a Chip Shop and a butchers and hairdressers.

There is village hall built in 1887 and a licenced Village Social Club.

The village has a Rainbow, Brownies, Guides and Rangers groups headed by the Churchwardens wife. These are all well attended and attract girls from other villages. Gayton United is our Football Club.

There is a 7 day a week bus route with an hourly service to King's Lynn and the Kings Lynn Fakenham route via Gt Massingham.

The church of St Nicholas dates back to the 14th century and has been brought up to date fit for the 21st century. Grant assistance and legacies have allowed major works and the interior has been re-ordered with modern comfortable chairs and with carpet on the floor. New heating has been installed. Our latest feature is a state of the art sound system with a hearing loop and remote retractable screen with projector and wi-fi in Church.

The church has 1 churchwarden and a PCC of 5 and they hold various events throughout the year Plant sales, Craft Fairs Christmas tree festival amongst others. We also help in running a Food Bank.

We have very few funerals with burials averaging just one per year and three or four weddings with the same number of baptisms. Church attendance averages between 27 and 30. Services are held on 2nd and 4th Sundays.

We have a safeguarding officer and an electoral Roll of 14.

Focus on Prayer

"Jacob wrestling with the Angel"
by Brit Wikstrom. (Genesis 32.22 - end)

This bronze sculpture sit in Church reminding us how we all grapple with life and some people perhaps more than others. We struggle with the difficult and sometimes inexplicable things life brings -sadness, tragedies, bereavement. God says "If you seek me , you will find me". It is why we pray. We have Bible study groups & also special Lent courses, in the Benefice, run with perhaps an occasional study period when we look at a Life in Christ.



"We believe that a sensitive and compassionate priest will be able to motivate our younger people and grow the Church here."

St Mary, Great Massingham



St Mary, Station Road, Great Massingham,
PE32 2HX
What3Words: unfair.mandolin.viewers
Grade 1 listed – open 9.00 to 4.00pm everyday
Village population: 900
Electoral Roll: 29 Congregation Av.: 20
2023 Weddings: 0 Baptisms: 1 Funerals: 2

Contact

Stephen Hudson

Churchwarden
01485 520450
stephenhudson43@gmail.com



There is a regular Holy Communion service each month & two lay led services all at 10.30 am. The Church is also used for Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals and all other Festival times.

Close to the Peddars Way, Great Massingham is well located in the heart of the West Norfolk. The village is notable for its number of ponds: two large ones in the village centre and more on the outskirts making it the quintessential English village.

The village boasts an impressive and recently refurbished Village Hall -with a Social club, Film club, fortnightly Auction, Historical society, A Biodiversity Group, Craft and Chat group, Bowls Club and a thriving Tennis club with floodlit courts.

There is a popular, award winning pub "The Dabbling Duck" and a well-resourced award winning village shop & P.O., complete with its own little café called "The Cart Shed". There is an excellent Medical Centre and even an "on-call" fire station.

Currently, three services are held each month, at the regular time of 10.30am. This is a Songs of Praise service, a Holy Communion service and a Family Service (Families are welcome and encouraged to attend all services) Services vary in formality and the congregations welcome the variety.

During Covid, the church set up a Food Bank which continues to thrive and is open to anyone who, for whatever reason may be finding things difficult. We ask no questions and all are welcome.

There is a weekly Bible Study/House Group which is held in a local home and this provides a safe, warm space for fellowship and contemplation. This is open to all and in recent months the Lord has added to our numbers

Annual Fairs and events are held to raise funds for the upkeep of the church and villagers rally round to support and help.

There is a faithful, supportive and committed PCC who endeavour to fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the sake of the Gospel and the extension of God's Kingdom; serving the Lord and the community of Great Massingham.

Focus on Schools

The Church porch in Gt Massingham was originally taller and had a room above reached by a spiral staircase. Sir Robert Walpole, England's first Prime Minister in 1720 was educated in this porch as a young boy. Schools are a key part of our ministry in the Benefice and Great Massingham C of E Primary School has strong links with members of the PCC being on the governing body and regularly going into school as volunteers and on occasions taking Collective Worship.

A Holiday Club is held for Primary aged children, led by members of the PCC with support from villagers. It is growing each year in popularity and has continued to be provided free of charge.



“We are moving forward in this Interregnum in the Lord’s strength but we need someone to lead us in our spiritual journey. Someone with a heart for rural ministry with all its blessings and challenges.”

St Botolph, Grimston



St Botolph, Gayton Road, Grimston, PE32 1BH
What3Words: dart.poet.bandaged.
Grade 1 listed – open Dawn to Dusk everyday
Village population: 2000
Electoral Roll: 23 Congregation Av.: 21
2023 Weddings: 3 Baptisms: 2 Funerals: 5

Contacts

Mrs Jan Willson
Churchwarden
01553 630129

Mr Richard Bowers
Churchwarden
01485 600485
rbowers@hotmail.co.uk



There are 2 regular monthly services at 10.30 am and occasional services at other times. The Church is also used for Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals and at Christmas and all other Festival times.

A weekly prayer group is held every Monday at 9am at a member's house

The villages of Grimston and Pott Row are about 7 miles from King's Lynn and just a few miles away from Sandringham. Grimston has a Medical Centre, a village shop with Post Office, and a butcher's shop. There are also farm shops selling locally grown produce. There are lot of activities offered in the community covering a whole range of ages and talents.

There is a Creative Arts school offering courses in creative arts. There is also Tiddlypotts pre-school, Scouts, Cubs and Beavers, a gardening club "Greenfingers", WI, Art Group, a thriving Cricket Club and Football Club, not forgetting Good Companions and Owls Lunch Club for the elderly. There are always plenty of activities for all ages to join.

Schools that serve the area are Holly Meadows (Primary) in Vong Lane and Springwood High School (Secondary) in King's Lynn. We fund free Bibles which are given to the leavers of Holly Meadows - much welcomed by the school and children.

The Church has a kitchen and toilet and this Autumn we are installing a new heating system and a new sound and video system. Our church members arrange a Benefice Outing each year and Parish Walks in the summer months, which are always well supported – and enjoyed. The two younger members of our PCC arrange and run children craft days three times a year in church, providing many different crafts and a free lunch. These are very well attended, and enjoyed by the children and parents.

Our congregation is made up of the older generation, mostly women. The parishioners strongly support the church for baptisms, weddings and funerals, but do not attend regular weekly services.

The Friends of St Botolph's (FOSB), though, is an enthusiastic group of more than 100 local people with a very active committee who continually raise funds for the upkeep of the fabric of St Botolph's. They involve the whole community and hold quite a few events welcoming people into Church and an annual Tractor Rally & Summer Fair. They have raised around £150,000.

Focus on Weddings

St Botolph has a ring of 6 bells, which are rung regularly by a passionate team of bell ringers from the village and especially enjoyed at Wedding services. (Gt Massingham also has a ring of 4 bells). All our Churches love a wedding.



There are some things about marrying in church that are unique and special. The Vicar has a very particular role to play and they can blend ancient tradition and modern experience to reflect a couple's story. The relationship with the Vicar can make a wedding personal, memorable, meaningful and beautiful – enriching us all.

"We will grow with an inspiring leader nurturing the skills and commitment of our people."

St Lawrence, Harpley



St Lawrence, Church Lane, Harpley, PE31 6TN
What3Words: viewer.habits.lasts
Grade 1 listed – open 9am to 4pm everyday
Village population: 300
Electoral Roll: 23 Congregation Av.: 13
2023 Weddings: 0 Baptisms: 1 Funerals: 1

Contact

Lucy Brown

Churchwarden

07787 386448, 01485 520252

jeremylucybrown@aol.com

St Lawrence's church is the focal point of our community. The Church dating from the 13th century, is magnificent with a fascinating history. Features such as the beautiful angel roof and 14th century church door led to its inclusion in Simon Jenkin's "England's Thousand best Churches."

Harpley, itself, is a friendly, attractive village close to the coast. There is a good social mix in the village and we are a very active community with a thriving school, gastropub and village hall. We have many young families and active volunteers of all ages.



The Church is open every day and locals, walkers and passing cyclists can find a moment of peace and quiet. We are developing and building on this with a prayer corner. The large area at the back of church is used by the village fitness group in bad weather.

We are an eco church and churchyard with bats, woodpeckers and unusual plants. Harpley Church is the only Norfolk church with a large maternal roost of the serotine bat. Our local bat expert gives talks, workshops and advice.

There are 3 services a month, a weekday Eucharist, 3rd Sunday Eucharist and an enthusiastic lay-led Family Service. Vestments are worn and we use Common Worship. We have 2 keen Authorised Worship Assistants.

Christmas is a very special time as we install a candle-lit visual, interactive Nativity during Advent and our lay-led Christmas Day family service fills the church with over 150 people. We hold popular Christingle and carol services. Our new, thriving community choir use the church for concerts and led carol singing last Christmas.

We organise 4/5 workshops in the year with 15-20 children attending. On Good Friday we build an Easter Garden and at Advent make birthday cakes for Jesus. Harpley Primary school (VC) come to celebrate festivals, explore the history, and for services and fairs. Children know and feel at home in church. We need to build on this and take more of them forward to confirmation (last year 4 children and 1 adult were confirmed). Our churchwarden is a safeguarding lead completing Leadership pathway training.

Fundraising is enthusiastic and strong with whole week-end events regularly raising thousands of pounds. This, combined with regular giving, allows us to pay our parish share in full. Having financed initial restoration through grants, we are currently working on the second stage of roof repairs and have started a project to install a kitchen and toilet in the church.

Focus on Music and Song

St Lawrence has a wonderful 15th century window showing the Order of Angels including one with a harp. Harpley holds a Sung Communion Service, it has a resident organist who also travels to other Churches and a community choir. Music is central to their worship as it is in all our Churches. Elsewhere it is mostly recorded music used for hymns these days, but with the right inspiration our Songs of Praise services might feature a Benefice Choir.



“We would love someone who is able to relate well with the children and young people within our Benefice and be pro-active in creating or assisting with youth activities.”

St Andrew, Little Massingham



St Andrew, Church Lane, Little Massingham, PE32 2JT

What3Words: soups.pancakes.cheese

Grade 1 listed – The church is open daily for private devotions and for visitors to the area.

Village population: fewer than 100.

Electoral Roll: 7 Congregation Av.: 8

2023 Weddings: 0 Baptisms: 0 Funerals: 0

Each month there is a service of Holy Communion and two lay-led services of the Word all taking place on Sundays at 10:30 am.

Little Massingham is a scattered community of approximately forty dwellings set in the beautiful Norfolk countryside, a half hour drive from the North Norfolk coast, and between the market towns of Kings' Lynn, Fakenham and Swaffham.

The village is adjacent to the ancient Peddar's Way footpath and just south of the A148 which links King's Lynn with Fakenham. Little Massingham village is less than a mile north of its much bigger twin Great Massingham.

A few properties are tied to the estate of Little Massingham House but the majority are privately owned. They include a farm with outbuildings converted to holiday lets and a large Arts and Crafts Manor House which is a leisure and spa facility.

Significantly, St Andrew's church is the only public building. Although it is small, it is perfectly formed – a jewel box of a Church - with an unusual use of "red chalk" (from the cliffs of Hunstanton) creating a chequer board pattern for the clerestory.

The churchyard is maintained free of charge by a local resident.

The people of St. Andrew's believe that regular worship is a priority in maintaining a Christian witness in the parish and the Parochial Church Council meets four times each year.

There is an Authorised Worship Assistant who is also licensed to serve, administer the chalice and give Communion in the home.

The church maintains close links with St Mary's, Great Massingham and one Sunday service each month is a shared Songs of Praise. At all services the laity are encouraged to be involved by reading lessons or by leading intercessions.

In recent years an organisation known as The Friends of St. Andrew's Little Massingham (FOSALM) has been set up by people who have historical connections with the church but do not live in the benefice. They seek to raise money for the upkeep of the building, and especially the Roof Fund, by arranging concerts, sponsored walks and other fundraising events.

Focus on Remembrance

An airfield was built in the east of the parish during World War Two. This was a base for Blenheim and Boston bombers, and for a Mosquito squadron. Over 2000 men and women worked there and used St Andrew's Church. During 1940-45, 600 Massingham crews lost their lives. Seven of these crew members are buried in the church yard here.

All our villages have memorials to those who lost their lives in conflict. They are not forgotten. Remembrance Day services are always well attended by villagers throughout our villages.



"The church fellowship aims always to be welcoming and inclusive. It always seeks to spread the Gospel and serve the needs of others."

All Saints, Roydon



All Saints, Church Lane, Roydon, King's Lynn, PE32 1AR

What3Words: typically.kind.edge.

Grade II* listed 12c restored 1857

The Church is normally locked but a key is obtainable from Ivan Hudson as below.

Village population: 400

Electoral Roll: 9 Congregation Av.: 10

2023 Weddings: 0 Baptisms 0: Funerals: 0

Contact

Colin Grimes

Churchwarden

01485 600059

grimes154@btinternet.com

Ivan Hudson

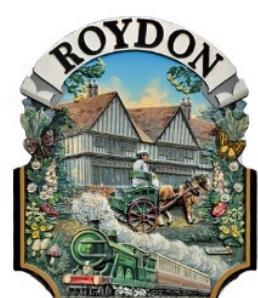
Churchwarden

01485 600471

ivanhudson397@btinternet.com

There is a regular monthly Holy Communion service at 8.30 am and occasional services at other times.

Roydon is a parish of about 400 people, located 7 miles due east of King's Lynn and 3 miles south of Sandringham. It borders Grimston and enjoys the facilities there yet still has its own pub, The Union Jack. There is one farm, a chemical factory and a veterinary surgery.



Roydon Common is managed by The Norfolk Wildlife Trust. It is 450 acres of protected common, featuring heathland, marshes and woodland and home to a wide variety of birdlife.

The village sign is double sided with one side featuring a steam train. Roydon had a railway station of the Midland & Great Northern Railway Company, opened in 1879 but closed in 1959.

The church is featured on the other side. The All Saints' Church that stands today is at least the third one on this site. The first we have evidence for was a Norman Church of which we only have two doorways. The second was an early 14th century building, for which we have a careful drawing from the 1820's But by 1857 it received a Victorian rebuild led by G. E. Street a leading practitioner of the Victorian Gothic Revival.

The Church is well maintained and looked after by its Churchwardens and PCC though the congregation is small, aging and not particularly mobile.

Before Covid, it held its own village fete, "A Bit of a Do" that brought the whole village together with music, stalls, and games.

The Churchwarden's wife and family organise regular Bingo evenings that help cover the Church's expenses.

Focus on Advent and Christmas

The East windows in Roydon are late 19th century by Clayton & Bell. The round window features the Nativity. – "Unto Us a Child is Born."

Advent and Christmas are such busy times for all our Churches. It is the time when many villagers turn out to take part in a traditional Carol service or Christingle and an opportunity for the Churches to welcome many new faces. It is also a time when our Schools and children come along into Church and perhaps act out the Nativity and decorate the Crib.



"We need someone enthusiastic who will appeal to a younger generation."

THE
CHURCH
YEAR

