

## ST BOTOLPH'S HADSTOCK: OUR MILLENIUM VISION

### A living church at the heart of the community

*-offering regular worship, enabling young and old to mark the great celebrations of life and of the year*

### A warm and welcoming building in good repair

*-minimizing damp, draughts and heat loss with plaster repaired and structurally sound*

### A building used by and serving the community

*-hosting concerts, discussions, events as well as worship and prayer*

### A church with viable finances

*-for reserves and running costs*

### A community sharing God's love

*-ready to give to those in need, locally and globally*

### A caring pastoral community

*-supporting the lonely and ill with our love and friendship*

### A place for all to find space and solace

*-where people of all ages may feel at home and valued*

## PARISH CHURCH OF ST. BOTOLPH – HADSTOCK



**Priest: The Revd. Paula Griffiths**

### Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

**Date: 29 March 2020 at 10.30 hours**

**MEETING OF PARISHIONERS** Open to all parishioners to attend and vote.

#### AGENDA

1. Election of Churchwarden(s)

#### ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Open to all parishioners to attend but only those on Electoral Roll are allowed to vote.

#### AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 24 March 2019 Pages 3
3. Consideration of the agenda
4. To receive reports:
  - 4.1 Electoral Roll Officers Report Page 7
  - 4.2 Financial Report Page 7-8
  - 4.3 Report of activities of the PCC 2019/20 Page 8-13
  - 4.4 Deanery Synod report Page 13
  - 4.5 Priest's report Page 14
5. Election of 1 member of PCC and 1 Deanery Synod representative.

Closing Prayers

*The meeting will be followed by a short meeting of the newly elected PCC to appoint officers and confirm date of next meeting.*

## Administrative Information

St Botolph's Church is situated at Church Path, Hadstock.

It is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford within the Church of England and is part of the Saffron Walden and Villages Team Ministry.

The correspondence address is St Mary's Parish Office, Church Path, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB10 1JP.

The incumbency is currently vacant as the Team Rector, the Revd David Tomlinson left November 2019.

The Revd. Paula Griffiths, an Associate Priest within the Team Ministry, was commissioned as Priest with particular responsibility for Hadstock on 15 June 2014.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity exempted from registration with the Charity Commission

A new website for Hadstock Village is being launched at [www.hadstock.org](http://www.hadstock.org)

It gives information for Hadstock Parish Council, St Botolph's Church, the Village Hall and the Hadstock Society and is due to go live from **April 1 2020**

PCC members who have served from 24 March 2019 until the date of approval of this report are:

<b>Priest and PCC Chair:</b>	Revd. Paula Griffiths	
<b>Churchwarden:</b>	Situation vacant	
<b>Elected Members:</b>	Mr Tim Boyden	Treasurer
	Miss Patricia Croxton-Smith	
	Dr Peter Jarritt	
	Mrs Ann Seward	
	Mr Malcolm Seward	Deanery Synod & Electoral Roll
	Mrs Jane Devlin	
	Mrs Janice Snell	Safeguarding
<b>Minutes Secretary</b>	Mrs Moire Jarritt	

## Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of the PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

## Objects and activities

St Botolph's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, and the Priest at Hadstock, the Revd. Paula Griffiths, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

involved in the selection process: special thanks to the PCC members representing us. Hadstock has evident strengths: the church's history and importance, and the village's commitment to maintain the building. But significant challenges remain: an ageing congregation and consequential reduction in financial resources; and the need to attract young families to take the church forward.

Other challenges face us too. General Synod is asking churches to become carbon neutral by 2030. And, as I write, COVID-19 is spreading rapidly. May God's wisdom guide and support us in the months ahead.

My deep thanks, as ever, to the many who give freely of time, talent and Christian commitment to our church community. Each member of the PCC contributes special skills and energy, willingly sharing tasks. Our many volunteers, and the Friends of St Botolph's, show a tangible love for the church. David Tomlinson gave unfailing guidance as Team Rector; the ministerial team care for each other; the Parish Office cheerfully give administrative help; and Archdeacon Robin King is always positive in addressing the processes of church administration. Together we have a good springboard for the future. May we face the future with confidence and step forward in trust in God's care.

**Paula**

look at things in a new light and try new things, looking about to see potential but keeping things in perspective. There was also a presentation by Revd Dr Elizabeth Jordan, the Diocesan Lay Development Advisor, who spoke about Lay Ministry and training, Pioneer Ministry and what we can do to encourage others to recognize their calling.

**Parish Share for 2019** - the Deanery currently has 71.5% paid.

Helen Eyles (Deanery Secretary) and Graham Cook (Treasurer) are retiring, having been Deanery Officers working with David Tomlinson for the last 11 years. Deanery Synod is urgently seeking replacements for 2020

### **PRIEST'S REPORT**

2019 has been a year of consolidation and looking forward.

Planning for the current building works is now bearing fruit – see the Fabric Report. Comments in the visitors' book show their appreciation: 'my favourite church ever' wrote one recent visitor.

Both church and village community have been planning enthusiastically to celebrate 1000 years in the life of the church and the life of the village. For about half the time since Jesus Christ himself lived on earth, half the time since the Romans settled in Britain, this church has been a focal point for this community – but the Christian presence here was old even in Cnut's time. Children have been baptised, couples married, loved ones committed to God, and individuals have worshipped. Praying, singing, hoping, and trusting, the community of God's people has inhabited this place. Imagine the numbers who have come through our Door since the church was built. We know some names: many have slipped through the centuries unrecorded. Yet each is precious to God.

Now it is our task to hold that torch of faith and pass it on. I am delighted that Bishop Roger is holding a confirmation here on 5 July, and that Bishop Martin Seeley, Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, is coming for the Millennium Service on 18 October. These will be special months.

In 2015 the PCC adopted the Millennium Vision (see back of this booklet). We have made great steps towards this. I hope that a visitor to the church or village would recognise us in those objectives: may they guide us and our successors into the next thousand years.

Last June my licence as Priest at Hadstock was extended for up to two years, enabling me to plan the Millennium with you. That time is passing quickly: 2021's Annual Church Meeting will be my last here. Meanwhile, the Team Ministry is seeking a new Team Rector, following David Tomlinson's move to Birmingham. All the parishes are

## **MINUTES OF ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

### **HELD ON SUNDAY 24 MARCH 2019**

**ATTENDEES:** Revd. Paula Griffiths, Rick and Sue Albrow, Robin Betser, Tim Boyden, Patricia Croxton Smith, Janey Devlin, Peter Jarritt, Roger Mance, Lorna Mufty, Ann and Malcolm Seward, Janice Snell, Irene Stapleton, Moire Jarritt (Minutes)

**APOLOGIES:** Tony and Jenny Handley

Paula welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened with a prayer. It was confirmed that due notice of the meetings had been given

### **MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARISHIONERS**

**Election of Church Wardens:** No nominations were received. The Parish will continue without Church Wardens for another year. Members of the PCC who have carried out the duties of a Church Warden and shared the tasks were thanked.

### **MINUTES OF ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed.

Proposed: Malcolm Seward                      Seconded: Janey Devlin

**CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA:** There were no further items for inclusion.

### **REPORT OF THE ELECTORIAL ROLL OFFICER**

Malcolm reported that the Roll has been totally revised. There are now 42 on the Roll (an increase from 37) with 1 outside the parish.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

**TIM BOYDEN**

The report was included in the APCM booklet distributed before the meeting and is held on file.

It was noted that the Parish Share had been paid in full for the first time in many years. It was noted that the electricity costs were low despite the work that had been done in the church and the need to have heating on for long periods to aid with decoration drying out. Tim explained that a new provider had been sought and some of the heating costs had been off set against the Building Fund.

Financial Report accepted unanimously

Proposed: Tim Boyden                      Seconded: Roger Mance

It was agreed unanimously to appoint Stewart Sanders as Independent Examiner

Proposed: Tim Boyden                      Seconded: Robin Betser

Tim was thanked for consistent help and handling of the financial affairs.

### **REPORT OF PCC ACTIVITIES.**

**REVD PAULA GRIFFITHS**

Paula reported that attendance figures were generally encouraging with more people attending services more often. It was however noted that the number of families and young people attending on any regular basis remained small which makes succession planning difficult. Numbers are increasing at the morning prayer service on Tuesdays and the time is much appreciated.

### **General Activities**

It was noted that there is a regular prayer group for the parish and over the year there had been several discussion groups, teas/coffee mornings, the Boxing Day lunch and a very enjoyable group outing.

### **Goods and Ornaments**

**RICK ALBROW**

The inventory of Goods and Ornaments has been checked. An electronic version has now been made and will be easier to update in future. The Confirmation Register remains missing.

### **Saffron Walden and Village Team Council Reports**

**TIM BOYDEN**

It was noted that the next Team Council Service will be held at Littlebury on 26 May 2019 which is Rogation Sunday. Ann Seward is representing St Botolph's on the planning group.

### **Fabric Report**

**RICK ALBROW**

Rick highlighted that there was some remedial work still to be done by Lodge on the decoration and Matthew Beasley still has some small areas of work to complete on the floor. These jobs will be completed in due course.

Grant applications have been made to cover the cost of conserving the wall painting. A new package of works has gone out to tender. The main objective is to complete the decoration and to repair several small areas that had come to light as a result of the quinquennial inspection last year. Once tenders are received, the PCC will prioritise work in light of costings, funds and grants available. Rick and Paula were thanked for all the work done over the last year and Robin and Crocky for their help in the earlier stages.

Paula commented that it was an achievement to have completed all the work from last year without having to use the Diocesan Fund facility that had been granted and wonderful to see how the village had come together to fundraise and support the work.

### **Churchyard Maintenance**

The flint wall by Glebe House has been repaired and the willow tree removed. The costs were born by the church and Glebe House 50/50 split.

The lime trees have been tidied recently and there is more tree work to be undertaken in the autumn which will cost £2000 approx. A full Faculty will be applied for in due course and Uttlesford Council will also be advised of work.

Tim and Hamish are continuing to work on repairing the churchyard walls. An area for cremated remains in churchyard is under consideration and discussions are taking place with Diocese.

### **Health and Safety and Safeguarding**

The annual walk around and review has taken place and all documents updated.

Janice Snell has taken over from Tim Boyden as Safeguarding representative and Isabel Fish is continuing to look after child protection.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

The PCC deeply appreciates the many volunteers who help in so many ways with the running of the church and events connected to it: flower arranging, cleaning, looking after the church linen, helping with items of maintenance, looking after the churchyard, setting up for services, verging for weddings and funerals, providing refreshments, planning of family services, organizing rotas, reading lessons, providing music, bellringing, organizing carol singing in the village, and much else besides.

Particular thanks to our organists: Martin Hannam plays for many Sunday services, and Gill Boyden supports weddings and funerals. Jenny Cottam, who played several times a term in recent years, moved to Scotland in October: we wish her well, and are glad to hear that she and husband Graham are settling happily. Occasional and much appreciated help from Kate Ollerenshaw from Saffron Walden, Lorna Mufty and Gill Boyden has enabled us to maintain full musical coverage for Sunday services. The Sunday reading rota is working well. Thanks to all involved in any way.

### **DEANERY SYNOD REPORT**

A member of the PCC represents St Botolph's on the Deanery Synod providing an important link between the parish and the wider structure of the church. Meetings are held quarterly across the Deanery as follows:

**13th February 2019 at Henham OCA.** At the first of the quarterly meetings there was a presentation by Revd David Beales on Pioneer Ministry, with youth 'team' meetings in the 20-30 age group engaging with young people beyond the church. The response had been encouraging.

**14th May 2019 at St Margaret's Church Wicken Bonhunt.** A presentation by Revd David Beales on 'Transforming Presence and Accountability'. Revd David Tomlinson spoke about the difficulties attracting new people to St Mary's Saffron Walden and need to consider different options. Revd John Saxon was looking at prayer spaces in schools to encourage both children and youth. The Revd Margaret Davies gave a talk on God's Mission & Your Church and spoke of the importance of Inter-faith understanding and tackling the wide range of religious faiths of our country.

**17th July 2019 at All Saint's Church Ashdon.** Revd Margaret Davies gave a presentation on 'God's Mission and Your Church' drawing on experience from her recent study leave. Small isolated communities need to work together despite lack of manpower but there are opportunities to work with other denominations. Special activities bring people into the church and make them feel comfortable.

**17th October at Great Chesterford Community Centre.** The Venerable Robin King, Archdeacon, gave a presentation on 'Resourcing Ministry' highlighting the need to

side of the village pond wall have been in the maintenance undertaken by Jon Sparks. Bill Richards has continued to undertake the regular mowing of the grass areas.

During the year the growth of fresh branches around the bases of the lime trees were removed and cleared away. Some overhanging branches from two of the sycamore trees close to the common wall with Glebe House were with the help of Jim Abbiss removed to avoid damage to the brickwork. It is planned to obtain permission to remove the yew and a sycamore adjacent to the common wall with the new graveyard and close to the south transept. This will improve light to that area and thus reduce damp risk and also future damage to the wall.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

In line with the Health and Safety Risk Assessment, regular reviews are undertaken and acted on as necessary.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

The PCC has adopted the Church of England's policies and best practice on safeguarding, which may be found on the Church of England's website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding>, or on the Safeguarding pages of the Chelmsford Diocese: <https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/safeguarding>. The policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.

The Safeguarding Representative is Janice Snell and Isabel Fish continues as Child Protection Representative.

## **FRIENDS OF ST BOTOLPH'S**

The PCC is represented on the Committee of the Friends of St Botolph. The Friends continued to work enthusiastically over 2019 organising fundraising events to support the repair works. We are deeply grateful for all their support, and for the leadership of Lou Symes-Thompson as Chair.

## **MAGAZINE.**

The Hadstock Magazine, ably edited by Sue Albrow, is issued 11 times per year and goes to nearly every house in the village. It is available on the Village website pages. It is funded by subscription, advertising revenue and a small subsidy from the PCC. It is much enjoyed and appreciated.

## **Friends of St Botolph**

Paula paid tribute to the work of the Friends over the last year in fundraising and for their enthusiasm.

Lou Symes-Thompson continues as Chair assisted by Robin Betser as Secretary and Tony Handley as Treasurer.

Tim and Janey are the PCC representatives.

## **Magazine**

Sue Albrow was complimented on the quality and content of the magazine. There has been an increase in the number of advertisements over the last year and the church subsidy has not been required. It was noted that due to a variety of different issues, it is not always possible to get the magazine out before the first of the month and events taking place in the first few days of a month need to be included in the previous month.

## **Volunteers**

Paula thanked all volunteers for their significant contribution to making the church welcoming and viable.

## **Deanery Synod Report**

Malcolm represents St. Botolph's on the Deanery Synod and meetings are held quarterly. He explained he had not been able to attend all the meetings over the last year due to family circumstances but highlighted that most churches in the Deanery were meeting their financial commitments. There will be a Deanery Quiz Night at St Mary's on 22 June and volunteers for a St Botolph's team are welcome.

## **Priest's Report**

Paula highlighted the steady incremental growth in attendance and the improvements in decoration and repairs. A number of grants had been obtained over the year which had enabled the repair and decoration work to be completed. The Stansted Airport Community Trust had funded the new tables chairs and leaflet rack. The church is establishing good links with its community through Café Church, coffee mornings and afternoon teas, breakfast discussions etc. Young people were involved with the Remembrance Day service and a good number came and enjoyed the recent pancake party.

The Millennium of the consecration of the church will be commemorated in 2020 with a series of events taking place culminating in a special service on October 18. Discussions and planning are underway.

Paula drew attention to the Millennium vision which was drawn up in 2015 and felt that we were moving towards seeing it in place.

Paula reported that she was appointed in 2014 for 5 years and after discussion and agreement of all the parishes in the Team, the Bishop is now considering an extension for up to 2 years which she has been led to believe will be approved by end of June when a public announcement will be made. She anticipates completing her term early 2021.

Paula also confirmed that Revd. Canon Jenny Tomlinson will be taking up appointment as Archdeacon in Diocese of Birmingham and that Team Rector Revd. Canon David Tomlinson will be seeking another appointment in that locality. He will be taking three months study leave over the summer. It was agreed that a card be sent to Jenny from St Botolph's but individuals should make any contributions to leaving gift via St Mary's Parish Office.

Paula thanked the PCC and all who contribute, for the work that is being done and how much is being achieved.

Robin proposed a vote of thanks to Paula and Roger for their commitment and work which was agreed unanimously.

#### **Election of 3 members to the PCC**

Nominations were received for Tim Boyden, Patricia Croxton Smith and Janey Devlin There were no other nominations. All were duly declared elected.

## **FABRIC REPORT**

**Fabric Officer:** Rick Albrow

**Church Architect:** Jerry Lander of Freeland Rees Roberts Architects

### **Major Works**

This time last year I reported that a new Schedule of Works had gone out to tender. This will complete the plaster repairs and decorating in the south transept, north porch and tower to complement the nave and north transept completed in 2019. The work also includes some essential fabric repairs and replacement of the rainwater goods on the south side of the nave with low maintenance aluminium which will give a higher storm capacity. Lodge and Sons have been awarded the contract and work started at the end of January.

At the time of writing we are waiting for new coping stones to be cut for the south transept. Ingress of water had caused damage inside and when examined it was found that the coping stones are in poor condition. It has been decided to replace them all. When the work is complete you will notice that lighting in the south transept and tower will have been improved with the installation of new LED lights. All should be done by the end of March.

The total cost is estimated at £34,000.

The following grants have been awarded totalling £27,250.

AllChurches Trust	2250
Friend of Essex Churches Trust	15000
Garfield Weston Foundation	5000
Church Care/Wolfson Foundation	5000

### **Wall Painting**

Tobit Curteis Associates have completed the conservation of the wall painting on the south nave wall. Cost of this was £3,280. Grants awarded towards this were: ChurchCare/Pilgrim Trust - £2,000, William & Jane Morris Fund - £500.

### **Minor Works and maintenance**

Annual gutter and drain maintenance carried out by Lodge & Sons.

### **CHURCHYARD, CHURCHYARD WALL AND TREES**

The vast majority of the churchyard is well looked after and the area around the graves in both graveyards, the area to the left of the church path and the area church

### General activities

We held two discussion groups in 2019: The Lent group studied the Book of Ruth, and the Advent Group considered the Christian response to climate change, using the *Tenants of the King*, course by Operation Noah.

The Prayer Group met approximately monthly to pray for the village and community. Between March 2019 and January 2020, we held three coffee mornings/afternoon teas, participated in the drop-in morning for Hadstock community groups, and enjoyed an outing to Ely Cathedral.

In place of a Boxing Day lunch for 2019 we tried a Bring and Share lunch on New Year's Day 2020 which attracted greater numbers and was much enjoyed.

We also held an extremely successful (and delicious) Pancake Party in the Village Hall on the Sunday before Shrove Tuesday, attended by over 30 people of all ages and with Jude and Katrina on a constant production line!

We began planning for the 2020 Millennium, with willing help and interest from others in the village. The group suggested marking the Millennium with some financial help to a developing church elsewhere, and in June the curates from the Team Ministry, John Saxon and Rachel Prior, gave a breakfast talk about their visit to the church in Kenya, with which Chelmsford Diocese is linked. Following this, we decided to support Chelmsford Diocese's appeal to set up a fund for micro-finance to encourage small businesses in the Diocese of Marsabit, and funds donated from our social activities and some church services are being put towards that.

In December we welcomed the Hadstock Silver Band who gave their traditional concert in the church and joined with villagers in singing carols on the Green.

Village and church congregation also joined together to organise Crocky's surprise 90<sup>th</sup> birthday lunch – a great delight for us all.

### Pastoral care

Where members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age, the Priest at Hadstock is always ready to visit on request, to bring Communion to their home either regularly or at times of special need, and through links with Addenbrookes Hospital, can arrange chaplaincy visits there when required.

## ANNUAL PCC REPORT FOR 2019/20

### ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

The Electoral Roll was completely revised in 2019. There have been no new applications for membership since then and one person has moved to Wales leaving the Electoral Roll standing at 41 members.

### ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE PCC

**Year ended 31 December 2019** **St Botolph's Church, Hadstock (26.14d)**

**Bankers:** Barclays Bank, Chesterton Road, Cambridge

**Independent Examiner:** Stewart Sanders FCA, 46 Saxon Way, Saffron Walden, Essex

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** are available in a separate booklet and include **Receipts & Payments, Balance Sheet, Assets & Liabilities and Examiner's Report.**

### FINANCIAL REVIEW 2019

#### General Fund

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £15,878, an increase of just over £800 over 2018. There was within this an increase of £400 in collections together with an increase in planned, gift-aided giving of £500. Church Magazine income through sales and advertising fell marginally short of the printing costs.

Total expenditure on unrestricted funds rose by £3,800.

Within the overall figure there was a rise in Electricity charges of over £200 as fuel unit costs rose.

Church Maintenance costs rose by £170 accounted for by the replacement cost of replacing the heating thermostat which had been stolen.

Churchyard Maintenance costs increase were accounted for by paying the Parish Council its £360 grass cutting costs twice because of their being late with the 2018 charge.

Costs of £420 were incurred clearing growth around the bases of all the 15 lime trees and £130 for refreshing stones on the paths to the church entrance.

The increase of £1,700 in Other Expenses was accounted for by bringing up to date the payments made centrally to Saffron Walden PCC of £1,750. These are now being paid in quarterly instalments as they fall due.

Payments toward Quota to Chelmsford Diocese continued at £6,000. This enabled the PCC again to meet its Diocesan Quota in full.

"Directed" donations were made to the Disaster Emergency Committee Cyclone Idai Appeal of £160, £250 to the Diocesan Kenya Lent Appeal, £102 to Water Aid, the Uttlesford Food Bank of £85, Essex Clergy of £80 and British Legion Poppy Appeal of £222.

### **Maintenance Fund**

Total receipts of £14,709 fell significantly compared with £32,377 due to the tail off the costs from the earlier building repair and improvement work. £10,000 of the total related to grants for new furniture and the wall painting restoration work plus the next planned phase of restoration work. Total expenditure of £7,315 was largely accounted for by the aforementioned work.

### **Overall Fund**

Balances on the General Fund fell by just over £1,000 whilst the Maintenance Fund rose by £7,393, producing a total unrestricted fund of £7,755 and restricted fund of £16,497.

### **Reserves Policy.**

The PCC would like prudently to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds equating to between 3- and 6-month's unrestricted payments which will cover emergency situations; at present with an unrestricted fund balance of £7,755 a minimum prudent level is, in the view of the PCC, being maintained.

## **REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PCC 2019/2020**

**Six Meetings of the PCC** were held: May, June, September, November 2019: January and February 2019.

### **Church attendance**

The standard service pattern continued over 2019 – usually a Family Service on the first Sunday of the month; Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) said on the second Sunday; and Holy Communion (Common Worship) with hymns on the third and fourth Sundays. Usually there are no services on 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays, but we held them this year on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays in March (Mothering Sunday) and June (celebrating extension of Paula's licence – see below).

Tuesday Morning Prayer continued, followed by coffee, providing a much-appreciated prayerful start to the day for a regular group.

Services were also held on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Ascension Day and All Souls' Day.

Café Church remains popular, with informal yet accessible and thought-provoking discussion and worship, and singing supported by Katrina and Andy Gittins' keyboard. We held it three times this year in the Village Hall. November's Café Church was particularly inspiring: we welcomed Sarah Jorgensen and her husband Lorenz from the Christian charity *Hope into Action* to talk about its inspiring work supporting homeless people with practical help and building up relationships.

Special services this year included a service of thanksgiving (March) for the 2017-18 building works, with Bishop Roger, and the Junior Choir of St Mary's Saffron Walden with Director of Music Oli King singing at our Family Service in June. On Remembrance Sunday the commemoration of those who died from Hadstock in the two World Wars again included a mixed age group reading out not only their names but some brief details about them. As the years pass, this commemoration seems to become more important, rather than less: we increasingly realise the impact of the wars upon this village community, and the sacrifice those men made.

The Christmas Eve Light of the World service is always a highlight of our calendar, but the atmosphere this year seemed more uplifting than ever and embodying the togetherness of the community, with a strong choir and well-known descants spontaneously emerging from several parts of the church! We estimate there were over 200 people present, including many family members back in Hadstock for Christmas.

We celebrated a wedding and a baptism in May, both for families with Hadstock strong links.

Congregation numbers at 'ordinary' Sunday services continued their gradual increase. Excluding major festivals (Christmas, Easter, Mothering Sunday, Harvest, Remembrance) and special services (e.g. Music and Readings for Advent), average Sunday attendance over 2019 was 12, with a range between 6 and 21. More than 20 individuals come to a service at least once a month, with others joining us occasionally. It is heartening that this includes some relative newcomers to the village.

Comparable figures for previous years:

2015: average (mean) attendance 8, with a range from 3 to 17

2016: average (mean) attendance of over 10 people, with a range from 3 to 19

2017: average (mean) attendance just over 11, with a range from 5 to 27.

2018: the mean was again 11, and the range 5 to 24.

### **Ecumenical relationships**

There are no other Christian churches in Hadstock, but as a member of the Saffron Walden and Villages Team Ministry, the church has links to Churches Together in Saffron Walden. The priest at Hadstock works with the Baptist Minister and the Anglican Team Vicar in the adjoining village of Ashdon to provide monthly clergy-led assemblies at Ashdon Primary School (Hadstock is within the catchment area for the school).