

# Southwold church in action

Headlines for our Annual Church meeting: 12 May 2024

If you would like more information please go to  
<https://www.stedmundssouthwold.com/apcm-2024>

## Supporting the life of the community

### Worship and Mission

- Reaching out to people through our worship
- Providing baptisms, weddings and funerals and welcoming families at important moments in their lives
- Celebrating the major festivals
- Joining with the town in civic services

### Welcome

- Welcoming visitors to our church services.
- Welcoming over 30,000 visitors to the church each year
- Rota of stewards to provide information
- Weekly church tours in the summer

### Pastoral care

- Supporting the vulnerable with contact, visiting and home communions
- Building on the work of the 'Lay Elders' and establishing and training a 'Pastoral Care Team'
- Maintaining our strong links with the St Barnabas Residential Care Home

### Safeguarding

- Ensuring our church is a safe and secure environment for all people, particularly the young and the vulnerable
- Recognising the huge contribution of Carolyn Kerr as Safeguarding Officer

### Study groups

- Meeting together for bible study and short courses
- Five ecumenical Lent study groups studying 'The Joy of the Gospel'
- Other regular study groups and a six-week study course on 'Threads through Creation' (<https://www.jacqui-textile.com/creation>)

### Parent and toddler group

- Supporting parents and small children to meet new friends, build support networks and meet other parents.
- Weekly sessions, breastfeeding café and Christmas party

### **Eco Church**

- Helping our church to care for the environment and to plan for the future
- Understanding the use of energy in the church how to reduce our carbon footprint
- Encouraging biodiversity in the churchyard
- Joining the 'Eco Church' scheme
- Engaging with the wider community

### **Church shop**

- To promote fair trade to help people in the third world and to help reduce the exploitation of labour
- Sales of church related items

### **Children's work**

- Supporting our young people with activities, learning and worship
- Consistent growth during 2023 to around 14 children attending Sunday School
- Younger and older children now able to meet in separate groups
- Groups led on rota basis allowing leaders to be present in some services
- Ambition for three groups and praying for leaders and helpers to achieve this

### **Open the Book**

- Taking bible stories into our schools
- 10-15 minute interactive dramas involving the children
- Three members of the team now also go into school weekly to hear children read.

### **Mothers Union**

- Supporting families locally and nationally
- Supporting Christians Against Poverty and national campaign against gender violence
- Helping with Parent and Toddler Group

### **Website**

- Reaching out to our community through digital media
- 2000 people accessed our website
- Facebook posts reached 11,000 users with 670 active followers
- 75% of followers live outside Southwold and Reydon

## The daily life of the church

### Church music

- Enhancing our worship with quality music
- Valued and consistent attendance of 4 part choir and occasional 'supplementary singers'
- Worship band providing contemporary music and songs
- Essential repairs to the organ now planned for 2024

### Bell ringers

- Calling the community to worship and celebrating national occasions
- Celebratory ringing for King Charles' Coronation and Installation of new Rector
- Two peals a year by Guild Ringers
- Open Tower Day in the summer attracted many visitors

### Flower arrangers

- Inspiring and beautiful flower arrangements in our church
- Festivals enhanced and celebrated
- Environmentally friendly approach
- Ideas in 2024 for sponsorship of flower arrangements to commemorate personal events

### Handbell group

- Joining together to ring familiar tunes
- Played in local community venues including Parent and Toddler Group

### Deanery Synod

- Playing our part in the wider church family. Meetings have covered:
  - Climate change and Eco Church
  - Modern day slavery and human trafficking
  - Financial challenges facing the Diocese

### Buildings and churchyard

- Restoration works to the South Porch
- Recognising the contribution of our church architect, Alan Greening, who has stood down and appointing John Bennett
- Design and construction of a new noticeboard
- Redesigning the supports for the font cover

### Hospitality

- Sharing food and drink as part of our faith and fellowship
- Regular tea/coffee after the family services and mid-week communion
- Harvest Festival lunch and barbecue after the Installation service

## Governance and Funding

### Electoral roll

- Recording our church membership
- Currently 115 members on the roll
- New members can join at any time and can be on two electoral rolls if you live away.

### Financial report

- A full annual report on our plans and progress provided to the Annual Meeting

### Regular giving

- Enabling our church to serve through our financial support
- Regular givers through the Parish Giving Scheme
- Contactless giving at the back of the church

### Churchwardens

- Thanks to Jill Horne and Jonathan Sutton who have supported the church in the past year in very many ways

### Parochial Church Council

- Supporting the work and mission of the church
- Helping the Rector to set the strategic direction for the future
- The PCC met on 6 occasions during the year. Then main topics and projects included:
  - Recruitment process for the Team Rector
  - Use of the common cup at communion
  - Eco Church and our response to climate change
  - Introduction of Prayers of Love and Faith
  - The installation of the new sound system in February 2023
  - The temporary appointment of a parish administrator
  - Repairs to the South Porch
  - Plans for a new noticeboard
  - Review of the lease for St Edmund's Hall
  - Safety of the font cover
  - Return of the Beach Mission
  - Repairs to the organ
  - Resignation of church architect, Alan Greening, and appointment of John Bennett
  - Review of church heating – costs and strategy
  - Links with Deanery Synod