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### **WELCOME**

#### Are you being called to lead and grow our ministry?

Here at St. Peter's Church in Yaxley, we are seeking a new vicar to lead our church community.

Part of the Ely Diocese, St. Peter's is located in the village of Yaxley, just south of Peterborough. There has been a place of worship on the site of St. Peter's for over a thousand years — although the oldest parts of the current building are 13th century — and today we are a vibrant and growing church seeking to move forward in accordance with God's will for us.

Our aim as a church family is to be welcoming, Christ-centred and compassionate. Our hope is to enable all to come and enter into church life and encounter God in a way that is accessible – whether they are mature Christians or simply exploring their way towards faith.

We are blessed to count a large number of young people, families and children within our church family, and for us, it's essential that we continue to be a relevant place for these groups in our community, as they are the future of the church.

This parish profile sets out our current vision and life as a church, as well as where we see our mission changing and evolving in the future. It also outlines the qualities and attributes that we prayerfully believe our next vicar should have.

We're excited to welcome the person God is calling to help shape the future of our church and spread the good news of Jesus Christ to all who live, work and play in Yaxley.







# OUR MISSION AND VISION

#### **Our mission**

St. Peter's Yaxley is an open, contemporary, evangelical church, devoted to loving God and our community. Our aim is to reach out in love and faith into the communities in which we live, work and play. Our desire is to see God's love transform lives, so that all in the Yaxley area would come to believe, trust and hope in Jesus Christ.

#### **Our vision**

We believe that God's message is more than relevant for our lives today. We therefore place a strong emphasis on connecting with God through the Holy Spirit, looking not only to read and dwell on His Word, but also engage with Him on a daily basis.



#### That's why our vision is:

- To be a vibrant and welcoming church at the heart of the community, reaching out in love and faith
- To enable individuals to deepen their relationship with Jesus and to live for Him
- To engage in Spirit-led worship of the living God
- To encourage and equip all our members to **use their God-given gifts** in the life of the church
- To provide an inspiring and stimulating ministry through which our **children** and young people encounter Jesus for themselves

#### **Our community**

We already have a significant presence in Yaxley and maintain a strong missional focus on working in, and contributing to, the community.

We recognise that to be influential in our community and successful in leading increasing numbers to a living faith, the church has to be continually prepared to change and develop its physical, technological and human resources to enhance its relevance in society.

As the body of Christ, each member of the church is therefore encouraged to find, explore and develop their God-given gifts, to contribute their unique attributes to building the life of the church and our local community.

We firmly believe that God is moving in this church and in this area, and that through the power of the Holy Spirit, God has much more planned for His church in Yaxley. It's an exciting time for someone with vision, enthusiasm and spiritual gifts to join our team.



## **OUR FUTURE**

In a recent sermon series, we explored the Book of Revelation together as a church. Revelation 2 introduces us to seven letters to the churches that sprang up throughout Asia Minor. Although these messages applied directly to the experience of the churches they were written to at the time, we believe that they are also prophetic and therefore apply to the church today.

As a result, every member of St. Peter's was invited to contribute their thoughts and suggestions on the letter which Jesus would write to His church in Yaxley today.

The following letter is the result of that thoughtful consultation. We recognise our strengths and weaknesses as a church and the words below reflect where we are at right now as a church family and how we want to move forward together.





### To the angel of the church in Yaxley:

These are the words of the one who is the Cornerstone and who made us to be a kingdom of priests to serve his Father. The one who was dead and is now alive, the one whose voice is like the sound of rushing waters.

### I know your works, including:

- · The way you care for your local community;
- The practical and prayerful support you provide for your friends in Rwanda;
- The help you provide to the less fortunate in a variety of ways through many different groups;
- · Your ministry to the children and young people of St. Peter's and in your local community, teaching them my word and encouraging their growth in faith;
- Your heartfelt worship;
- The welcome and hospitality which you offer;
- The growth in discipleship through home groups;
- The dedication of those in positions of leadership

### Yet I hold these things against you:

- Too many of you are spectators and not willing to get involved or use your gifts for my Kingdom;
- · Some of you don't take your worship outside of the church building. Are you embarrassed or ashamed of me?
- Some of you are lukewarm and fall away too easily to the temptations of the world;
- Why do you spend so little time in prayer?
- Some of you thrive on conflict, hold grudges and take offence too easily;
- There are cliques among you and too many of you gossip about other members of the church

You need to do these things or you won't see my Kingdom grow in Yaxley:

- You need to wake up and all play your part as one body;
- · Commit your lives wholly to me;
- Seek peace with your brothers and sisters be quick to seek forgiveness and to forgive; don't allow a root of bitterness to grow;
- · Build one another up and encourage each other;
- Remember my love for you and show that kind of love to others;
- Enthuse and empower new leaders of ministries and groups;
- Proclaim my truth to the world and don't water down the Gospel;
- You need to walk across the room and bridge the divides for the good of the church:
- Seek me in prayer; listen and act or there will be no St. Peter's

To the one who overcomes I will give a heart full of love, fellowship and compassion. The one who is victorious will walk with me dressed in white and I will never blot their name from the book of life. I will acknowledge you, with your new name, before my Father as you sit with me beside my throne. Remember that your identity is found in me and you will see my Kingdom break through in Yaxley.

Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying.

Love Jesus

XXX

#### Our response

Following on from this exercise, over 60 members of the congregation attended a vision morning in February 2018 to consider the church's response to the letter.

Along with recognising the vision of our Diocese – as set out in 'Ely 2025' – this led to a number of priorities being identified as to how we should make progress in these areas as a church.

The following are the first 4 areas we feel led to take forwards for change:

- Welcome
- **Encouragement**
- **Prayer**
- Worship

#### 1. Welcome

- Engage Continue our current warm welcome to visitors
- Deepen Develop a Welcome Desk and a revised
   Welcome Pack as a source of information for visitors
- Grow our understanding of being welcoming; be more proactive in sitting with visitors, sharing conversation, welcoming them to our homes and inviting them to participate in home groups and other areas of interest



#### 2. Encouragement

- Engage Continue the strong and diverse base of skills and spiritual gifts already present in the church
- Deepen Develop an ethos where we continually show love, encouragement and forgiveness and seek peace with each other as members of the body of Christ
- Grow home group membership and the use of personal testimony and spiritual gifts as a source of encouragement



#### 3. Prayer

- Engage Continue the involvement of the skilled prayer ministry team and broaden its role
- Deepen Develop an inspiring prayer station within the church and the use of blessing prayers to enhance the presence of the Holy Spirit within our community
- Grow our confidence to pray in groups, prayer walking and the concept of prayer triplets as an essential tool in the prayerfulness and cohesion of church members



#### 4. Worship

- Engage Continue to encourage the current base of skilled musicians and worship leaders
- Deepen Develop new creative expressions of worship, such as the use of dance and painting within services and to expand the use of drama
- Grow by actively working to encourage new worship leaders and increase the number of members willing to use their creative gifts so we can take our worship into more places in the community





## **CHURCH LIFE**

With our focus on God and the vision He inspired, church life is about bringing that vision to life in practical ways.

#### **Church organisation**

Alongside our vicar, St. Peter's has one other paid member of staff — our **parish communications officer.** This role was created in April 2018, thanks to funding from both ourselves as a church and with the support of Ely Diocese. This role has responsibility for a wide range of church administration and communication including management of the website, social media, weekly newsletters and more.

In addition to the vicar there are also **three retired clergy** and **several occasional preachers**. We also have a **pastoral authorised lay minister (ALM)** who takes communion to those who are unable to attend church, as well as leading services in care homes and



supporting the vicar with baptism preparation and administration. We also have two volunteers who act as co-ordinators for baptisms and weddings.

We have had a **pioneer minister** and **curates** in the past and hope we will be able to welcome more in the future.

Our **parochial church council (PCC)** is an established, active group supporting our church leadership, making informed decisions to enable the growth and development of the church. Alongside the churchwardens and the treasurer, the PCC has an important role in maintaining and developing the organisation and physical structure of the church.

We take safeguarding very seriously and have a nominated **safeguarding officer** who co-ordinates DBS checks, ensures that we are working to current policies and works with a small team to ensure that current practices are optimised. We are also working across all the church groups to ensure that data protection meets the standards being set by the new European General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

For the last couple of years, a small group of mature Christians from within the church was established by the vicar, whose responsibility it has been to provide trusted, confidential and prayerful support to him.

At St. Peter's, we strongly believe that the **ministry team is everyone**. We all have a responsibility for using our God-given gifts to their full potential and we are lucky to have many active group leaders and volunteers.

#### A Sunday at St. Peter's

Our current service structure looks like this:

#### Sunday

- 9.00am Traditional service (Common Worship Order One)
  - A small regular congregation with worship and Holy Communion
- 11.00am Contemporary worship
  - The first Sunday of each month is all-age
  - Holy Communion is held on the second and fourth Sundays
- 7.00pm Informal evening service of contemporary worship
  - This service is held on the first and third Sundays
  - Time is made available for personal testimony and prophetic words

#### Wednesday

- 9.30am Midweek fellowship
  - A contemplative service with Holy Communion on alternate weeks



From April to October, we have a small team of volunteers who open the church every weekday morning from 10.30am-12.30pm to visitors.

#### **During a service**

Whilst we recognise that the work of being welcoming falls on every church member, each Sunday service has a nominated, dedicated **Welcome Team** to greet visitors and newcomers to the church both before and after the service.

We are blessed to have a skilled **Worship Team**, which includes a number of audio-visual volunteers, which allows us to participate in contemporary, Spirit-led worship at the 11am and 7pm services. In addition to this, the team also leads worship at the local prison on a regular basis, represents the church at the Yaxley Festival and play a 'Beer and Carols' night at Christmas in one of the village pubs.

We regularly hold services that include **Holy Communion**. As a church, we welcome all who know Jesus Christ as their Lord as Saviour to take communion with us. This includes believers from other denominations and also children who have attended the 'Access to Holy Communion' course.

To guide our way through books of the Bible or to address particular topics, we have followed various **sermon series** both on Sunday mornings and evenings, with the issuing of notes for our home groups to enable deeper study of a given subject.

During a Sunday service, children begin in church with their parents before leaving for their own groups. Junior Church and Youth Church meet in separate parts of the church where the groups are run in age-related groups by our team of enthusiastic, committed and creative volunteers. In Junior Church (aimed at children aged 3-11), teaching follows Scripture Union's 'LightLive' programme and the children enjoy presenting a nativity service every December. Numbers attending are currently on the rise, to the point where we are finding that we now require additional space and volunteers to help run this ministry!

For children aged 3 and under, our **Crèche** can be used by parents with babies and toddlers before, during and after the service.

We also offer prayer ministry after the 11am and 7pm services thanks to our dedicated **Prayer Ministry Team** who have been trained using the New Wine model to offer supportive prayer to members of the congregation.

After the 11am service, we join together for tea, coffee and biscuits (if you get there before the children!) all supported by a team of volunteers.





The number of people who attend regularly (once a month or more) at St. Peter's has grown from 265 people in 2015 to 400 in 2017. In an average week, we would expect to see around 165 people attend services, with the majority of these at the 11am service on Sunday. Christmas and Easter services certainly attract large numbers into the church – particularly so at the Crib and Carol services where the church is often full to capacity.

In an average year, we also hold around 30 weddings, 50 baptisms and 40 funerals. We have a flower-arranging team and a group of bell ringers for such special occasions.



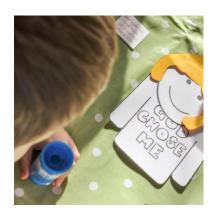
#### **Our church community**

#### **Children and families**

This work at St. Peter's is planned and coordinated. Through all kinds of activities, we aim to encourage children – of all ages – to explore faith, to develop a relationship with Jesus, and to share their beliefs with others.

The activities we offer include:

- SPARKs This is our group for preschool children and their parents and carers, which follows a programme of both Old and New Testament Bible stories presented in an interactive way. Held on alternate Friday mornings, it also includes craft, songs, prayer and refreshments. We currently have more than 50 children regularly attending
- Youth group Two members of our congregation have recently undertaken the diocesan youth ministry training. We run a fortnightly group for teenagers where the key focus is to journey with our young people, nurturing, engaging and teaching God's word. We also take a group of young people to Soul Survivor each summer
- SPREE This is a group for families who would otherwise struggle to attend a homegroup for childcare reasons. It meets once a month in the evening for crafts, chat, tea and plenty of cake. The group also holds four main community events throughout the year, one of them being 'Beer and Carols'!
- Holiday Club We host a fun-packed, themed Holiday Club each August bank holiday week in the morning, for children of primary school age. The activities include songs, bible teaching, drama, craft and sport and we usually welcome around 60 children. It's an exhausting adventure for the adult helpers (who love the dressing up!) but it is great fun and a hugely valuable outreach to the community.









#### **Adults**

At St. Peter's, we're also enthusiastic about generating and celebrating community.

- Home groups Attendance at home groups is strongly encouraged for all regular church attendees. We currently have 8 groups running, held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at various times and locations. The aim is to disciple members of the group in their faith journey, to help develop knowledge and understanding of the Bible and to provide support and encouragement for each other
- Prayer We also place a huge emphasis on prayer, and hold a
  weekly Revival Prayer Meeting on a Monday morning at 7.30am.
  We also hold 'Prayer Days' three times a year where the church
  is open for 24 hours of prayer using resources provided
- Alpha We regularly hold Alpha Courses to give the opportunity for new Christians and those searching to ask some of those difficult questions and discuss the Christian faith in more depth
- Encounter This is an informal, open space for people who
  would like to think about life, faith and spirituality. Our aim is to
  create a safe place to ask questions and explore the Christian
  faith; it's held on the alternate Friday mornings to SPARKs
- Mothers' Union Monthly meetings are held with an annual 'Teddy Bears' Picnic' for the families of all children baptised in the previous year. We also host a fortnightly women's discussion group called MU Engage

For some 10 years, we have also held annual or bi-annual weekends away. Usually attended by 60-80 adults and children, the weekend provides a time for in-depth teaching, spiritual growth, prayer ministry and bonding as a church family.

#### Outreach

We place a huge emphasis on reaching out to our local communities. Below are some of the groups and initiatives which are close to our hearts both here in Yaxley and internationally. Our vicar also has the opportunity to write a monthly article which appears in the local community magazine, the Yaxley Gazette, which is delivered to every home in Yaxley.

 Yaxley Foodbank – This opens to provide food parcels and support for local people in crisis. Food is kindly donated by the local community through various collection points and we receive a great amount of support from local schools, the Parish Parish Council and the local Co-Op

- Care in the Community Our aim is that every month a team of volunteers goes out to help local people in the community in projects ranging from cleaning and painting to gardening and DIY. Once a year we also host 'Community Sunday' where in place of our morning service we all participate in a huge number of projects across the village to help those in need. This is a particularly good way for the church to be seen as relevant, active and contributing to our community
- Impaired Senses This is an outreach group run by a member of
  the congregation who is a specialist in deaf/blind
  communication. It's held in a local hall and is run for those in our
  community with impaired vision and/or hearing. The group
  meets monthly for worship, games and social interaction. The
  same member of our congregation has also taught British Sign
  Language to some church members and has also begun signing
  once a month at our 11am service. All this enables greater
  engagement and unity in our church family.
- Debt Prevention Several of our church members are trained to run Christians Against Poverty (CAP) money courses, linked to the CAP centre in Peterborough. Take up of the courses has been variable, but we have also taken it into local primary schools where it has been very well received by pupils and teachers alike
- International Mission Over the past few years we have developed close links with Bishop Nathan Amooti and the Diocese of Cyangugu in Southern Rwanda. On two occasions the church has sent groups to build houses and support schools and clinics with education and healthcare. We are currently funding a children's feeding programme and the salary of Berthe, the pastor at Kabahire church in the Diocese. You can read more about all these international initiatives on our website
- Social events Once a month from March to October, we host a SPLASH Walk where we amble a few miles nearby before having lunch together. Each year church members host a garden-party style event called 'Strawberry Tea', which raises funds for the church involving tea, cakes, strawberries, ice creams, a raffle and activities for children. The afternoon concludes with an open-air service. We also hold a concert each year as part of the 'Music in Special Places' part of the Oundle Music Festival, and hold a Christmas Fayre each December









# OUR NEW VICAR

We have had an exciting few years of change and the family of St. Peter's is seeking to move forwards in accordance with the will of God for us. As a consequence of this we have prayerfully considered where God wishes to lead us as a church through the 'Letter to St. Peter's'.

We are therefore looking for someone who is able to respond to these challenges and take the ideas forward with commitment and enthusiasm. But most importantly, we are looking to discern the person God has planned for us.

In particular, we would like our new vicar to:



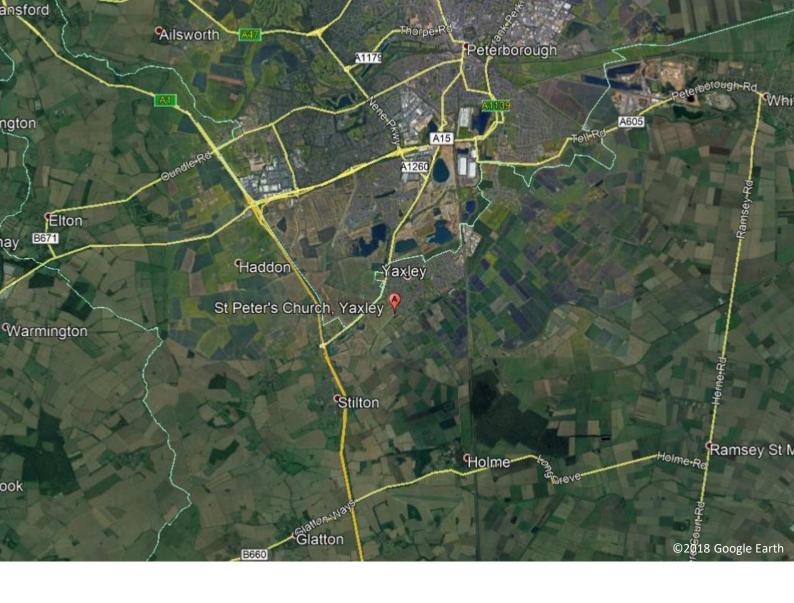
- Be energetic and youthful-minded We're looking for a vicar who has a passion to grow and develop their ministry and that of the church in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the community
- **Be Spirit-filled** They will prayerfully listen to God's promptings and help us continue to progress in our mission, vision and maturity, and expand our use of 'Fresh Expressions' of church. We are looking for someone who will inspire and motivate us to live Christ-centred lives, treasure the Bible, deepen our relationship with God and encourage us in our use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Interact imaginatively and creatively with children It's really important to us that our new vicar has a passion to see children and young people coming to know Jesus as their personal Saviour. They would be expected to act as an exofficio governor at the William de Yaxley Church of England Academy, to take school assemblies, lead Bible studies and to welcome pre-school and school groups into the church throughout the year
- Engage in modern worship Set in the context of a relaxed style, our services incorporate modern worship, where contemporary liturgy is selectively used to focus our engagement in Holy Communion, rather than to manage it
- Have a pastoral heart We would welcome someone who is able to come alongside people with care and compassion in a way that makes an impact and draws individuals more closely into their faith journey
- Have strength of character Good time management and personal resilience will be essential in dealing with the demands of the position
- Engage with people on a personal level Our new vicar should be a good communicator and motivator; an inspiring teacher who will lead us into a deeper understanding of God's word and its application in our lives
- Have leadership and organisational skills They will need to be a leader and strategic thinker, capable of stretching our current boundaries and challenging us to step out in faith. They should encourage us to recognise and make greater use of our gifts. Our new vicar will be someone who can manage an efficient team and support those in training; especially those who are seeking to pursue training in lay or ordained ministry
- Be willing and keen to take on new initiatives We understand that the Diocese is keen for St. Peter's to take up the mantle of being a resource church for the locality and be an oasis of encouragement, exploration and development available to other churches in the area
- Have a good sense of humour Last but not least, here at St. Peter's we like to have fun and we hope that our new vicar will too!



# WHAT WE CAN OFFER

As you can see, there are many exciting things already in place at St. Peter's and we have huge ambitions for the future. As we join in with what God is doing, we recognise the importance of a strong support network for our new vicar and can already offer the following:

- A loving and welcoming church family
- Spiritual and prayerful support
- An active and supportive PCC led by two experienced churchwardens
- A proactive and passionate parish communications officer
- Three retired clergy, a pastoral authorised lay minister (ALM) and occasional preachers
- Two youth ALMs in training
- Two volunteer baptism and wedding administrators
- And a host of other skilled volunteers involved in all aspects of church life
- A beautiful Grade 1 listed building that we are continuing to adapt to meet the needs of a modern worshipping community



# PRACTICAL INFORMATION

#### Where we are

Yaxley is a large and growing village located in Huntingdonshire on the southern border of Peterborough, with a population of over 10,000. It lies close to the A1(M) and is only 5 miles away from Peterborough railway station with fast services to London and the north as well as cross-country services to the east and the Midlands.

Yaxley has the advantage of its village roots – which inevitably engenders a strong sense of community – whilst being close to Peterborough with all its amenities. The ethnic mix of the village is predominantly white British with a range of minority groups. On the whole, the area has a very cohesive atmosphere.

Yaxley is home to a junior school, William de Yaxley Church of England Academy, which is part of the Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust,



Fourfields Community Primary School and Yaxley Infant School; as well as having numerous pre-school and nursery facilities.

The King's School in Peterborough is a highly regarded non-selective, state secondary school offering a wide range of subjects up to A-Level standard, and with a small primary school. It is part Church of England funded and has a strong Christian ethos, with input from Cathedral clergy. Other local secondary schools include Stanground Academy, Sawtry Village Academy and the newly-opened Hampton Gardens, the designated secondary school for Yaxley located in the neighbouring parish. which opened in 2017.

Within the village there are a range of public services, open spaces, shops, eateries, and local businesses. There is a large health centre, a public library and small shopping centre, together with a medium-sized Co-operative store. On top of this there are a number of sports clubs and associated amenities — our previous vicar acted as chaplain to Yaxley Football Club.

The church also has strong links with the Parish Council, with several Councillors worshipping regularly at St. Peter's.

Over the next decade work will begin on a large new housing development to the north of Yaxley – Great Haddon. This will add some 5,300 houses with local facilities to the area. Although the development is within the boundaries of Peterborough Unitary Authority, the area lies within the Parish of St. Peter's. This will provide us with an enormous opportunity for outreach and church growth, which we will have to be ready to meet as building commences.

It should be noted that although Yaxley is currently with Holme in a united benefice, there is a pastoral plan in progress which will see Holme join a new grouping. We expect this to be implemented in early 2019, with the legalities completed by the end of the same year.

#### The church buildings

#### The church

Many changes and developments have taken place over the centuries, leading to the beautiful building we currently have. There's a small book available on the history of the church.

In order to keep the building relevant for today's worship we have undertaken a number of modernisations over the last 25 years.

In 1999, an upper room was built alongside a small kitchen and disabled access toilet at the rear of the building. In 2006, a new heating system was installed together with a dais and a new audio-visual system to make leading the services more accessible. In 2013, the whole church building was rewired and the interior redecorated. At the same time the opportunity was taken to upgrade some of our audio-visual system. In 2017, roof alarms and CCTV were also installed to help prevent lead theft.

The increasing number of church attendees and events held in the church have made



us realise that the current facilities are now inadequate for our needs. We have therefore designed a project to be completed in 2019 which will provide a new servery area and increase the number of toilets to three. A second upper room will be built to cater for the needs of the increasing children's ministry during services. We are blessed with having churchwardens who have project management experience and are handling this all for us with the PCC's support!

#### The vicarage

This is a modern 4-bedroom detached house, which was built in 1994. The downstairs consists of a good size lounge, separate dining area and modern kitchen. There is a study which is separated from the main house by the entrance way and a separate downstairs toilet. There is also a garage and a garden to the rear.

In the last 12 months, all of the windows and external doors have been replaced and the roof has been replaced. The house is in a good state of repair and is warm and welcoming, both to those who live there and to their visitors.

#### **Finances**

St. Peter's has a steadily growing income allied to our increasing growth in numbers and maturity as a church. In 2017 our giving through collections and covenants

increased by 20% in comparison with 2016. Although general expenditure is slowly rising, we were also able to transfer nearly £10,000 to our latest building project fund last year, which means that we already have approximately half the estimated cost of the future work.

Here's a quick overview of our current finances:

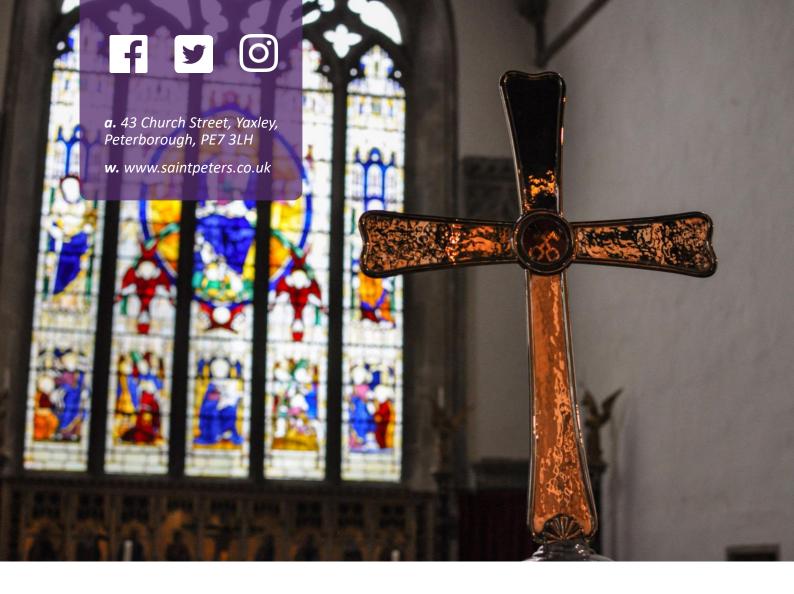
	2015	2016	2017
Income	£69,300	£69,600	£87,100
Expenditure	£65,500	£70,600	£85,200
Balance	£3,800	(£1,000)	£1,900
Mission	£12,100	£10,400	£8,500

Each time we have completed a major project in the church, we have raised an additional 10% as a tithe to support our international mission partners.

Over the last few years we have also committed to raise our Parish Share contributions by 10% annually. This means that we now pay our direct cost of ministry in full.

We mentioned above that this year, we took the step of faith of employing a parish communications officer. The Diocese has committed to a level of financial support through a successful 'Growth Fund' application over the first three years of this position.

Once a year we hold 'Stewardship Sunday' where one of the churchwardens gives a presentation on giving of our time and gifts, as well as our income.



## JOIN US

We firmly believe that God has a plan for His church in Yaxley.

Over the last few months we have come to understand the areas in which we need to grow as a church. Our prayer is that our new vicar will help us continue on that journey, working with us to shape our vision as we strive to become the church God intends us to be. We're at an exciting point in our development and can't wait to see what God has in store for us and for the village of Yaxley!

If, after prayerful reflection, you believe that God is calling you to join us, we would be delighted to hear from you. To enquire, please contact the Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech, Hugh McCurdy:

- e. archdeacon.handw@elydiocese.org
- t. 01353 652709 or 01353 658404





## REACHING OUT IN LOVE AND FAITH

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