

ST AUGUSTINE'S THORPE BAY



ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 2017

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PARISH AND THE PCC

If Thorpe Bay has a reputation it is as a place of calm and tranquility – which makes it attractive to many both to bring up a family and also to retire to. Closer inspection reveals, as one might expect, considerable activity and development. Areas of church life remained vibrant – attendance (notably higher at Easter) was constant around 80 – 100 at the main service, junior church, Men's Fellowship, recitals, ministry in schools, trips to Berlin and Ely, youth trips to and from our twin parish in Sweden. Lent sermons at the 10 am service attracted a good following, and included some moving subjects. There were 7 funerals in church and 14 at the crematorium or cemetery, 18 people baptized and 15 confirmed (a record in recent years). Janet Allan came to the final year of her curacy, and during that time was appointed to an incumbency at Swaffham. No replacement curate was assigned, though this was to change in 2017. Her ministry, and the support of James, is much missed. The ministry of Canons Ballard and Burdett as retired local incumbents, and the arrival of Linda Barnard as a lay minister, have been much appreciated by the vicar and congregation.

The generosity attested to in the financial report by members of the congregation was augmented in 2016 by a number of legacies, which enable work on the fabric to take place without appeals for money. In addition a number of anonymous gifts made possible new green and white vestments and frontal, the restoration of the fine oak sanctuary chairs, a silver lavabo bowl, a new vimpel, the installation of some new radiators and, most significantly, the cleaning and refurbishment of the organ which had not had major work done on it for some thirty years. Though in the end external funding was not available for works on the church grounds nonetheless the thinking that went into preparing grant applications laid the foundations for later work.

The vicar continued as area dean, and become nominal priest in charge of North Shoebury, both appointments duties rather than pleasures. More pleasurable was being part of the diocesan links with Romania and Sweden, and hosting potential ordinands from the diocese of Europe. The discussions that the Bishop of Chelmsford is encouraging between parishes to form ministry and mission units have not progressed due in large part to lack of enthusiasm.