

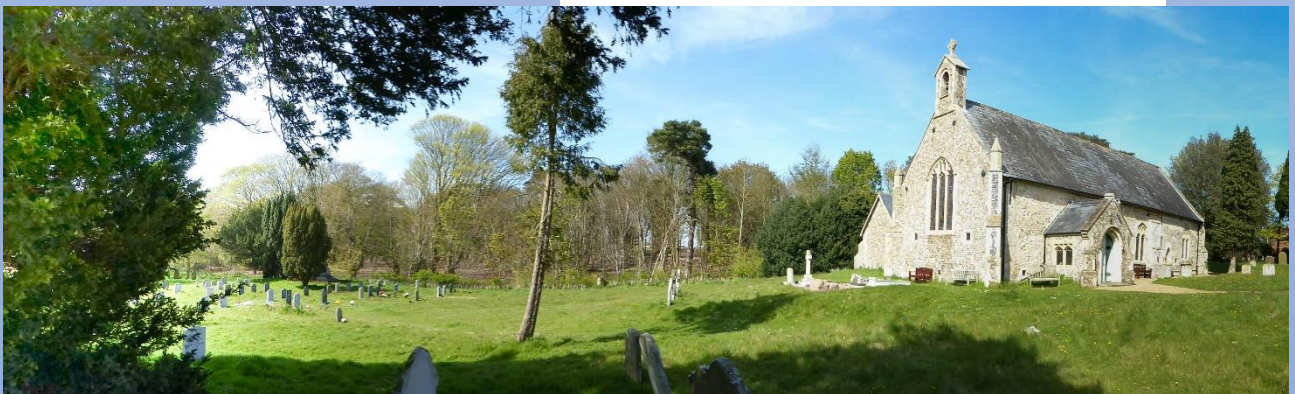
*'Reaching out with the  
love of Christ to all'*

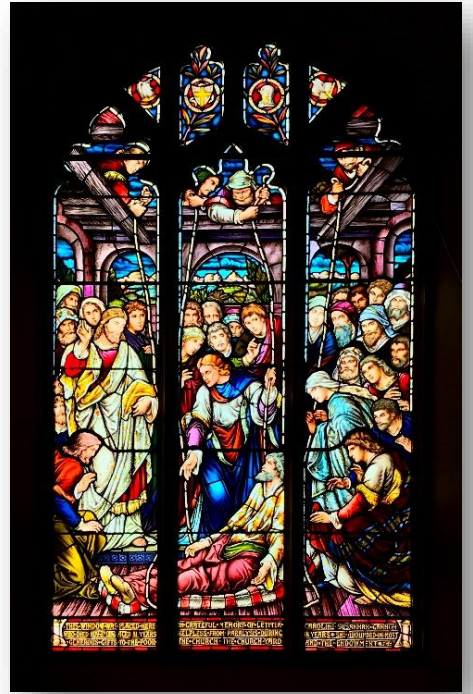


## St Andrew's Church Aldringham-with-Thorpe

### ANNUAL REPORT 2025

For the year January to  
December 2025





## **St Andrew's Church, Aldringham with Thorpe**

### **Clergy**

Rector	Reverend Sarah du Boulay
Curate	Reverend Mary Brown
Retired Clergy	Very Reverend Christopher Lewis
Licensed Elders	Sheila Brechin David Gordon

### **Parochial Church Council Members**

Reverend Mary Brown	Chair
David Copp	Churchwarden, Churchyard
Dorothy Walker	Churchwarden, Hospitality
David Gordon	Treasurer (January to May)
Sandra Harle	Treasurer (May onwards)
Sheila Brechin	Elder
Rex Bourne	Deanery Synod Representative
David Bywater	Deanery Synod Representative
Mark Goyder	Choir
Anne Norton	Friends Secretary
Amanda Jinks	Minutes Secretary

# St Andrew's Church, Aldringham with Thorpe

## Annual Report 2025

### **Review of the Year from the Rector** - *Reverend Sarah du Boulay*

God's church does not run by virtue of individuals, nor by luck or by throwing money at any problems. God's church runs because of a whole team of people who generously give their time, expertise, money, kindness, faith, goodwill, and hope. We pray faithfully and we try to tread where God is already at work, bringing His love and His mission into our community.

As always, I must start by thanking all of our wonderful volunteers, without whom the church wouldn't function - either as a worshipping body, or as a building. Our team of Sacristans, Choir, Cleaners, Welcomers, Flower Team, BoBS, Rota Organisers, Readers, Organists, Friends, people who pray so faithfully, and many others who give of themselves, their time and their resources so freely. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

Our dedicated and generous Church Wardens, David and Dorothy do a superb job of supporting the clergy and making certain the church functions as the 'a place of worship, where Jesus Christ is known and loved'. Thank you both so very much.

Thank you also to our dedicated ministry team, both lay and ordained. Rev'ds Mary and Nicky, our retired priests and Lay Elders are all so generous with their time and themselves, and it is a continued pleasure to minister alongside you.

We are readvertising for the post of Children and Families Worker, and pray that the right candidate will step forward and join us here in Alde Sandlings.

My not-so-secret prayer of doubling the number of baptisms we hold each year is still being honoured by God, and it is really exciting that this ministry is growing across the benefice. In Aldringham we also hold a number of weddings and a greater number of funerals and burials of ashes. It is such a privilege to be part of people's lives at these important times.

In 2025 we have celebrated the liturgical year with gusto, welcoming members of other parishes throughout the year on an ad hoc basis. We are fortunate to be able to offer Communion services at all major feast days and festivals and on such occasions also enjoy welcoming visitors from the village into our worshipping community. The Alpha course held at Liz and George's home was a resounding success, cementing not only friendships within our own benefice, but also building on relationships with our neighbours, Alde River.

This year we have been especially aware of our friends in Thorpeness whose homes

have been threatened by coastal erosion. Although there is little practical help we can offer, we continue to pray for and with them, and to ensure that we are here as and when needed.

Much has changed in the nearly 4 years since I have joined you as your Rector, and although not all of it has been easy, it is a real joy to look back and see how far we have come together. I feel as though God has really honoured our prayers, faithfulness and passion for Him, for each other and for the Good News of the Gospel, and I am excited to see what He has in store for us over the next season.

As last year, I would like to invite you to please join me in praying for our church, and our parish of Aldringham cum Thorpe; that over the next year we can continually to prayerfully discern God's calling to us, and continue to spread the Good News of the Gospel throughout His kingdom, joyfully loving God and loving each other as He would have us do.

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

- Matthew 22:36-40

**and from the Assistant Curate** - *Reverend Mary Brown*

2025 was a joyful year of worshipping and serving the local community together. We began our monthly family services, which take place on the fourth Sunday of each month. These services are designed to be very accessible for everyone, no matter their age or stage, or whether they are used to coming to church. Whilst we have not had many children join us, the different style of service has been enjoyed by a wide range of people. Moving forward it would be wonderful to see families with children being invited to these services. In the summer months we also had picnic lunches together in the churchyard after the family services, a wonderful time of enjoying each other's company and getting to know one another better.

Suzanne has continued to give her time and energy as organist and choir mistress, conducting the choir on the first Sunday of the month whilst Hugh plays the organ, and playing for the second and third Sundays. Our choir has grown in number over the course of 2025 and it is a joy to hear them sing. Officially they sing on the first and second Sundays of the month, but various members can be heard leading the singing unofficially on the other Sundays, for which we are very grateful. During the summer months we held Evensong once a month, welcoming congregation from across the Benefice and beyond. Mary's mother Annabel has played either the organ, or the guitar, or both (but not at once!) for the family service on the fourth Sunday, when we

often sing a mix of newer choruses as well as traditional hymns.

Our Thursday Morning Prayer services in the vestry have continued this year, with the usual lively discussion and strengthening of friendships.

2025 saw the usual range of special services, with a particularly well attended Pet Service (high numbers of humans and animals alike!), the wonderful Cadets from Leiston joining us for various services, and well attended Advent and Christmas Carol Services. This year our patronal festival was celebrated during a Sunday morning service, a change which worked well.

One way in which we serve the local community is through occasional offices. We baptised three children during 2025, had two weddings, and 16 funerals or burials of ashes. We also strengthened our relationship with our neighbours in the Alms Houses, who joined us for a coffee morning, and who we have joined for coffee mornings. At the beginning of 2025 we joined with Rev'd Rob from the Alde River Benefice to run an Alpha course in Aldringham to which people from across the Alde Sandlings and Alde River Benefices were invited. We had about 18 people attend the course, which was hosted and catered for by the Fishwicks.

I would like to add my thanks to those of Rev'd Sarah to everyone who contributes in any way to our life together at St Andrews.

### **Churchwardens' Reports – *David Copp & Dorothy Walker***

The year has followed its traditional pattern. We seem to have only just finished putting the Christmas decorations away before it is time to start planning for Easter.

Palm Sunday with the donkey-led procession and the dawn service for Easter Sunday on the beach are always high points and traditions which we are pleased to continue.

At the APCM in May, David Gordon retired as Treasurer and stood down from the PCC. His input and stimulus will be greatly missed. There was a hearty round of applause for David. Later in the month we had a get together to say thank you, with a cake baked by Margaret Webster and we presented him with a painting of the church by our friend Ian Sedge.

David had been Treasurer for many years and that post could have been hard to fill. However we were introduced to Sandra Harle and Sandra has happily and effectively taken on the post so we continue to be in good financial hands.

Summer Evensongs continue to be popular, both with the choir and the congregation as will be apparent elsewhere in this report.

Mary Brown has instituted Family Services on the last Sunday of the month and she

has entertained us and made us think in different ways with a variety of thought-provoking props.

Inside the church we now have a smart electricity meter so we don't have to worry about reading the meter and checking on estimated bills.

We sadly lost our friend Mary Morgan during the year but her family donated many of her paintings to be auctioned for the church so we had a lovely evening in her memory when we displayed the paintings and took bids from many who were pleased to take something home to remember Mary.

## **Churchyard** - *David Copp*

The wildflowers around the church were splendid this year.

The new mowers (Stiga ride on and Alko power scythe – aka the yellow one and the red one) have proved very worthwhile, the Stiga being used to keep the short grass around the church in good order and the Alko cutting the long grass on the Ogilvie field and in the lower half of the churchyard.

Raking Days were held on July 25 and 26 and thanks to lots of volunteers, and Conca's tractor, the work got done – just. Many thanks to all, especially to Chris Burrell-Saward for hours of willing work and support.

Bob Browne has been looking after the machinery; servicing as necessary and also riding around on the Stiga mower to keep the grass directly around the church under control.

The yew hedge around the new cremation plot is "good in parts". Attention is needed to the southern edge and hopefully we will attend to that in the coming year. I am not sure about calling it a Garden of Remembrance; that sounds a bit more formal than we like to be but it would be nice to have suggestions for a suitable name – any one ??

Being able to house the new mowers in the tin shed has been a great boon and has made it possible for the church to own the tools needed to maintain the churchyard according to the wildflower/wildlife plan.

## **Estate** - *David Copp*

In the period since the last Annual Parochial Report there have once again been very few repairs necessary at St Andrew's other than usual cyclical maintenance items.

All statutory maintenance requirements i.e., PAT testing and Fire extinguisher maintenance etc, have been completed in-year.

The car park (which the church does not own) is in need of repair to fill some potholes. An approach has been made to the Ogilvie Trust for help with this.

St Andrews self-help maintenance group, BoBS (Band of Brothers and Sisters) had the intention of meeting on the last Thursday of each month to attend to maintenance

both of the churchyard and the church and for a get together over coffee and biscuits in an atmosphere of fellowship. Sadly this hasn't worked very well but hopefully once the weather warms up there may be more volunteers. If you would like to be part of this group, please let David Copp know.

### **Hospitality** - *Dorothy Walker*

The word, hospitality is derived from Latin, hospes, and came into English from medieval French. Welcoming strangers was seen as an obligation and a way to strengthen social bonds. The welcome that visitors and members of the congregation experience is a constant theme at St. Andrew's. We endeavour to convey love and warmth in all our worship and social activities.

At our 11 AM service on Sunday mornings we offer different versions of Holy Communion, we have a monthly Family Service and an informal worship service on Thursday mornings at 9 AM. After our 11 AM service we offer refreshments provided and served by volunteers and, despite the size of the Vestry, a very friendly experience ensues. There is a small kitchen with a dishwasher and toilet facility with a baby-changing station. Visitors and parishioners enjoy the peace and quiet of the Church and Churchyard with a register of the interments available with a map.

Special events take place from time to time. This year we raised funds for a diocese in Africa serving lunch by the kind support of Thorpeness Country Club. we presented posies on Mothering Sunday, donkeys led a procession around the Churchyard on Palm Sunday, we blessed pets, donkeys, sheep, dogs, a cat, and a tortoise. The Air Cadets paraded to commemorate the Battle of Britain and we celebrated Harvest Festival. Remembrance Day was marked by memorials to parishioners who died in World Wars. Our Patronal Festival took place in November, and the Candlelight Carol Service was a show-stopper. Christmas was a joy for us all. Our team of volunteers made our events memorable.

The function of St. Andrew's Church is to serve as centre for the community to gather, worship and receive spiritual guidance. Not only do we take care of our congregation and friends in life by offering baptism, and weddings, we care for those who have passed away in our Churchyard, providing a well-tended and peaceful garden-like environment in which to rest and family and friends to visit.

All these activities require quite a number of volunteers to keep things going. Flowers need arranging. The choir contributes great music for services. After service refreshments have to be provided. The building and Churchyard have to be maintained. The Churchwardens and members of the Parochial Church Council thank all of the team that contribute so much. If you feel that you would like to be involved in any way in the life and work of St. Andrew's, do please talk to one of the Churchwarden to express your interest.

### **Choir & Music** - *Mark Goyder*

Last year it was explained that we are now navigating one of those inevitable periods of change, driven in part by financial pressures. The work of the choir has continued under the leadership of Suzanne Vandenberghe, who, in addition to contributing her skills as organist, rehearses and leads the small choir in contributing introits, and sung elements in the Holy Communion service. We continued to offer Evensong during the summer months. The choir also contributed to the especially atmospheric Advent Service under candlelight.

We very sadly lost our valued alto singer, Mary Morgan, who died this year. Mary always brought energy and joy with her to every rehearsal and we all miss her.

Thanks are due to Hugh Singleton, who has continued to contribute his impressive organ- playing skills in partnership with Suzanne. Our thanks on behalf of the PCC to Suzanne and all those who give their time, their talents and their loyalty to creating the musical dimension of worship in Aldringham. The regular choir operates as a happy team and derives great joy from their singing. We would welcome additional singers to our ranks and indeed any musicians with something to contribute to our worship. We are always looking to strengthen our 'bench' of alternative organists to cope with days when Suzanne and Hugh may be unable to play.

#### **The Friends of St Andrews** - *David Copp*

We had a Bric a Brac Stall with a New and Nearly New Rail at two of the Aldeburgh Church Friday Markets in August raising £166.

The Autumn Coffee Morning was held in November which included the new and nearly New Rail plus Guess the Weight of the Cake. We raised £389 for the Fabric Fund.

The Friends' Committee would like to thank everyone who has helped us with our events by donating items for the stalls, tombola and draw prizes, making cakes, helping to set up and clear away. Thank you also to those who supported our events on the day. Your help and support is appreciated.

Total sum raised for the Fabric Fund in 2025 was in excess of £500.

#### **Deanery Synod** - *David Bywater*

An important outcome for the Synod has been the Deanery Plan for Growth. This is the culmination of work done at Synod, "growing in confidence as we grow together". The document adopted by Synod will be used to guide Deanery priorities.

The Deanery also considered the work of Suffolk Coastal Poverty Action (S.C.P.A.) - "Hope when it's hardest. Support when it's needed". The Rev. Nic Stuchfield urged our support through prayer, volunteering, promoting and finance.

May 14th Ascension at Leiston 7.30

June 16th Meeting at Yoxmere

Oct 14th Meeting at Aldeburgh

Our current Rural Dean, Richard Finch, will stand down at the end of April with our appreciation and thanks for his hard work in post.

**Money** - *Sandra Harle*

Total funds of the parish increased by some £35,000 to nearly £190,000.

£30,000 of this came from a generous legacy and the remainder from the surplus on the fabric fund that is mostly interest on the invested funds.

The general fund was just in surplus with a surplus of £269,

This was achieved by tight control of costs and generous giving from you, our congregation.

It is a sobering thought that out of total expenditure of some £33,000, only some £8,000 is under our control, with £25,000 paid to the Diocese and the Benefice by way of parish share.

Of the £33,000 of income, the majority is from banker's orders and collections at services plus the connected gift aid recovery. So a very big thanks to everyone for continuing to give to your church in these difficult times.

*The Financial Statements for St Andrew's church may be found later in this report.*

**Safeguarding** - *Dorothy Walker*

The PCC has complied with its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults; and details of the Benefice and Diocesan contacts in this regard are clearly displayed in church for the public to see.

**Volunteers** - *David Copp*

So much of what the church does relies on volunteers, so this report would not be complete without a big thank you to all of the volunteers. To those who clean the church, work in the churchyard, help with the lovely flower arrangements, act as sacristan, read the lessons, lock and unlock, provide after church refreshments, thank

you very much for all that you do.

And to the PCC, thank you for working together for the benefit of the church and the congregation.

**Action by you, the reader of this report**

If you have any questions, comments, or feedback, please email these to David Copp ([davidcopp@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:davidcopp@hotmail.co.uk)).

Elections to the PCC will happen at the APCM so, if you would be interested in exploring what you might contribute as a PCC member then do please speak to David Copp or Dorothy Walker.

**ST ANDREWS CHURCH, ALDRINGHAM**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025**

FABRIC FUND - A RESTRICTED FUND

	JAN - DEC 2025	JAN- DEC 2024
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
Friends subscriptions	£ 180.00	£ 180.00
Friends fundraising	£ 1,218.42	£ 1,617.00
Legacies		
Gifts & Grants		
In Memoriam/Wedding Gifts		
Gift Aid - tax recovered	£ 25.00	£ 25.00
Bank Interest	£ 4,572.48	£ 4,061.00
	<b>£ 5,995.90</b>	<b>£ 5,883.00</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Vestry scheme	£ 750.00	£ 560.00
External maintenance		
Internal maintenance		
External lighting		
	£ 750.00	£ 560.00
<b>SURPLUS FOR YEAR</b>	£ 5,245.90	£ 5,323.00
<b>FABRIC FUND @ 31.12.24</b>		£ 105,018.00
<b>FABRIC FUND @ 31.12.25</b>	£ 110,263.90	

<b>INVESTMENT OF FUNDS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2025</b>	
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GENERAL FUND	£ 79,307.04	£ 49,038.00
FABRIC FUND (RESTRICTED)	£ 110,263.90	£ 105,018.00
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	£ 189,570.94	£ 154,056.00
In bank accounts at:		
Barclays (current & deposit)	£102,892.16	£ 70,956.00
Virgin Money	£ 86,578.78	£ 83,000.00
Cash Float	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	£ 189,570.94	£ 154,056.00

GENERAL FUNDS RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	JAN - DEC 2025	JAN- DEC 2024
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
Planned giving - Bankers orders	£ 11,901.00	£ 12,041.00
Loose Collections	£ 5,021.26	£ 4,667.00
Collections for Charity Funds	£ 1,572.03	£ 1,127.00
Donations, inc. DG Gift	£ 1,812.50	£ 3,043.00
Fundraising	£ 912.50	£ 485.00
Gift Aid - tax recovered	£ 5,079.75	£ 4,355.00
Grants	£ 500.00	£ 1,523.00
PCC Fees	£ 6,513.00	£ 6,025.00
Wall Safe	£ 121.07	
	<b>£ 33,433.11</b>	<b>£ 33,266.00</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Parish Share ( <b>paid in full</b> )	£ 20,385.00	£ 20,265.00
Share of Benefice Admin Costs	£ 4,411.84	£ 3,768.00

Charity Giving	£ 1,830.53	£ 1,408.00
Insurance	£ 1,304.45	£ 1,268.00
Church maintenance	£ 391.79	£ 162.00
Churchyard	£ 759.50	£ 2,570.00
Abnormal exp (c/yard equipment)		£ 3,394.00
Utility bills	£ 1,702.99	£ 1,289.00
Music	£ 1,025.40	£ 3,747.00
Sundries	£ 1,352.57	£ 2,246.00
	£ 33,164.07	£ 40,117.00
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR YEAR</b>	£ 269.04	<b>-£ 6,851.00</b>
Legacies received	£ 30,000.00	
<b>GENERAL FUND @ 31.12.2024</b>		£ 49,038.00
<b>GENERAL FUND @ 31.12.2025</b>	£ 79,307.04	

Approved by the PCC on 20th January 2026 and signed on their behalf by  
Revd Sarah du Boulay (Rector) and Sandra Harle (PCC Treasurer)

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH  
ALDRINGHAM  
SUFFOLK  
IP 16 4QT



A part of the

