

St Mary's Church Boxford – 2025 report to Parish Council

The Rev Robert Parker-McGee and the Families Minister Sarah Parker-McGee were called to St Mary and St Nicholas churches, Spalding and the Benefice bade them farewell in August. The Ministry Team has done an amazing job in ensuring that divine services continue and we are very grateful for their provision of spiritual nurture and support.

We are especially grateful to Maggie Cogan for providing comfort and support to the dying and the bereaved and to Maggie Cogan and Diana Garfield for maintaining St Mary's connection with Boxford Primary School. Audrey Zuck continues in the role of Churchwarden and Judith Blatch continues to manage our accounts with clarity and detail in her role as Treasurer. None of this would be possible without the tireless work commitment at all hours to the work of the Benefice by Elizabeth Potter as Benefice Administrator.

Morning Prayer has continued on weekdays, as well as the Wednesday Midweek Communion at Mary's House and Sunday Services. The regular BCP Evensongs often see good numbers attending. We were again able to operate a full Holy Week and Easter schedule including the Holy Triduum (of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day). St Mary's celebrated four baptisms, two marriages and a renewal of vows and two funerals in 2025.

The midweek Eucharist at Mary's House has maintained good numbers this past year. St Mary's celebrated the Harvest Festival, the Carol Service, the Christingle, the ever-popular Midnight Mass and other significant events in the Christian Calendar. The Church of England Primary School in Boxford had School Services in Church for Christmas, Candlemas, Easter, Pentecost and End of School Year.

Boxford continues its tradition of music through Tom Cogan's Happy Hour Concerts, and concerts in aid of the church organised by Edward Gold. Thanks to the efforts of members of the congregation, especially Frances Munro and Jacky House, monthly coffee mornings continued in 2025 and the October Harvest Supper was enjoyed by attendees. Special commendation goes to Liz Potter for making the Christmas Tree Festival a joyous and child-focused event.

The Ministry Team and members of the PCC (together with other members of the congregation) continued to visit the sick, the isolated and those identified as in need in the villages. We have maintained a good level of sacramental pastoral ministry to those requesting spiritual counsel and confession, the sick with the sacrament of anointing, anointing and last rites to those coming to the end of their lives, and support to those needing bereavement support.

The Benefice continues to operate a 'Bring and Share Foodbank' in the North Porch of St Mary's Church in Boxford which is well used. Through this facility we also deliver food parcels at the point of need to any who require it.

We are very grateful to all those who support the church in any way, through volunteering, attendance, financial contributions and giving their time and energy. If you do not already, please consider giving up a little of your time to support the church's activities in Boxford.

St Mary's expenses are greater than church income and has only been able to make building repairs due to a legacy. Not being able to pay its full parish share means the shortfall is being underwritten by the diocese and makes the Box River Benefice less attractive for new Rectors. This is obviously not sustainable in the longer-term. Please consider making a small monthly donation or leaving a gift in your will towards the ongoing running costs of your local church. Details of how to do so can be found on our website (www.boxriverbenefice.com/supportus/) or by contacting the Benefice Administrator.