

2010 CHURCH REPORT TO ASHBY ST MARY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Apologies

Rev Peter Knight sends his apologies; he is chairing the Thurton Benefice annual general meeting at Alington school this evening.

Fabric

This year has seen the culmination of five years work to re-order the chancel in front of the altar/sanctuary, rebuild the bells and refurbish the organ non of which would have been possible without extensive grants and some donations. The chancel in front of the altar was substantially widened to improve the space available for weddings, funerals and concerts. We have now been able to host annual concerts, with one choir of 65 people able to perform without using pew space. All three bells have not rung in Ashby church since some time before 1874, but they were all rung again on Easter day 2009. As the organ has been refurbished we have discovered a beautiful mahogany case and together with the newly gilded pipes we now have a magnificent piece of antique furniture which now works properly and sounds marvellous as well. To celebrate the completion of these projects we have a service of thanksgiving with the new Bishop of Thetford at 7 pm this Friday evening.

Churchyard

The churchyard grass, verges and hedges are always kept neat and tidy, many thanks to the parish council for their contribution towards this work.

Services

As well as hearing the bells ring for advertised Sunday services, you may have noticed the bells ring every Friday morning at 8.30 am before a short prayer service usually attended by a small number of people; but anyone can come and join in or just sit and listen if they wish.

An advertised less formal much more relaxed service (signified by the abbreviation PT in eleven says) is held once a month without clergy and run by the parish team. In one form or another this has been happening for the best part of 20 years. Anyone who wants can come and take part, or just watch what happens and join in the refreshments and fellowship afterwards.

The normal range of services as advertised in Eleven Says and work with children/youths continues as usual in the form:-

- Little Fish (0 to 5s)
- Explorers (7 to 11s)
- Halos (11 to 13s)
- Rockaholics (14 to 17s)

People

Jill Stevens who has been a reader for some 15 years moved to Pakefield some time ago and is to retire from this work in the Thurton Benefice and Ashby St Mary in particular in May this year.

A new full time youth worker, Andy Rose, has now been appointed to work in the Bramerton Group of churches.

Roy Roebuck