

## St Peters Church Moulton Report to 2024 Annual Parish Council Meeting

St Peters Church continues to be an active and busy parish, hosting fortnightly services plus additional acts of worship for Festivals. It remains a popular wedding venue and the usual run of baptisms, funerals and memorial services take place. Thank you to all those who ensure its smooth running so that God's word continues to be experienced and heard. Special thanks must go to Anne Garmston, Bob Saltmarsh and Geoff Dobson who hold the offices of Churchwardens and Treasurer respectively, though we note that Bob did not seek re-election and there is therefore a vacancy for Churchwarden. June Dobson acts as Verger and Fran Saltmarsh leads on Fund Raising, Douglas James has been our Bell ringer and all members of the PCC play their part. We were sorry to say farewell to Sally and Mick Lambourne Brown from the PCC but welcomed Jennifer Howell, Geoff Dobson and Sue Woolston as new members.

Our group choir under the leadership of Philip Asher has recently been augmented by members of the former Moulton Community Choir and we are grateful to them all for their work. Philip is also our much talented organist. On the first Sunday of the month our All Age service is lead by Alan Walton with keyboard and Ian Garmston on guitar.

We are part of the Kennett Valley Group of the Forest Heath Team Ministry. I was appointed team rector of that Group (formerly having been a team vicar) and was pleased you were able to be represented as a Council at my Induction service with Bishop Martin in February. Our Ministry is supported by Revd's Gill Anderson and Adam Barclay. In 2024 we shall be supported by a full time curate (trainee priest) Raul Akaia who we anticipate will live in one of the villages of our group. I am very happy to visit parishioners in their homes for any pastoral issue.

Several prayer meetings have taken place in church in conjunction with the Moulton Ministry Project to engender more life in the church. Gill's monthly Soul food project with prayer and weekly thoughts are welcomed by some but have not yet received the 'coverage' they deserve. We wrote to every home in the parish asking what they hoped for from their church and received virtually no direct response but to a significant and pleasing extent our prayers have been answered by a marked increase in the number of people at all our services and a new active younger group prepared to take on some fund raising.

We continue to welcome the school 3 times a year for special services and Easter with speaker Helen Matter was again a great success. We appreciate the strong support of the Headteacher and the open invitation to the termly school production. I lead collective worship in the school at last fortnightly and it was good the school received the highest accolade from SIAMS, the Anglican and Methodist Statutory Inspectorate of schools.

A new event was Carol singing at the Packhorse and that was much welcomed by the parish with funds being given to charity.

I continue to pay a part in the Moulton Charity as the point of contact for applicants.

We are grateful to Alan Walton for leading the fortnightly House Group in his home and Kim for her hospitality. Anne continues to lead a valued Bibles Study group each month.

Through the generosity of a parishioner we were able to replace the stile at the eastern edge of the Churchyard with a metal gate which will enable better access to a circular walk for those with physical disabilities and so go some way to supporting 'wellbeing' in the parish.

Financially it was a challenging year as some of the events from which we thought we could receive income did not materialise and others were not as lucrative as we thought but we have managed to pay our 'dues' and didn't finish the year with debt. Fund raising events took place as recorded elsewhere and we are grateful to the organisers and supporters. Apart from benefit to our finances they add to the sense of community in Moulton.

We have not been so fortunate with the building as the tower roof and at least 3 other places in the roof are in need significant repair. Internally the building needs redecorating but at present we are struggling to find the enormous amount of energy for those tasks- let alone the money. The vestry remains incomplete.

Nevertheless thank you all once again – we carry on cheerfully and there are always free seats available!

Rev Canon Chris Childs May 2024 – Team Rector