

Parish Council AGM Church report 2024

2023 was our first full year without a Priest-in-Charge. North Samford Benefice was split, with the parishes of Bentley and Tattingstone leaving at the end of May to join East Bergholt; leaving four parishes in the Benefice. To date a part-time Priest-in-Charge for our smaller Benefice has not been found. The service pattern of services has continued as one Holy Communion service, a Family service and two Morning Prayer services each month. The church has continued to be open for private prayer and contemplation every day. After the thefts of last year, items stolen were replaced with those made from wood and steel, as opposed to brass and a camera installed in the porch.

In addition to our Christmas services of Christingle, Candlelit Carols and Holy Communion on Christmas Morning, a Festival of Angels was held for the first time. The church was decorated with angels crafted by children and residents in the village. The service was well attended and enjoyed by all. The church porch was also decorated for Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas, which included children's craft activities. Food was collected at Harvest and Christingle and cleaning products and toiletries at Easter, which were taken to the FIND (Families In Need) foodbank. A food collection box remains at the back of the church throughout the year, the contents of which are donated to FIND periodically.

2023 saw the loss of Lay Reader Emeritus, June Read, who was a much-loved stalwart of our church for many years and had been ill for some time.

Fundraising activities were carried out throughout the whole year and included coffee mornings, a cowslip cream tea and a Harvest lunch in the Village Hall. In July, an openair Brass Concert was organised, but due to high winds had to be relocated to the village hall. The audience squeezed into the hall, but it was an enjoyable evening, even so. A Christmas Market at the end of November was also a very successful day.

We are very grateful to the Parish Council for continuing to cover the cost of grass cutting in the churchyard. Thanks to everyone in the village who continues to support the church with flower arranging, decorating the church and porch, cleaning and those who come to our fundraising events.