



All Saints Church, Croughton



St Michael's Church, Aynho



*The Most Holy Trinity Church,
Hinton-in-the-Hedges*

Astwick Vale Benefice



St Peter's Church, Steane



St Michael and All Angels Church, Farthinghoe



St George's Church, Evenley

Rector's Report 2017

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As a community of five villages, this past year we have seen our own share of ups and downs. Several members of our communities have died, some better known than other, but all missed equally by their family and friends. We have also seen communities come together for village fetes and for celebrations of our monarch's birthday.

As a church community we have much to be thankful for too. For those who clean our churches week by week, those who care for the churchyards, those who decorate our churches with flowers, those who serve on parochial Church Council and those who take the office of Church Warden. We can add those who have played the organ, those who have given refreshments, those who have rung the bells, sung in the choirs and benefice festival Chorus (BFC). Those who have distributed news letters, welcomed people at services, this list goes on and on and I thank you all.

As a group of churches we have managed this past year to pay all our bills, the nearly £10,000 to insure our buildings, the £55,000 to pay the cost of ministry, plus heating, lighting and £150,000 of repairs to the windows and roofs. This hasn't been easy, but with generous support and contributions from charities we have paid our way. I am very grateful for all who have supported us, with one off donations, and those who regularly give each week, in a timely and tax efficient manner. Thank you for your support.

We can also give thanks for Shemil and his ministry among us. 2017 sees him come to the end of his training here and he has now started as the Chaplain at Oxford brookes. We must also thank Heather for the work she has done with our young adults Routz, they have met regularly in the Rectory and around the place and Heather has lead the group and encouraged them as they grow. If they are to continue to grow then she will need some extra help.

Shemil and I have gone into the schools at Croughton and Charlton each week to take a themed assembly and have enjoyed services in church at the start and end of a term. We have also enjoyed inviting the school children at Croughton into church to experience Easter, Pentecost and Harvest, in practical and exciting ways. We also have a team who read the younger children bible stories going under the name of 'Open the Book'. If you would like to join please let me know.

We have also had the fun of the summer holiday club with two special guests from CSI in Melbourne and are very grateful to the head and governors at Croughton school for allowing us to use it in the summer and for all the other thirty strong team of helpers.

Our churches have also seen regular use this year with all but one church having at least three Sunday services each month and then sharing worship with the other churches on the fourth Sunday. Also there is daily prayer in our churches during the week, to which everybody is invited. We have had 20 weddings and blessings and 8 baptisms in our churches, and many funerals as well.

Over 30 people have met regularly for bible studies (Cuppa and Chat) during Lent and autumn and other meet all year round. So as you see, there has been a lot going on and even more to come in 2017.

So if you are thinking about what you might do to grow your faith, or what you might do for your church and also for your community. There are many ways to help and much to be done. But thank you one and all for all your heard work in 2016.

May God Bless us all in the coming year. Simon

