

Firstly, I'd like to thank the Parish Council for inviting me on behalf of the Parochial Church Council to present St. Mary's 2025 Summary.

All four churches in the benefice have an established pattern of Sunday worship with Holy Communion.

Sunday worship at Lt B is at 11am on the 4th Sunday of the month. Attendance remains static at between 11-20 including support from our sister parishes.

We also thank the Parish Council for allowing the use of the new Village Hall for post service refreshments.

Life Events 2025

Baptisms 0, Weddings 0, Internment 1

Parish Share

The Parish Share continues to be our biggest financial challenge.

The Diocese requested £7,000 from us in 2025, we managed to pay £3,000.

Church Interior

The PCC have been exploring ways to sensitively improve the interior of the church so it may better serve the community.

Initial proposals are:

The removal of the dilapidated organ alongside some back pews and 2 rows of choir pews.

On 5th March we received a visit from various members of the Diocese, alongside representation from Suffolk Church Buildings, Historic England and English Heritage all were very supportive of our ideas.

Churchyard Care and Upkeep

The churchyard is very large for such a small parish and previously has been extremely difficult to manage. We are grateful that we now have The Probation Service, Community Payback Team helping us to maintain this large area on a regular basis.

Reclaim the Rain

This is a project run by Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils to test new ways of managing water in small rural locations. Lt Blakenham were one of the three villages chosen for the project and the PCC have received a new bench at the front of the church alongside 3 water SUDs Pods (x1 at the front and 2 at the back) from the project

PCC Village Events

February - Annual Snowdrop Event and April - Annual Bluebell Event at Blakenham Woodland Garden in aid of Lt Blakenham and Nettlestead Churches

We are grateful to Marcia Blakenham for her ongoing support of both Lt Blakenham and Nettlestead Churches through the Snowdrop and Bluebell events. These events witness both parishes coming together with many people from both parishes playing a part in the very successful baking and running of the events.

Annual Village Fete and Dog Show - The Old Rectory Garden,

July witnessed the Annual Village Fete in aid of Little Blakenham Church Fabric Fun. We are so grateful to Julia Buckmaster for her continued support of this popular village event by making her garden available to us.

The Three Cordettes

August witnessed an evening with The Three Chordettes, a 1940's/50's Jazz and Swing group. The event venue was supported by Marcia Blakenham and held in the Amphitheatre inside the Woodland Garden. The event was in aid of Little Blakenham Fabric Fund and supported very well from near and far.

Christmas Bazaar

November witnessed the annual Christmas Bazaar held in the church and Rev Eric Falla in full swing playing Christmas carols via his speaker system

Christmas Eve Service 6pm

Over the last 4 years this service more than any other has witnessed the engagement of the community and reflects a full church each year. Post service neighbours and visitors alike have an opportunity to know each other while refreshments including warm mulled wine are served

Finally

As previously mentioned, the PCC are not only grateful to Marcia Blakenham and Julia Buckmaster for their continued support allowing us to use their properties for the venues. The biggest appreciation however goes to all those from our community and beyond who support us so well at these events whether it is behind the scenes or attending an event.

Finally, the PCC we give many thanks to Steve Wright, who without his help and support, none of these village events would happen.

Michele Kenningale
St. Mary the Virgin
Churchwarden.