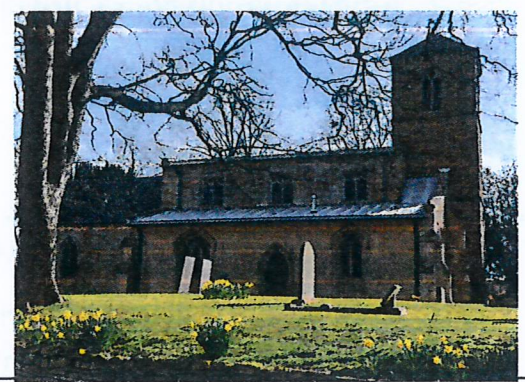
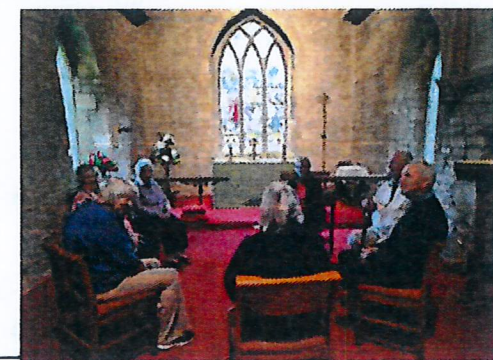
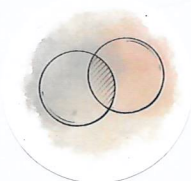


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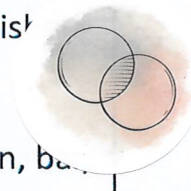
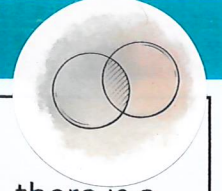
Who are you?

- Part of Melton Mowbray Team parish- with St Mary's Melton, St James' Burton Lazars, St Bartholomew's Welby, St Leonard's Sysonby and St Mary's Freeby.
- A small village situated on the A607 Grantham Road just north of Melton.
- We offer a warm welcome
- We enjoy a range of services – eucharistic, service of the word and 'special' services on a theme. Lay involvement with reading and intercessions but at present most services are led by the acting rector, retired clergy, a pioneer or lay reader.
- A faithful but ageing congregation
- 37 on the electoral roll. Average attendance on a Sunday 20.



Where have you come from?

- The church dates from circa 1200. It is set in an attractive churchyard. Inside, there is a mix of pews and seats with a capacity of about 100.
- We have a strong band of bell ringers who ring the five bells for most services.
- The chancel provides space for quiet, contemplative services or study groups.
- Water has to be fetched from the hall for refreshments.
- Recent renovations include replacing the roof after a lead theft, new guttering and drainage was installed at the same time. The clerestory windows have been refurbished and the porch repaired.
- Church owned Village hall – provides a strong link between the church and community. (disabled access and toilet, warm, fully fitted kitchen, bar, wifi).
- We are working towards net zero but need to upgrade our electric supply to three phase, replace our poor lighting and eventually replace noisy gas heaters. All this comes at a very high cost.
- Our congregation pull together and work hard but has shrunk in the last few years due to people moving away or dying. We no longer have Sunday schools or youth groups as in the past. We are grateful to our Pioneer who leads a weekly 'Come and Grow' group for carers and pre school children. She also runs a Fresh Expression of church; 'Gathering and Travelling' aimed at families.



Where are you going?

- We want to share God's love with all we meet both in church & in the wider community.
- To be an inclusive church and provide a welcome all.
- We would like to do more outreach to those who come to us for occasional offices.
- To develop school contacts and work with young families.
- We want to grow deeper in our discipleship
- To develop lay leadership especially associate ministers to lead worship and develop our pastoral role to our congregation and beyond.



What are you doing now?

- Weekly services at 9:45am
- Currently we work with: bell ringers, churches together, a new housing estate, the village community, parish council, deanery, Child Contact Scheme & other community initiatives, Waltham – bellringers, bio diversity, Saturday morning at St Mary's, working with Gathering & Travelling (FEx)
- Bronze Eco award
- We are good at offering a range of social events including: coffee mornings, Come and Grow (carers and preschool children), bar and film nights.
- Much of our energy is spent on maintaining the building and the finances when we would like to focus more on mission and outreach.



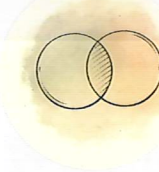
Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

- We have a committed, faithful congregation who offer a warm welcome to those coming into the church.
- Pioneer led Fresh Expressions of Church providing a meaningful experience for families.
- We are working better as a team parish and sharing in both services and outreach.
- We work with Churches Together in Melton Mowbray providing support to the Foodbank and the Child Contact Centre.



What are you fearful about?

- That we are not providing enough for new and younger Christians
- That with less people available to lead services, we will end up without a weekly service.
- Too many churches bound together without clear leadership or direction.
- Stipendiary clergy overworked, unable to build relationships with congregations or communities due to physical distances between church.
- That without strong leadership across the Minster Community some lay leadership might struggle.
- That many of the smaller churches will have to close and there will be communities without an obvious Christian presence.



What are you hopeful for?

- That we will grow deeper and in numbers enabling us to reach out.
- That we have a choir back for Christmas.
- That Fresh expressions bring more people to our church, even if it's not on a Sunday.
- That we have new lighting and heating matching our drive to be Eco friendly.
- Disabled access to the church

How you can pray for us.

- As part of a Minster Community should we continue to maintain our ancient church building? A huge amount needed to upgrade access, heating and lighting. Should we continue, move to the hall or close and join other congregations?
- That the Minster Community will enable teams to work together providing the skills and strengths to minister to new and faithful Christians, young and old from all backgrounds.



Who are you?

Sound building setting, church has new roof which is in reasonable condition

Strong partnership with Twyford Church and other churches in the SWF group

Part of the SWF Group, working with 15 other Parish Churches, with shared administration

Providing Christian presence in the community for life's changes

**Where have you come from?**

The South Croxton Group Benefice was formed, as others at that time at in the Framland Deanery, at the beginning of the 1990's. It is made of the communities of Ashby Folville, Barsby, Beeby, Gaddesby, John O'Gaunt, South Croxton, Thorpe Satchville and Twyford.

For half of the groups existence, it has been a member of the South West Framland Group.

Each village sending a member to be part of the Group Council of 16 churches working closely with each other and sharing a central administration based in the benefice at Twyford Parish Church vestry.

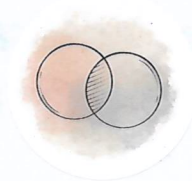
The benefice has experience of working collaboratively with others and the Minster Community documents produced identify in an honest and open way a desire to continue doing that.

Where are you going?**What are you doing now?**

Providing Christian presence in the community for life's changes

Village hosts monthly prayer group with attendees across the SWF parishes

Services continued in absence of Vicar



Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

Really good supporters from who help in lots of different ways, prayer groups, flowers arrangers, cleaning church and financial contributions

Church popular for weddings and funerals because of attractive setting with lots of space for graves in large churchyard

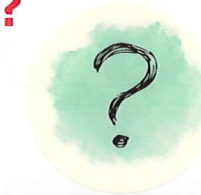
Good support from Pioneer Curate whose services are popular with villagers

Regular annual contributions made to parish share from committed villagers

Great support ecclesiastical knowledge and support

A strong faith and church unity

Village Hall close by with excellent facilities and activities (toilet can be opened for services)

What are you fearful about?**What are you hopeful for?**

Trained lay members to assist

New members of the church community

Pray for Vicar's recovery

Pray for greater flexibility of worship and services

How you can pray for us.

Trained lay members to assist

New members of the church community

Pray for Vicar's recovery

Pray for greater flexibility of worship and service

1

Church name: Holy Trinity Church Thrussington

Date: 23/04/2023

Who are you?

We are a small rural church with an active community that is proactive. We are actively fundraising and developing a structure for outreach

Where have you come from?

We have had a difficult journey
The impact of the 20:20 project that meant that we lost ½ a post and the impact of COVID has had a significant impact on our church
The lack of heating and the structural problems with the stone work has brought many challenges and difficulties
Not having a vicar also brings significant challenge and difficulty
We have experienced a very unsettled period under the previous vicar and we are working hard to re-build faith and the congregation.

Where are you going?

We are driving forward with a renewed and re-invigorated and open perspective.
We are driving forward in faith but with baby steps, perseverance and in prayer.

What are you doing now?

We are building back up to restore what we had.
We are opening up to the community and looking more broadly about the definition of church and what that looks like for Holy Trinity Church Thrussington and our Parish.

Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

The cooperation within the church. Bringing the community together through fundraising and running the church without a vicar and church event.

What are you fearful about?

Losing a regular service scheduled that risks us losing our existing congregation.
The pressure on individuals / clergy
The focus being taken away from mission and outreach.

What are you hopeful for?

A settled period of growth, survival and peace. A light at the end of the tunnel.

How can others pray for you?

Who are we referring to as us?

Who are you?

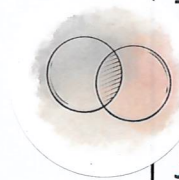
Member of the South West Framland Group Council
(working together with other churches).

Administrative Centre for SWF

Attend services at other local churches on occasions.

Work with other churches who are members of the South
West Framland Group.

Host, in the vestry, the office for the SWF group
administrator. Broadband and telephone connections soon
to be installed.

**Where have you come from?**

The South Croxton Group Benefice was formed, as others at that time at in
the Framland Deanery, at the beginning of the 1990's.

It is made of the communities of Ashby Folville, Barsby, Beeby, Gaddesby,
John O'Gaunt, South Croxton, Thorpe Satchville and Twyford.

For half of the groups existence, it has been a member of the South West
Framland Group.

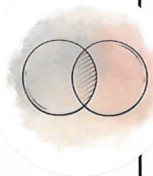
Each village sending a member to be part of the Group Council of 16 churches
working closely with each other and sharing a central administration based in
the benefice at Twyford Parish Church vestry.

The benefice has experience of working collaboratively with others and the
Minster Community documents produced identify in an honest and open way
a desire to continue doing that.

Where are you going?

Congregation consists of three elderly women (the complete
PCC) and occasionally up to three others. Therefore, hardly
anyone to assist with festivals and services where furniture
needs rearranging.

More younger people to take an interest but this means an
attitude change by the wider church.

**What are you doing now?**

Holds services for Harvest and Christmas (carols) annually and
Remembrance and Easter on a rotational basis

Cleaning and flower rota involving local residents.

Churchyard mowing rota involving local residents.

Bell-ringing group which practices weekly and rings at other
churches in the area.

Oil-fired central heating which offers a warm venue for winter
services.

Clock-winding rota involving local residents

Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

Holds services for Harvest and Christmas (carols) annually and Remembrance and Easter on a rotational basis

What are you fearful about?**What are you hopeful for?****How you can pray for us.**

1

Church name: St. Mary Magdalene Waltham on the Wolds

Date: April 15th 2023

Who are you?

- Rural Anglican Church, one of Benefice of 6, central to village, N.E. Leicestershire
- Mixed church community, 'traditional'/older, fresh expressions/younger
- Hard-working lay workers
- People of God, looking to reach out
- Only church in village
- C of E school in the village

Where have you come from?

- 20 years ago: old-fashioned, dusty, pew-filled building with small, ageing, mostly inward-looking congregation
- Traditional Sunday services: Communion, family worship
- Static elderly demographic
- Historically valued grade 1 listed building: 13th to 21st century
- Project almost ten years ago to remove pews, level floor, install servery and toilet
- Aim to retain heritage and make a space suitable for current needs
- Created flexible space
- Emerging from Covid: breakfast café, Messy Church, Starlight Night stopped and new things explored
- Adapting to growth of new housing estates
- Mission vital
- Building Kingdom of God more important than denomination

Where are you going?

- Engaging wider community of Waltham
- Making friends
- Looking outward
- Breaking down barriers and becoming more welcoming
- Bringing God's Kingdom to this area
- Becoming the hub of the community
- Continuing to build on our accessibility to our local groups/school and our welcoming ethos
- Being salt and light

What are you doing now?

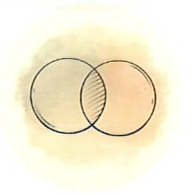
- Benefitting from multi-use user friendly space
- Forward thinking
- Attracting new people into church building through community café and craft club
- Variety of services (Communion, Village Morning Worship, Café Church, weekly prayer service for healing) to sustain the Christian needs of the diverse demographic of a growing village
- Daily open access
- Running courses to explore faith
- Listening/looking for new opportunities
- Celebrating events: Jubilee, Coronation
- Raising funds for charities other than church
- School Messy Fiestas
- Book/jigsaw lending
- Film nights
- Retaining heritage

Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

- In relationships being formed as new/young families settle in the village and older people retire
- In pastoral care and prayer offered for people new to the village and established villagers.
- In evangelistic courses offered
- In village school: more faith focus in Messy Fiestas and teachers more engaged
- In people being interested in learning about faith and being more comfortable in discussing the Bible in café church and courses
- In people from new estates being welcomed to community café and craft club
- In children being welcomed at events
- In enabling the watching world to see/experience what church is for (not just what it is against as shown in the media)
- In God being very visible members of our church community
- In a quiet corner where God's love and peace can be sought and felt
- In our congregation, who show love and faith by listening and/or doing
- Church specific noticeboards advertising open access, services, displays enabling us to share/seek the kingdom of God

What are you fearful about?

- Insufficient finances
- The too few workers become burned out/discouraged
- Relevance of church to its immediate community being diluted in addressing the needs of other worthy but distant communities, with less common ground
- Fewer people willing to work as volunteers or take on roles to encourage others/help make things happen to keep the church looking outward.
- Continued decline
- Clergy numbers/capacity to do what is being asked
- Inability of church to change fundamentally
- Not using resources, people, money to best effect
- Lack of focus
- Same people supporting things
- Low transfer between community support and church
- How to address the effects of apathy and negativity in wider society
- Negative effects of fear of change amongst deep-seated traditions and ways of being
- That the needs of our small communities are not valued within the church hierarchy
- As we get older, no-one to take over of PCCs and as churchwardens
- Many people today do not see themselves as God's family
- Good things will not be carried forward



What are you hopeful for?

- Stronger worshipping community
- More local Christians becoming involved in church outreach and prayer
- That seeds planted will come to fruition
- That people will grasp the vision of the Church
- That others will step up to assist
- Growth in disciples
- More lay leaders emerge
- Look out rather than in.
- Look to Eco Church, Fair Trade and Food Banks and mean it
- That change will bring resources to address fears.
- That our rector/vicar-led communities will not disappear
- That we will take pride in our traditional church while continuing to change positively
- That we do not dilute our core values
- That people are not put off by the administration of a large Minster Community and lack of services

How you can pray for us.

- More workers and more pray-ers
- Seeds planted will come to fruition
- Greater confidence in the gospel message and its ability to change lives
- Grasp the vision of the Church
- Others will step up to assist
- That we can seek out what God wants us to do, embrace change and reach out.
- To be able to articulate our fears and know what to hope for.
- To pray that a positive approach to change inhabits our community
- However, whatever, wherever you feel, you can think of us, our wider locality, nation and world and not diminish our place in that.

1

Church name: St Michael & All Angels, Wartnaby

Date:

Who are you?

St Michael & All Angels, Wartnaby.
Small congregation of generally older people with a large proportion not living in the village



Where have you come from?

The church dates C1190 surrounded by farmland. Wartnaby became the property of the Knights Templar and afterwards of the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem from 1231 to 1540. The village and land surrounding the church was then owned by several prominent families who dominate the churchyard.



Where are you going?

We have Holy Communion on first and fourth Sundays.
Small but dedicated congregation/PCC.
Connections to the wider community/other churches as the village becomes smaller in terms of permanent residents.

What are you doing now?

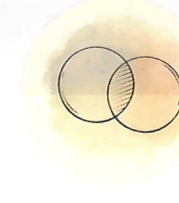
Our focus, sadly, like many churches is balancing the books and struggling through red tape in order to stay open. This takes up most of our energy as support from the main body of the church seems to get ever further away as pastoral care for us as a church/congregation had virtually disappeared up until our current priest arrived recently.

Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

We have a new priest who is a lot more active and interested in supporting us.

We have a dedicated PCC who have faith.

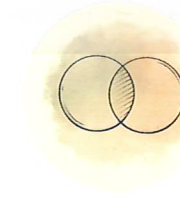
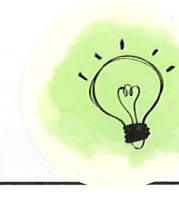
We have a lot of visitors who come to our church and discover Gods house is open.



What are you fearful about?

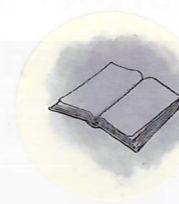
The spiral of decline to continue in attracting people into our church to take over from us as an ageing PCC/congregation.

Decline in donations as people who support the church financially either die, move away or can't afford to keep up with donations.



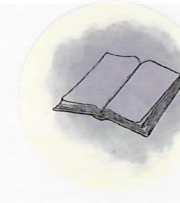
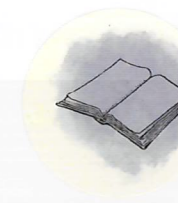
What are you hopeful for?

A new spiritual awakening that will reenergize us.



How you can pray for us.

Hold each other in prayer and hope that this initiative will be the starting point for action.



Who are you?

We are St Bartholomew's Church, Welby a small medieval building located in fields on the northern edge of Melton Mowbray. We have no local community and draw our small elderly congregation from Melton Mowbray. We are part of the Melton Team Parish.



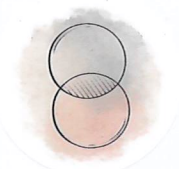
Sadly, when the elderly community gets less & less the church may have to close!

Where have you come from?

Our church dates from the 12th Century and is the only remaining building from the deserted medieval village of Welby. In recent years we have held regular services and have held occasional Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals. Our churchyard is open for burials and we have a Garden of Remembrance for ashes. In 2013 we secured Heritage Lottery Funding to carry out a major refurbishment of the Church and to lease land for a church car park.

Where are you going?

We continue to nurture our small but loyal elderly congregation who come to join in our regular (twice a month) services from the BCP.

**What are you doing now?**

We continue to look after the upkeep of our medieval building and small surrounding churchyard and to provide regular services at 3.00pm on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month for a dwindling congregation.



We have formed an Eco group to look after the churchyard and to make our congregation aware of climate issues. We have recently planted three new trees. We have this year received an Eco Church Silver Award. We are fortunate to benefit from giving/donations, regular and occasional, from a number of people who do not attend our services but who wish to contribute to upkeep of the church.

Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

We are a friendly group who appreciate the services provided from the BCP. The fact that we have no local community means we are hampered for local outreach or support. We have on occasions supported the Foodbank in Melton Mowbray, eg at Harvest last year we 'filled our font' to overflowing with tinned and packaged foods for the foodbank rather than bringing the traditional fresh produce for decoration and auction. We have been moved to form an Eco group.



What are you fearful about?

As part of a Team Parish it can sometimes be difficult to staff services at all five churches in the Parish and as a small church with no immediate local community we worry about a reduction in services or even closure of our church. With the advent of Minster Communities it seems ministry (ordained and lay) is likely to be further stretched.



What are you hopeful for?

To increase our congregation, hopefully including younger folk and children from the new housing estates being built on the northern edge of Melton Mowbray.

Hope that is achievable to keep the church open



How can others pray for you?

We can pray for all those involved in the exploration of the Minster Communities in our area to have understanding and wisdom leading to a successful outcome.



Who are you? We are **Windmill Forest Church**; a fresh expression of Church based in Bottesford and licensed via a Bishop's Mission Order. Windmill is a registered charity and is led by a self-supporting Pioneer Minister, supported by a small group of trustees. Our Bishop's Visitor is Archdeacon Richard Worsfold and we also work closely with Rev Crystal McAllister, Ordained Pioneer Minister.

Windmill Forest Church is run in partnership with a local Forest school provider, A Little Bit Wilder Ltd, to create an outdoor space in local woodland where children and their parents can explore God's creation and learn more about faith and God. We hope to be a Church where everyone is **accepted and included**.



Where have you come from?

Windmill began as a **fresh expression** of church in 2012 when we were known as 'Sunday Praise' and part of St Mary's Church in Bottesford. We started as a band-led contemporary church service with a heart for outreach and youth. Over the years our community grew and in 2019, we were licensed by Bishop Martyn as a separate church via a Bishop's Mission Order. Through this process, we chose to change our name to Windmill to reflect our vision to be a church community turned and led by the blowing of the **Holy Spirit** (as the sails of a Windmill are turned by the wind). Following the pandemic, we re-imagined our families work and began hosting Forest Church sessions as a trial. We found that the **outdoor** setting, and the practical, fun activities we can offer there, enabled our families to explore faith in a way that was more accessible to them. In February 2023, due to the early retirement of a leader, we made the decision to focus solely on Forest Church and close the remaining indoor worship gatherings associated with Windmill.

Where are you going?

Windmill Forest Church currently supports 30 local children and their parents. We have grown unexpectedly through **families** inviting each other and a key focus for us now is how to make room for more children, so that we can continue to support those we have already, alongside offering room for more to join us. We are particularly keen to develop provision for older children within our gatherings, as we recognise that these young people have differing needs to those in pre and primary schools, and that we need to have a teenage provision for our current year 6/7 cohort to move into as they grow.

We seek to be a church where people deepen their **discipleship** and as such, we are starting weekly faith-based discussion groups for our current parents and carers to further build connections and faith. We are also discussing options for group events in the holiday periods to develop our sense of **community**.

What are you doing now? We currently meet once a month in a woodland setting, usually on a Sunday afternoon between 1.30-3.30pm. All our sessions are themed, and we mark the main events of the Christian calendar. We now have an established partnership with our forest school provider, and we interweave **faith** through worship songs, prayers, a short interactive talk and activities linked to the theme. Our aim is to make church **accessible** to all and we have many children and adults with special educational needs and disabilities who can find traditional church difficult. We aspire to be an inclusive church community where everyone is valued, respected and honoured whether they are of no faith, spiritual seekers or Christians.

We have recently been blessed with 4 new trustees and now have a strong leadership team of 8 people. Through this process, we have tried to ensure that all parts of our church community are **represented** within our leadership team.

Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

- Number of new families joining us, meaning we are currently full (30 children)
- Families who are not Christians being willing to join and open to explore
- Togetherness in activities, friendships emerging between children and parents, sense of community and family being fostered
- 4 new trustees willingly joining the Church
- Some parents beginning to want to ask questions and to seek to know more about the Christian faith

What are you fearful about?

- Not being able to accommodate everyone who would want to come (we have not advertised, yet have grown through invitation)
- That if we grow too big, the experience and care of the current membership may be diluted
- Maintaining the running costs
- Losing our current teenagers and year 6/7 young people

What are you hopeful for?

- We are looking to start evening and daytime small groups in the summer to support parents who are asking questions and wanting to seek more depth.
- That we can develop an exciting and age-appropriate teenage provision so we can retain and attract this age group
- For more people to hear about Windmill
- To continue to nurture and build community within our current membership of Forest Church

How you can pray for us.

- For our small groups to flourish and for faith to grow
- That we can grow Christian leaders from within our membership
- For financial provision
- For our plans for a teenage provision to prosper, and for additional funding to enable this to happen
- For us to be able to manage our growth in a planned and sustainable way

Who are you?

A tiny community, 4 very small villages with 3 closed churches. Only Wyfordby still operating. Most of those engaging with the church from Wyfordby & Brentingby, but we also attract visitors from local parishes & others with historic links to the church (e.g Birmingham, Sleaford). No school or any form of communal building in any of the villages; few children.

Supporters/worshippers include those with active Faith (including Catholic and Methodist) but many without. No pool of retirees to help run the church, nearly all working, some of us farming and basically PCC = 2 people.

Where have you come from?

Saxon origins, medieval expansion; simple, very rural origins. A history of struggle, closure and resurrection. Abandoned in 1950's, re-opened in 1960's after a massive effort by locals. Closed early in the Millennium for a short period and re-opened by a small but dedicated group. Just finding our feet when devastated by the WHOLE of our lead roof was stolen in 3 visits in 2015-16. Struggled ever since, but 2/3 of roof now replaced so at least we can hold services and fund raising events in the dry, even though the pews are out of bounds due to decay.

Where are you going?

We do NOT want this church to die on our watch, determined to keep it open. With no other community building, the church is the only public place that people can get together socially, which is so important in isolated rural communities. We would like to continue as an active church with Worship but also to re-order the building in order to facilitate community use and develop an improved church tourism offer, but in the short term we have to focus on completing the roof replacement.

What are you doing now?

We have 6 -7 services per year, at which we always offer refreshments, sometimes a full meal, bringing the community together. We hold a monthly coffee morning in the summer, with sales of plants, books, local produce etc. Occasional events eg Flower Festival, Christmas Crafts, Heritage Day. Church not open all the time (which we would like); inhibited by rotten pews/roof situation & need for re-ordering which threatens our survival.

Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

In the willingness of the community to work together to keep the church open. In the fellowship of our friends, many are not active Christians but still take time out to visit and support us. In seeing the joy that serendipitous meetings between total strangers can bring as a result of the church being there and being open and welcoming.

What are you fearful about?

Insufficient funds to safeguard our church building & its place in our community as well as being able to 'pay our way' in the Diocese. Losing our much loved & supportive priest-in-charge. Losing community support needed for viable future-we are very thin on the ground & getting tired. Villages not likely to expand. Diocesan lack of understanding of the importance of church buildings as well as Church in isolated rural communities.

What are you hopeful for?

Finding the time/energy to secure enough grant / funds to complete roofing and re-ordering that would secure the building for the future and widen its use and subsequently our financial position. Not having sleepless nights constantly worrying about the church building any more
More volunteers – we are only 2 miles from Melton but the Melton church 'family' seems to ignore other local villages

How can others pray for you?

In whatever way they feel best! We shouldn't need to tell people 'how' they can pray for us!