

PARISH PROFILE

FOR THE PARISHES OF

ALRESFORD



FRATING with THORRINGTON

November 2008

Please note that this is an edited version of the full profile with some of the appendices removed. The full profile is available from Bishop Christopher of Colchester.

Diocese of Chelmsford

St Andrew's - Alresford

St Mary Magdalen – Frating with Thorrington

A New Beginning

The retirement of the incumbent of St Andrew's in August 2008 has given an opportunity to take one step in a long-standing Deanery Plan. This involves a separation of the parishes making up the present benefice of Great Bentley and Frating with Thorrington, with the latter then joining its neighbour Alresford.

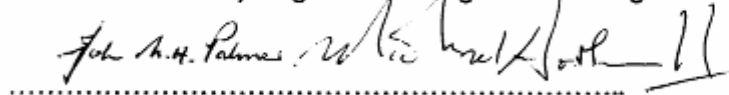
The new benefice of Alresford and Frating with Thorrington will comprise 3,740 people (2001 Census) and two churches, one modern and the other 13th century. Unusually neither parish has churches or chapels of other denominations within its boundary; a situation enabling St Andrew's to be the first church in the diocese to be recognised as a "Church of Ecumenical Welcome".

Whilst our two parishes have embraced the opportunity to begin working together, so far contact between us has been quite informal. The planning for the separation of Frating with Thorrington from Great Bentley has taken place with an incumbent still in post, although it is expected he will have taken his last service in Frating with Thorrington in early January 2009. Effectively this Profile represents the work of one parish in an interregnum and another still with its minister. It thus is an account of work in progress and represents only the beginnings of our journey together. Whilst the main body of the Profile contains separate statements from the two parishes, the introduction and the statement of needs have been produced collaboratively and agreed by both our PCCs. Applicants for the new post can be assured that we both recognise the potential of this new union and are excited by its possibilities. Under God we believe that many new things will be possible. The gender of applicants will not be an issue for either of us.

On behalf of
St Andrew's - Alresford PCC



On behalf of St Mary Magdalen - Frating with Thorrington PCC



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St Andrew's - Alesford **St Mary Magdalen – Frating with Thorrington**

Our Needs

We seek an incumbent who will be able to build on our strengths, help us in areas of need, and further the Christian message in a lively way, becoming fully involved in parish life both in our respective church families and in our communities more generally. We believe that together we have much to offer and we look for a person who will encourage and enable our parishes to work together in partnership so that we can make God's Kingdom more real to our communities.

The areas where we both believe we need help and encouragement are:

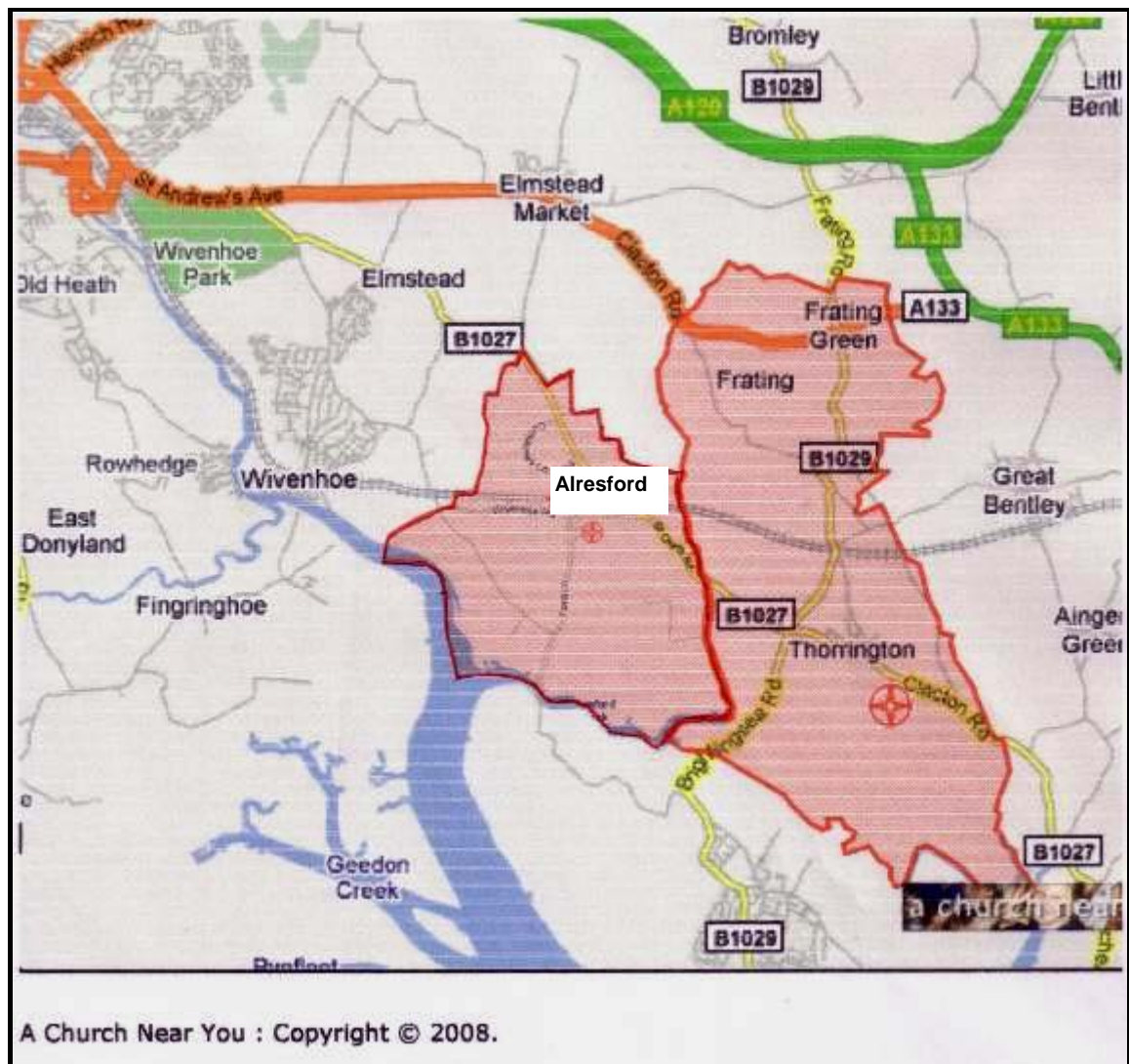
- ❖ our focus on our broad vision and strategy and the activities involved
- ❖ our corporate prayer
- ❖ our outreach to the established community, in particular to young families
- ❖ our contacts with newcomers to the community
- ❖ our pastoral and healing ministries
- ❖ identifying opportunities for a “fresh expression” of church

The new incumbent will be a person who:

- ❖ is a challenging teacher able to make the Bible relevant to today
- ❖ is comfortable with and promotes a variety of worship styles
- ❖ has strategic focus
- ❖ is ready to build on our strengths and attend to our needs
- ❖ is committed to lay involvement at all levels
- ❖ has an ability to work with young people in different situations
- ❖ has an enthusiasm for the ecumenical ethos of our church families

For our part, our church families aim to give enthusiastic encouragement and support, using the gifts which God so graciously provides to develop further our shared ministry to our communities.

Composite Map of the parishes forming the new benefice



Populations	
2001 Census	
Alesford	2130
Frating	550
Thorrington	1060
Total	3740



Parish Profile

Alesford

St Andrew's

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St Andrew's Church - Risen from the Ashes

Our vision

To draw closer to God and each other so that we may more ably bring his love to the world.

St Andrew's came into being in 1976 following the destruction by fire of the original village church in 1971.

After that momentous event, and after being a parish on our own since records began, we look forward to another new beginning as we form a benefice with the united parishes of Frating with Thorrington.

In Alresford we are a church family with a living faith, growing in prayer, learning to be imaginative in worship, and striving to respond to God's call to be effective in ministry and evangelism. We believe that with God's help we have faithfully served Him in our community and the wider world. In prayer we continue to seek new ways to engage with our community. The P.C.C. is currently studying "Mission-Shaped and Rural" by Sally Gaze.

We are a family-orientated church, still privileged to have children and young people in our midst, and it is important to us that the new incumbent will support this ministry as well as our links with the local primary school and pre-school.

Since 1976 there have been periods when church membership has grown and others when it has been less buoyant. Yet in the last fifteen years, three members have become non-stipendiary priests, another a full-time stipendiary priest, and one more left us only recently to train for the full-time ministry. Another member has been licensed as a Reader and others have completed the Course in Christian Studies designed by the Chelmsford Diocese.

To complete this picture there are former members in full-time missionary work overseas, in full-time Christian youth work and in hospital chaplaincy in this country, and strong links with overseas missions generally, including one in Romania.

Being the only church in a very large village it will be crucial that we have a minister happy to engage fully with that community and to guide and support our efforts in mission to it.

In return we, as the church family, aim to give enthusiastic encouragement and support, offering the gifts which God has so graciously provided to uphold our new incumbent's ministry amongst us.



Introduction

The parish of St. Andrew's, Alresford is located 7 miles to the east of Colchester in North East Essex. It is close to the A12 giving access to London and the South, and to the A14 giving access to the Midlands and the North. The village is a mix of private and council housing (much now privately owned). There are approximately 870 dwellings in the village and a population of around 2100.

The church is located centrally in the village next to the Playing Field and the Village Hall and is the only place of worship in the village. As such, in 2006, St Andrew's was the first church in the Chelmsford Diocese to make a declaration of ecumenical welcome and commitment (Appendix 1).

The village has a direct rail link to London, Liverpool Street, and numbers of villagers use this link to commute to Chelmsford and London as well as to Colchester and Ipswich. There is little industry; the largest local employer is the Alresford Sand and Ballast Company.

The village is surrounded by mainly farmland with many beautiful walks. There is access to Alresford Creek and the Colne Estuary. The area has long established sand and gravel workings; many pits now form excellent fresh water lakes for angling clubs. The village is on the whole a quiet safe place to live and is located in the CO7 postcode area which has one of the lowest crime rates in Great Britain.

Close to the railway station are a number of village shops including a Post Office & General Store, Hairdresser, Butcher, Fish and Chip shop, and Chinese and Indian take-aways. Another General Store, which provides a newspaper delivery service, is on the main road. A very good Farm Shop is also on that road at the boundary with Elmstead.

The nearby town of Colchester, claims to be England's oldest recorded town, has many Roman remains and an impressive castle. Colchester has excellent shopping facilities, a successful theatre and many fine restaurants. It also houses the University of Essex and a large Army Garrison. Within a short drive are the seaside towns of Frinton, Walton-on-the-Naze and Clacton-on-Sea and the port of Harwich.

The local primary school has a good reputation and caters for children from Reception to Year 6. A pre-school is also on the site having relocated from the village hall several years ago. The previous incumbent was a welcome visitor to both the primary school and the pre-school, and St Andrew's is used by the school for special occasions such as harvest. A church member is helping with school assemblies during the interregnum. The local secondary school is The Colne Community School located in nearby Brightlingsea, but other schools such as Tendring Technology College, Colchester Royal Grammar School, Colchester County High School for Girls and St. Benedict's College (a R.C. church school) also take children from the village.



The Church Family

As St. Andrew's is the only church in the village, there are people from many different church and denominational backgrounds in the congregation. This has led to a wide range of knowledge and understanding of scripture, doctrine and vision. The ecumenical nature of the congregation and our ecumenical commitment means that speakers from various denominations and groups are welcomed and valued. St. Andrew's has evolved with a broad evangelical churchmanship, and welcomes the expression of everyone's spiritual gifts. Services make use of many liturgical sources but formal morning and evening prayer and communion services are all based on Common Worship. We use Songs of Fellowship with 1690 songs and hymns to choose from, as well as other contemporary sources.

We have a self-financing (non-stipendiary) associate minister serving his Title in the parish which sponsored him. He was ordained deacon in 2006 and priest in 2007 and as well as his commitment to St. Andrew's, teaches geography at a local catholic secondary school. For many years we have held permission from the Area Bishop for a local Methodist minister, living in the village and now retired, to preside at occasional Methodist communion services in St Andrew's. We also held permission for a Baptist minister, whilst he was full-time chaplain to the hospice in Colchester, to hold occasional services according to the Baptist rite. Two Readers with a good number of other church members participate in a rota to lead services and preach. Many more read lessons and lead intercessions. We feel that we have been very fortunate over the years, that God has blessed us with so many gifted people willing to be involved.

Many styles of worship are used at St. Andrew's, from liturgical to informal, and the congregation encompasses all ages. The Electoral Roll at the last A.P.C.M. was 111 with 20% not resident in the village. Around 70 adults usually attend the morning services. Twice a month the children leave for their own groups 15 minutes into the service, and once a month start separately but join later. Evening services are usually attended by around 20 - 30. Music is provided by a number of skilled pianists and guitarists as well as a worship band. There is a dance worship group which adds more variety. Pastoral Care has been provided by the clergy assisted by a lay member of the church family but is under review.



In recent years we have been humbled to realise that through God's Grace and the Holy Spirit we seem to be an equipping and sending church. Our encouragement of the use of spiritual gifts, as well as our ability to be flexible and outward looking, has led to an exceptionally high number of members hearing God's call to the ordained ministry. In the last fifteen years three members have become non-stipendiary priests, one a stipendiary priest, and one more left us only recently to train for the full-time ordained ministry. Another member has been licensed as a Reader in this time. Locally, members are involved with outreach groups in and around the area. Abroad, there are links with Romania through two church members who regularly lead aid missions to that country, and former church members are in the mission field in Senegal and Cambodia. All are supported by regular prayer as well as financially.

Alexandra House is a home in the village for men and women with learning disabilities. We are very blessed that several choose to worship regularly with us. We have also greatly enjoyed occasional services led by the residents of Alexandra House and by those from the Causeway group which supports such work in the Colchester area.

Children's Groups

Children's and Youth work is important to us. Whilst there is an adequate number of volunteer helpers, at times we have felt vulnerable and would welcome more. The current activities are:

Scramblers, our Parent and Toddlers group, meets on alternate Monday afternoons in the church from 2.00 p.m. to 3.15 p.m. in term-time, with tea, coffee and biscuits for the adults and craft activities, stories, songs, nursery rhymes and refreshments for the little ones.

Our **Sunday School** comprises **Discoverers** (3 - 10 yrs) and **Pathfinders** (11+ yrs). These groups normally join the morning service for the first 15 minutes and then, after a 5 minute slot in the service, led by one of the leaders, the children move to the adjacent Village Hall to continue their worship. This integration forms an important part of the life of the church and is seen very positively by the church family. On the first Sunday of every month a family service is held which the children are encouraged to attend. On the second Sunday the children start in the Village Hall but then move to St Andrew's to join in with the Communion Service and come to the rail for a blessing. Overall numbers on the register are about 30 with a regular attendance of around 20.

The **Youth Group** meets on a Sunday after the evening service and is a study group for teenagers meeting at the home of one of our church families. Some groups have been to "Soul Survivor".

Along with many other churches we have experienced a decline in the number of children from non-church families attending on Sundays. In 2001 a **Thursday Club** was started from 3.20 to 4.30 p.m. which children could attend on the way home after school. Whilst attendance was variable, it was always encouraging with a good number from non-church families. However, with clashes with other after-school activities and recent difficulties in ensuring continuity in leadership, the club has stopped for the moment. We continue to look for other possibilities.

IOU and other Groups

There are currently four IOU Groups, three meeting weekly in the evening and one fortnightly in the daytime. "Inward, Outward, Upward" (IOU) is the vision for these important groups which have some cell group characteristics with the facilitators meeting to coordinate activities. There are also two nurture groups meeting regularly for those from recent "Alpha" courses. A men's group formed recently with good support.

Alpha Courses

A number of courses have been held but not regularly. Recently the alternative "Christianity Explored" was tried but we have now reverted to "Alpha". The last two courses, although small in numbers, were very encouraging. The PCC has approved plans to offer an "Alpha4All" from 4.30 – 6.00 p.m. on Sundays in the new-year using a format which will encompass families with young children, and include tea afterwards.

Prayer

Corporate prayer is important to St Andrew's with a Co-ordinating Group meeting regularly to plan activities. Particular high-spots have been a 24/7 period of prayer over the 2007 New Year and a 24/2 period over the 2008 New Year. A day of prayer is planned for St Andrew's Day in November 2008. The weekly news sheet includes a prayer diary and a group prays before each morning service. A prayer card appears on the website with the prayer diary.

Church Events

The church building with its grounds lends itself to a variety of special events for the church family and the community, amongst which are Harvest Suppers, Passover Meals, Bring and Share Sunday Lunches, and Barbecues following Discoverers Prize-Giving. Occasionally, in the summer, there are Family Fun Days for the community, and at Ready-Steady-Christmas villagers can find gifts amongst the many craft items on show. None of these events aim to raise finances for the church.



The Community

St Andrew's is used by the primary school for a Harvest Celebration and by the local W.I. for a Carol Service. It is sometimes also used for public meetings. We host "police surgeries" with the local Police Community Support Officer in attendance. In the 1970s the church launched a village newspaper - "The Advertiser" - which still continues as a bi-monthly. Although no longer sponsored by St Andrew's, many members still help with distribution. Church Services and other special events get good coverage.

Website

St Andrew's has developed a website which can be found at www.alesfordchurch.net.

The Parochial Church Council

Since 2003 the P.C.C. has been meeting on Saturdays beginning with breakfast at 8.00 a.m. and finishing at 11.00 a.m. This completely changed the meeting dynamics and is described in an article "Revitalising the PCC", in "Making Connexions", the Resource provided for Parish Development in the Colchester Episcopal Area. (Appendix 2).

Links with the Diocese of Chelmsford

St. Andrew's has three lay representatives on St. Osyth Deanery Synod and joins fully in activities, including the twice-yearly Celebration Services. Two of the representatives are healing advisors to the deanery in a diocese-wide scheme; the other is a representative on Diocesan Synod and a member of the Bishop's Council and Finance Committee, being Chairman of the Budget Sub-Committee.

The Church Building

St. Andrew's is a modern church opened in 1976 following a major fire in the old church of St. Peter's some distance from the village. It is a modern, well equipped "A" frame style building. The main part of the church is a large multi-function area used for services, social events, a parent and toddler group, and occasional public meetings. Seating arrangements are flexible with chairs for up to 200 worshippers. Fan-assisted convector heaters provide warmth and comfort from a gas boiler in the external boiler house. Off the main area are a vestry, kitchen (soon to be re-fitted), toilets and store room. Recently an area was set aside using purpose-made screens to provide space for private prayer and prayers for healing, particularly after services

St Andrew's has a surfaced car park for around 20 cars with the Village Hall car park next door providing additional spaces. The Village Hall is used regularly on Sunday morning for our children's groups which start at the same time as the main service.

The fixtures and fittings in the church can be arranged to suit a variety of worship styles. Musical accompaniment is provided by an electronic piano (there is no organ) or a worship band using guitars, a keyboard and drums. There is a sound reinforcement system with three microphones coupled to an induction loop for the hard of hearing. A computer with digital projector enable liturgy, hymns and songs, to be displayed thus reducing the need for books. It is also used to project DVDs.



The church site is relatively large with a substantial grassed area adjacent to the building which is mowed regularly by church members so that it can be used for social functions such as barbecues, family fun days etc.

The recent Quinquennial Report (2003) required no major expenditure. The fascias and gutters needed replacement and this has just been done as has most of the minor work.

The church is therefore in a very good state of repair and requires little maintenance. The wooden floor is re-polished during an annual spring clean. The walls in the main area are un-rendered brick and need no maintenance. The inside of the roof is wood and was re-varnished some years ago whilst the lighting was improved more recently.

The Rectory is situated in St. Andrew's Close opposite the church and is a spacious four bedroomed house. It has a reasonably sized, well kept garden and a double garage with extensive additional parking. The mower used for the grass at St Andrew's has its home in the garage. The Rectory has a study just inside the front door which is used for most pastoral work. The fourth bedroom, however, would also be suitable as a study.

The old church ruin of St Peter's is situated half a mile outside the village. The incumbent has responsibility for the graveyard which is still used but the church ruins are the responsibility of Essex County Council. The graveyard includes a garden of remembrance. Occasional open-air services are held at St. Peter's in its quiet country setting.



Financial Position

The financial position of the church is essentially sound, although we do not have large reserves and giving by church members forms 85% of our annual income. The P.C.C. takes very seriously the need to pay its parish share in full. We pay the incumbents expenses in full and also tithe our general fund income to support Christian work at home and abroad. We are a Fairtrade church.

Over 80% of the parish income is received as planned giving, including the tax recovered. The P.C.C. maintains a Fabric Fund in which amounts are regularly set aside against future substantive repairs to the church fabric and equipment. The balance of this fund on 31st December 2007 was £10,614.

In budgeting for 2008 it was seen that finances were stagnating and the P.C.C. agreed a letter to all church members to be followed by a special Sunday sermon on financial stewardship and a separate presentation on diocese and parish finances. An increase in planned giving of at least £7,000 in a full-year resulted and illustrates the commitment of church members.

A summary of the income and expenditure over the last three years is given below. There is a full financial report in Appendix 3.

Financial Summary	2007 (£)	2006 (£)	2005 (£)
Receipts:			
Planned giving and tax refunds	40,215	39,846	40,483
Other	7,044	9,012	12,364
Total	47,259	48,858	52,847
Payments:			
Parish Share	31,980	29,172	28,188
Outward giving	5,801	5,336	5,567
Other	10,100	10,967	13,939
Total	47,881	45,475	47,694
Balance in hand at the end of year:			
General Fund	7,394	10,016	8,270
Other Funds	11,016	8,701	7,254

Church Services

The following services are held at St. Andrew's in a typical month:

Time	Type of Service	Weeks in which service is held
8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion (1662)	1 st Sunday
10.30 a.m.	Family Service Holy Communion Morning Worship	1 st Sunday 2 nd and 4 th Sunday 3 rd (&5 th) Sunday
6.30 p.m.	Evening Praise Holy Communion & Healing Service Youth Service Special Service	1 st , 2 nd and 4 th Sunday 3 rd Sunday 4 th Sunday (bi-monthly) (5 th Sunday)
There are, at present, no regular midweek services		

A full range of Special Services, as well as Festivals, is celebrated and supported well by the community. These include:

- Harvest Festival
- Discoverers and Pathfinders Prizegiving in July,
- Discoverers and Pathfinders Christingle Service,
- Carols by Candlelight including a choir,
- Bereavement Service on Remembrance Sunday evening

(On some of these occasions the church furniture is rearranged to face South rather than East to make full use of St Andrew's 200 seat capacity).

Mid-Week Meetings

Day	Time	Type of meeting
Monday	11.00 a.m	IOU group D (fortnightly)
Tuesday	8.00 p.m.	IOU group A (weekly)
Wednesday	7.00 p.m. 7.45 p.m.	IOU group B (weekly) IOU group C (weekly)

Children's Groups

Day	Time	Group
Sunday	10.30 a.m. 10.30 a.m. 8.00 p.m.	Discoverers - 3 to 11 years, in the Village Hall. Pathfinders - 11 years and above, in the Village Hall. Youth Group
Monday	2.00 p.m.	Scramblers - Mums and Toddlers group (Fortnightly)

Parish Profile

Frating with Thorrington

St Mary Magdalen

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St Mary Magdalen Church

Our Mission

We are an inclusive Christian community who have been commissioned by our baptism to use the gifts God gives us to:

- ❖ *TELL the good news of Jesus Christ*
- ❖ *TEACH, baptize and nurture new believers*
- ❖ *TEND for those in need*
- ❖ *TRANSFORM the unjust structures of society and*
- ❖ *TREASURE God's Creation*

in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Introduction

The villages of Thorrington and Frating lie south-east of Colchester in what the tourist authorities call the Tendring Peninsula of north Essex. They are attractive, if less than picturesque settlements on the road to the seaside resorts of Clacton, Walton and Frinton. The original parishes were joined in 1763 and St John's College, Cambridge became patrons of the united living. The well-attended annual Harvest Festival weekend is a reflection of the predominantly agricultural character of the area.

The medieval church of St Mary Magdalen is the only church in the parish. It stands beside the listed Thorrington Hall, about one mile to the east of Thorrington, amid fields and woodland at the end of a farm track off the B1027. Its isolation is due to Thorrington's history as a plague village which led to the relocation of the community. While Thorrington has a relatively clear identity with a post office, pub, village hall and church combining to form its social nucleus, Frating is a more diffuse community whose church



closed a generation ago. Services have been held in the Memorial Hall there but people make their own choice where to worship. The population of both villages (Thorrington's stood at 1,063 at the time of the 2001 Census, Frating's at 551) is 98.3 percent white. With the construction of new housing, population is rising. Unemployment in the Tendring region as a whole stands at 2 percent but deprivation does exist behind the lace curtains. An age profile indicates that about a third of residents are retired and about a fifth below the age of 20.

Little industry exists in either village. Neither may be described as a commuter village though some people do travel to London, Ipswich and Chelmsford for work as well as to the nearby towns of Colchester and Brightlingsea. Children generally attend the primary and junior schools in Brightlingsea, Great Bentley and Elmstead Market; the nearest secondary school is in Brightlingsea though a handful of pupils attend the Royal Grammar School and the County High for Girls, both in Colchester.

The Church Building

A record of the rectors of Thorrington begins in the mid-13th century. The main body of the church consists of a nave, chancel, north aisle and south porch, together with a 15th century west tower. The building was much restored in the 19th century, however, and the pews are mid-Victorian. Recent innovations include a kitchenette, a water supply, and a sound system, including a loop amplifier.

Although it has proved possible to draw a reasonably stable number to the church each Sunday for worship and to hold occasional baptisms, weddings and funerals, the primitive facilities have seriously hampered the potential of St Mary Magdalen as a centre of community life where such delights as concerts, fairs, educational events and exhibitions may be staged. Further, the Victorian restoration filled every available space with pews, making it difficult for people to gather in more than twos and threes. However, the installation of a screened-off kitchenette, which represents Phase 1 of a major attempt to bring the building into the 21st century, will make it more user-friendly. Pews have been removed from the west end of the north aisle to make way for it and to create a carpeted area with a circle of chairs and a table for meetings.



Phase 2 of our development plan is a self-composting toilet under the tower, the present chemical toilet in a shed beside the lych gate being less than convenient. The Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) has agreed in principle to its installation, subject to the submission of more detailed drawings in due course.

The PCC's commitment to these projects has caught the imagination of the local community and the parish council which donated half the proceeds (£1,194) to the church from their Village Day festivities last year. Our own challenge to connect with the wider community within and without the church walls is thus a two-way street.

The Church Family

As the only place of worship in these villages, we extend a warm ecumenical welcome to everyone on behalf of all Christian denominations. This was best exemplified when we greeted a number of people of different nationalities and fellowships who were accommodated at a temporary asylum reception centre in Thorrington in recent years. It would not be immodest to point out that they, in turn, invariably complimented us on our friendliness.



Services are held at 11am on Sundays, attracting a year-average congregation for 2007 of 34, of whom about one-third live outside the parish. Attendance is slowly declining, however. At the last count, the electoral roll stood at 53. Worship includes a family service on the third Sunday of the month. Unhappily, it attracts few children. There is a regular programme

of adult groups meeting in Thorrington for study, fellowship, and meditative prayer, and a calendar of social and fund-raising events. We have a fairly relaxed programme of church life and worship that embraces different traditions, but our instinct leads us along a broadly traditional, conservative path. We don't like our worship to be too informal; we do like it to be ordered. While churchmanship is hard to define in a church that tries to accommodate the needs of the entire community, it would not be inaccurate to say that our hearts are slightly on the low and evangelical side of central. The congregation is mainly elderly and includes people who have faithfully served the church here all their lives. The loving care of the churchyard and the faithfulness of our bellringers indicate their dedication to St Mary Magdalen. Equally, our support for the bereaved and the sick reflects our devotion to the community, as does our outreach ministry to the extremely elderly residents of the Quenby Care Home in Thorrington. Despite the age profile of the congregation, ours is a lively, cheerful fellowship that is blessed with much ingenuity in raising the funds necessary to keep the wolf from the door.



We have a lay reader, Valerie Catchpole, and there are retired clergy living nearby who are always willing to assist. Among our PCC members is Antoinette Barnard, a Lay Evangelist who is licensed to the parish although most of her ministry is in the Colne School, Brightlingsea, where she teaches, and in chaplaincy work in the town centre and the hospital in Colchester.

Ours is a particularly settled and close fraternity with pastoral connections that have been established over a long period, and there is a strong desire for our identity to be retained. The new incumbent would need to respect the traditions that continue to call parishioners to worship. Nevertheless, we admire the vigour apparent among our brothers and sisters at Alresford. We look forward to our union with them and pledge to keep open our minds to their experience, particularly where it encourages younger people to worship.

We look forward to the appointment of our new vicar, having been well served by the present incumbent, Rev Canon Bernard Metcalfe, Vicar of Great Bentley, for the past 15 years. The gender of the applicants is not an issue for us.

Financial Position

Our first priority has always been to pay our parish share to the diocese for our ministry, and this has been achieved for many years. The giving in the church, through planned giving, tax recovered and the weekly collection more than covers this, and amounts to 60% of our income.

Our annual income needs to be supplemented through fund raising to cover additional expenses to the fabric of the church. The installation of the kitchenette/meeting area is paid for but we now face the challenge of providing the toilet with a depleted fabric fund.

A full set of accounts for 2007 is included Appendix 4.

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Appendices

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Appendix I

Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome and Commitment

- 1) We, the Rector and people of St Andrew's are aware that St Andrew's is the only church in Alresford. And therefore we invite all Christians in Alresford to be as fully a part of our life and fellowship as they are able.

- 2) We invite those of Christian Traditions other than our own
 - ❖ To share in the ministry and mission of the Church in this community
 - ❖ To worship and, if baptised and communicant members of other churches, to receive Holy Communion at St Andrew's.
 - ❖ To be a part of the decision-making of the church and to contribute to a common fund for the mission and ministry of the wider church, in so far as their continued giving to another church will allow.

- 3) We undertake
 - ❖ To give pastoral care to those who desire it
 - ❖ To invite ministers of other churches to take part in leading worship
 - ❖ To incorporate the riches of worship of other traditions as appropriate
 - ❖ To include this ecumenical declaration as an integral part of the Parish Profile.

Palm Sunday
9th April 2006

Appendix 2

Revitalising the PCC

Saturday breakfast meetings lead to new sense of purpose

What was the problem with the PCC? It wasn't the members: there was an abundance of gifts and talents waiting to be harnessed, and attendance was pretty regular. So why did we no longer look forward to meetings?

A problem was that it had met for many years on a Friday evening so that those who commuted or had demanding jobs could attend and then look forward to a bit of a lie in on Saturdays. But so many members were tired when they arrived that by the time routine business had been seen to there was little enthusiasm for anything else. Consequently there was frustration that the parish was not making as much progress as it might.

A few PCC members met and after much sharing and prayer we decided to try moving the PCC to a Saturday morning starting at 8.00am with breakfast, moving on to business matters by around 9.00am and then major issues of mission and ministry by 10.00am (earlier if possible), finishing by 11.00am.

This approach has revitalised our PCC (and Rector!) and encouraging progress has been made.

It is clear that the breakfast has made a huge difference and we have enjoyed the fellowship at the beginning of the day when we are all fresh, rather than on a Friday night when people just want to put their feet up. Although the meeting is on a Saturday, we finish in good time for everyone to enjoy the rest of the day.

But what has really made the difference is the discipline needed to complete business matters in good time to make space for the much more stimulating issue of being church in the 21st century. We have entitled this *Emerging Church*. At the beginning the three of us who had first met to pray about and plan the new format gave presentations to stimulate small group discussions or open debate. Later, as we grew in confidence, other members of the PCC led sessions.

As our inspiration we used material and ideas from several sources, all opportunities available locally:

- A talk on Cell Church by Revd Bob Fuller
- A talk by Michael Moynagh on *Changing World – Changing Church*.
- The Charge to churchwardens by Ven Martin Wallace at the annual visitation

- A talk by Bishop Graham Cray on *Mission Shaped Church*
- The video *Restoring Hope in the Church* sent to all clergy at Easter 2003

In July 2003 the PCC issued a report to the whole church family entitled *Emerging Church – A New Vision for St Andrew's?* and invited responses for the next PCC meeting in September. We reported on what the PCC had been up to. We talked about the importance of prayer and small group activity and gave an idea of the sorts of things we might do to enable us to engage more with the local community. We recognised that as a church we were there to serve the community. We were very blessed as a fellowship in having a variety of skills and abilities amongst the membership.

The question was were we prepared to mobilise ourselves to take God's love and his message of salvation into a world full of seekers?

There was a really encouraging response which indicated that the PCC and the whole church family were undertaking this journey together.

Here is a taste of what has happened since

- A three day Flower Festival and Craft Fayre in the church and village hall in which every village organisation was invited to participate; many valuable contacts have been made as a result and will lead to other things
- At one PCC meeting we had a presentation from two young people who had just got back from a *Soul Survivor* week and this led immediately to the allocation of a Sunday evening each month at which they take sole responsibility for a Youth Service; this is going really well and has brought much blessing both to the young people who attend and to the adults who join in for the fun and for something different

A revitalised PCC has led to a revitalised congregation – Praise the Lord!

Canon Don Cardy, Alresford

V is for Vocation and Vision
Who in your parish will meet together to pray and discern what God has for you to do?

Appendix 5

The Diocese of Chelmsford – Its situation and interests

The diocese of Chelmsford, in terms of population, is the second biggest in the Church of England. It has 2.7 million people within its borders and is served by nearly 400 parishes. It stretches from Newham and the Royal docks development (and, yes, we are the Olympic diocese too!) through to the sandy east coast: and from the Thames estuary up to borders with Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. This extraordinary diversity makes diocesan life colourful and interesting – as we continue to learn from one another and seek to talk and work together.

The Colchester Episcopal Area and Archdeaconry takes in the northern half of Essex. Colchester itself and Braintree are seeing considerable development: Stansted with its airport and Harwich with its docks await huge growth: and seaside towns like Frinton, Clacton and Brightlingsea continue to attract both the newly retired and younger families. Scattered across north Essex are many villages – most of them attractive, often with historic church buildings and all of them eager to grow as real communities. The combination of effective road and rail links with London and the evidence of good and vibrant local communities makes this part of Essex an attractive area within which to live.

There are 9 Rural Deaneries and around 100 Benefices in this Area. We are lucky to have a valued Area Team – with Advisers offering help with Parish Development, Evangelism, Youth Ministry, CME, Parish Finance and Communications. There are also some central diocesan officers (notably in connection with Education and Schools work) who are certainly available to support us in this Area.

Our shared concerns are to manage significant change (in church and wider community alike) as creatively as possible and actively to develop the ministry of all God's people. A key feature in all of this is the development of trustful and honest communication. Any ordained minister joining us will be positively welcomed. It is hoped that they will be able both to put down strong roots in their local community and also to share gladly in the wider life of the Deanery, Episcopal Area and Diocese. Their contribution will be valued.

+Christopher
2008