



Mitre Benefice Profile

For applicants applying for the post of Priest in Charge to the Mitre Benefice (hereafter referred to as the MB).



Who We Are

At the MB, we believe we are called to Love God, Love each Other and Love our Neighbour. We believe in the Church gathered and scattered. We celebrate the big gatherings, the small gatherings and also the scattered: House Groups, Garden Church and anywhere 2 or 3 can meet together before God. The MB is relational: vertically to God and horizontally to one another. We love 'one anothering'!

“to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,
and to love one another as He commanded us”

— 1 JOHN 3:23

For us, church isn't a building, although we meet in several buildings which look fairly traditional from the outside but, much like the Tardis, are so much more on the inside. The heartbeat of the MB is to see people transformed by Christ, knowing Him and living that reality every day.



The Journey So Far

Since 2013, when the Bishop of Norwich kindly invited HTB to partner with the Diocese to plant a church in Norwich, God has enabled the MB to grow. The opportunity and privilege to be part of this revitalisation in Norwich has breathed new life into it and enabled the church to grow to what it is today. Since this time, we have played a significant role in leading and encouraging regular Alpha courses, church planting and revitalisation across the Diocese through a variety of methods:

- Mission Partnership with the neighbouring Earlham parish
- The revitalisation of SHED church in Costessey
- Planting of two new House Churches through The Garden Network

From the initial single site at St Thomas, we have grown to three sites, with St Albans joining us in 2015 and St Barnabas in 2017, and a team of 4 clergy, plus a curate and a diocesan curate, 14 staff. Through 2019, we averaged 400-500 people each Sunday across our locations including 146 young people. Subscribers to our YouTube channel have increased 400% with 62,400 views and 10,000 watch hours during 2020. Demographics of these figures reflect that 50% are under 34 years old and then 30% are 65+ years old. Our services have reached 15 countries worldwide.

In January 2021 we released 'Restoration', the debut album from UK worship collective STN Worship. Lyrics of hope and faith in a God who makes all things new are woven throughout the album's 13 songs. Produced in 2020, as the world longed for the hope of restoration, we wanted to release a project that created worship moments wherever people listened; songs that reassured our hearts and our minds that God is still present and in charge.

2020 has been a challenging time for all of us and, as the pandemic continues into 2021, we continue to reflect and learn from God as He guides us faithfully through this time. We have seen incredible things through and including:

- The Mitre
- The Sports Factory
- The Sanctuary
- Love Your Neighbour
- Garden Church
- Cafe Shine

Prior to Lockdown, we operated across our site, with services at different times and places in our vibrant Church community. Post Lockdown, we did not close: we embraced becoming an online church, with 4 services every Sunday for contemporary (live and recorded), traditional styles and one just for the children. These have attracted unexpectedly high viewing figures on YouTube reflecting the immense skill and creativity of all those involved in producing the high calibre content. Excellent preaching and inspiring worship has blessed us all. Virtual coffee and chat sessions have successfully continued to draw people together across the congregations. Lockdown has taught us to be creative, brought about many acts of kindness and reminded us of the value of community.

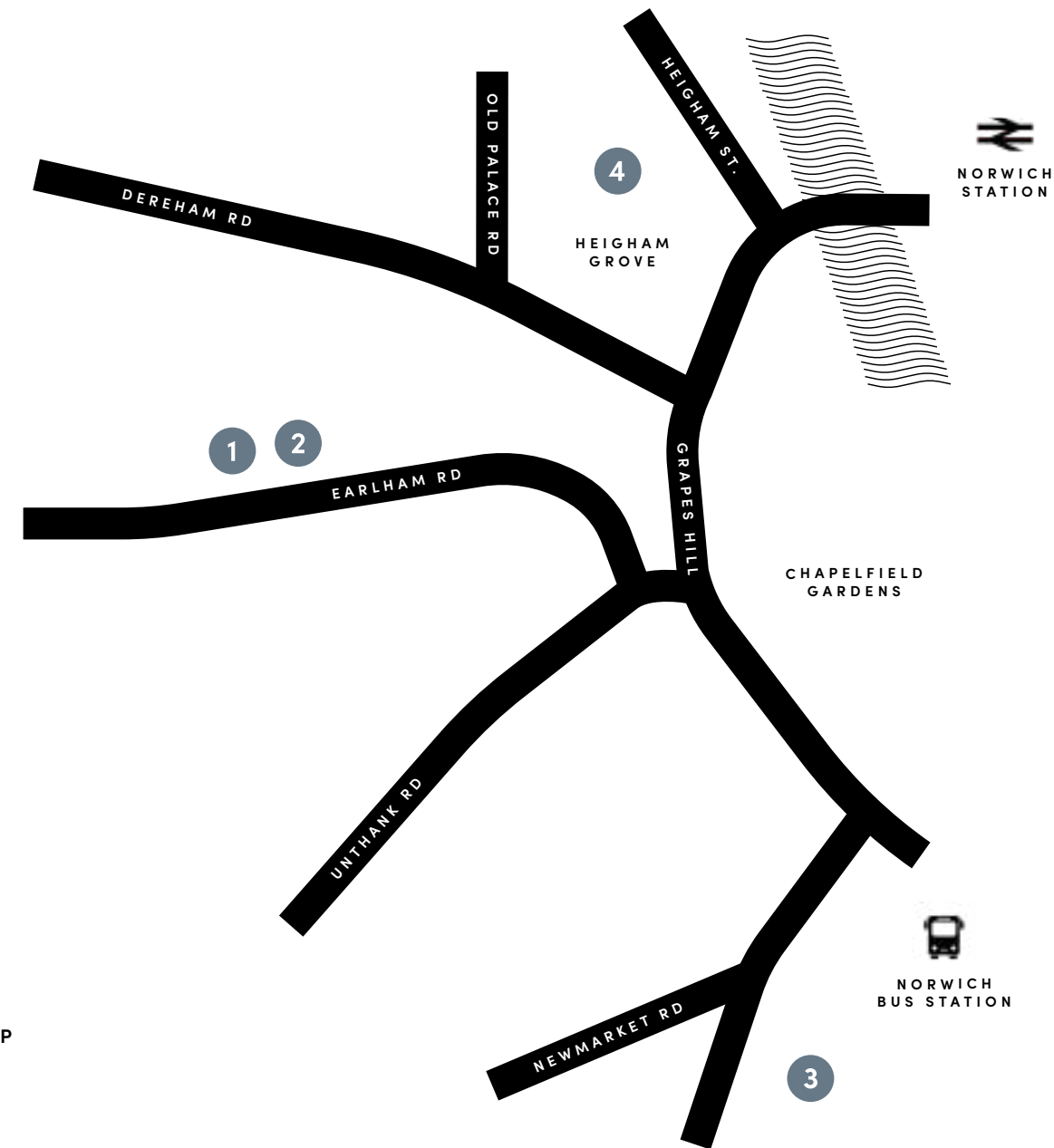
We are and remain dynamic, contemporary and networked through working in 2 Mission Partnerships. We recognise the unity of the traditional and the modern approaches to worshipping God. We remain focussed on working for the benefit of our local communities. We have grown quickly over the past 7 years, playing a key resource church role in the wider diocese, including church planting and revitalisation.

As part of the HTB wider network of churches, we join them for a number of different events. We attend the annual Leadership Conference, Focus gathering and regular network leadership meetings. We also play our part through involvement with the Church Revitalisation Trust and the Love Your Neighbour campaign. We have run Alpha regularly 2-3 times each year since 2013 sharing our celebrations and days away with local churches. Overall, we strive to take an active role in local church initiatives to encourage our communities to discover Jesus for themselves.

The next exciting chapter of the MB lies ahead as we aim to embed and create stability and sustainability in all of our ministries.



- 1 **STN EARLHAM RD (ST THOMAS)**
Earlham Rd, NR2 3RG
- 2 **MITRE & OFFICES**
131 Earlham Rd, NR2 3RF
- 3 **STN GROVE WALK SANCTUARY COFFEE STOP (ST ALBANS)**
Grove Walk, NR1 2QF
- 4 **STN RUSSELL ST (ST BARNABAS)**
1 Russell St, NR2 4QT





The Vision is Heaven

In Norfolk as it is in Heaven. Seeing the Kingdom come house by house, street by street, village by village.



The Mission is Love

Love God. Love Each Other. Love Our Neighbour. The command that fulfils the law and prophets. The discipleship journey running through everything we do.



The Vehicle is Church

God's Plan A. And there is no plan B!



The Mode is Gathered & Scattered

The Temple and the House. Drawn in and sent out. Like a heart-pumping oxygenated blood around the body. We can say both “come and see” and “I’m coming to your house for tea”.



The Method is You

We are the body of Christ. Everyone has a crucial part to play.



The Tools are in Your Hands

Fish? Loaves? A Staff? Some Smooth Stones? His story teaches us to dream big with whatever He places in our hands.

Who Are We Looking For

Role Purpose

As a church, we are seeking to grow as prayerful and confident 'whole of life' disciples who are seeking to make more disciples. We need a vicar who sets vision around this goal, who brings leadership and creativity to achieve this, who preaches and communicates in a way that inspires and teaches us to do this, and who communicates consistently around this core theme.

Key Aims of the Role

As we look forward to this significant new chapter of our benefice' life, we are looking for a vicar who is able to demonstrate they have the right character, competence and, above all, calling to lead the MB at a key moment in our journey. We are looking for someone with the ability and vision to –

- lead our mission with fresh insight
- strengthen our mission leadership, so that each member of our church grows deeper in their walk with Jesus, can bring kingdom blessing to their communities and worldwide
- consolidate and build on our children, youth and student ministries
- deepen relationships between our church and the local area
- enlarge our mission through church planting
- face the challenges of secularism and scepticism in Norwich

Key Qualities

- someone who will prayerfully seek God, supporting the church together discern His plans and vision for the future.
- a mission strategist for revitalisation of the church and the transformation of society in a secular city environment
- an excellent communicator, with the ability to develop the teaching programme
- a team leader who can manage, motivate, encourage staff and delegate effectively
- Someone who will maintain positive relationships with diocesan, deanery and local ecumenical colleagues
- someone who is able to lead the management of church assets: people, buildings and finances
- experienced at leading both traditional and contemporary forms of service
- someone who can reach the community with loving care through the occasional offices (baptisms, funerals, weddings)

Person Specification

We want to remain open to God's guidance as we look to appoint trusting in His provision of a new vicar for the MB. In view of our vision and values as a church, it is our hope that our new vicar should have the qualities and capabilities as follows. Equally, we are very aware that no single person can have every skill and gift.

We are looking for someone who:

Spiritual Approach

Loves the Lord – as evidenced in life, ministry and a pattern of prayer and daily devotions, has a deep personal faith and spiritual discipline, humbly seeking to please God in the power of the Holy Spirit

Loves His Word – is committed to the full inspiration and final authority of the Bible in belief and ethical practice, is biblically orthodox

Loves His Spirit – is a charismatic evangelical who experiences and promotes the fruit, gifts and leading of the Holy Spirit in the church today

Loves His people – as evidenced in a commitment to the church ministering practically and spiritually to the needs of the local area. Loves spending time with people and can build authentic connections with people of different ages and backgrounds, who can guide with wisdom and encourage unity when different perspectives arise

Loves those who don't yet know Him – as evidenced in a deep personal conviction and outworking of the gospel imperative to make disciples of all peoples

Ministry Experience

Discipleship – passionate about developing disciples and new leaders, especially among our young people, has experience helping people to deepen their spiritual maturity, including through personal mentoring and leading groups

Pastoral care of a congregation – a loving and wise pastor who has worked across a large church and local community and is able to draw people together with differing views and traditions to encourage unity within the body of Christ, clearly understanding the need for effective pastoral care

Evangelism – has had the privilege of bringing people of all ages to know Christ, experience of leading the Alpha Course and of equipping others to share their faith

Community-based ministry – active involvement in community ministries, serving the practical and spiritual needs of vulnerable individuals and families

Teaching – a preacher who faithfully handles God's Word, effectively teaches its contemporary application to those of all ages and backgrounds, and is committed to the authority of the Bible

Commitment to protecting the vulnerable and safeguarding those in our care to the very high standards required



Skills Approach

Successfully held significant leadership and management responsibility – including a track record of leading ministries which have grown both in church or other contexts; management of employees within a staff team; able to delegate, direct and inspire to get the best out a varied staff and volunteer team; someone who can unify and draw others inwards and onwards; able to discern others' gifts and develop a strategic collaborative leadership team; management of self, time and others.

Communication and empathy – someone who is able to engage, communicate and connect across cultures and social backgrounds and engage well with other churches across the Diocese and the wider church network.

Financial management – able to engage with setting and management of budgets.

Other

A passion for learning and personal development.

A personal vision for the MB's outreach programmes and excited to take opportunities to embed and develop existing ministries such as, Love your Neighbour, Sports Factory, the Mitre, the Sanctuary etc. in the culture of the church.

Authentic, enthusiastic, encouraging and self-motivated with a calm professional disposition; quick to celebrate others and share credit.

Someone who likes to keep moving and growing but who is a wise prayerful gardener too – careful of all those planted in the church nurturing them and enabling them to flourish.

A sense of humour and knows the healing power of laughter!

The Team



David Lloyd
Vicar



Andy Woodman
Curate/Location Pastor (St Thomas)



Joanna Payne
Associate Vicar



Matthew Hulston
Associate Vicar



Di Rowlandson
Wor (Earham Parish)



Tim Watts
Curate (Earham Parish)



Dave Hendra
Associate Vicar/Location Pastor (Goschuley)



PJ Brambley
Curate/Location Pastor (St Barnabas)



Diane Timms
Lay Minister



Edward Lond
Wor (SHED Church)



Bea Petty
Love Your Neighbour



Jason Baldry
Head of Creative & IT



Jacob Darlsen
Worship Pastor



Sylvia Hemmings
Finance



Bonnie Wilson
Sanctuary Coffee Shop Manager



Emily Saunders
Worship & Students Intern



Ben Lawrence
Finnisher



Tim Kenery
Sports Factory



Rich Mills
Kids & Sports Factory



Ben Lambert
Creative Intern



Evie Lizka
Love Your Neighbour Intern



Sooba Ennin
Kids Intern

The History of the Mitre Benefice

St Thomas

St Thomas Church was built in the 1880s by Ewan Christian for the new middle-class suburbs off the Earlham Road in Norwich. As a result of intensive bombardment in 1942, the St Thomas church was completely gutted with only the outer walls left standing. It took ten years to rebuild leaving us with a modern, light airy space in which to work. In 2012, the church had been declining for some years and could not afford its parish share with a small congregation of 30, no children and not many under the age of 40. Talks began between the Bishop of Norwich and HTB to explore the possibility of a church partnership and in March 2013, the Revd Ian Dyble was appointed as vicar.

The church quickly grew and a new Benefice was formed (The Mitre) with St Barnabas Church, Russell Street and St Alban's, Grove Walk. St Alban's Grove Walk built in 1937 and joined with the MB in 2015, is sited to the south of inner ring road. St Barnabas was consecrated in 1906 and joined the MB in 2017 and is sited on the estate to the north of the Dereham Road and west of the inner ring road. All 3 churches have been refurbished to provide open areas and moveable seating to make the most of the space available for church events. In 2020, Ian moved to a new position as priest in charge of the Weybourne Group of Churches in North Norfolk leading to this vacancy.



St Albans / The Sanctuary

St Alban's church was reopened five years ago as part of the Bishop of Norwich's revitalisation of churches' vision. In partnership with St Thomas, the church building was reborn (after 6 years of non-use) as a space for worship, outreach and engagement, to be known as The Sanctuary. This signifies something of God's intention for what happens in and around this building – a Sanctuary where we can worship God and the outsider is welcomed into a safe space.

The Sunday service is 'The Four'. This service is a family and seeker-friendly service with the aim of the congregation being in God's lounge. There is rarely a typical Four service as it is known as a place to 'experiment' with a variety of services. There have been services led by the Youth and another was the Gospel according to Jazz (building on the jazz mornings held in the café). The teaching follows the series used across the MB. During lockdown, The Four became the live service broadcast on YouTube from the home of the vicar (plus assorted pets, children and special guests). We are blessed to be part of the MB providing a great pool of talent to sing, play, teach and support the growing congregation. Our homegrown teams are growing and dedicated to the ethos of meeting people in God's lounge in so many creative ways. The numbers prior to March 2020 for the services were on average 65 adults and 15 under 16s with vibrant and vital children's and youth work.

The greatest asset is the space for all ages. This is not just a church building but a team dedicated to meeting those around us in the wider non-churched community. With the vehicle of the Sanctuary Café, there were (before closure) over 400 contacts a week with individuals from a wide variety of age, social and cultural backgrounds. Alpha courses were run and the space is used by a number of groups including an older people's coffee morning, the Friday youth club,



English+ (for refugees & asylum seekers) and pilates run by Sports Factory. The Sanctuary is open (when allowed) to the community, not just as a cafe, but as a space to ask questions, show off (City College arts department), play (NIYP), pray and support. The Sanctuary has engaged with local politicians, garden groups, dance schools, community gospel choirs, local charities, other churches, senior groups, toddler groups and has been a place the local community is able to come and talk and share.

So much of the way the Sanctuary has operated in the last five years has the stamp of creativity – not just in terms of arts and music (although these are definitely part of its character) ... but in the types of decisions made and the way we “do” church.

@sanctuarynorwich
sanctuarynorwich.org



St Barnabas

Consecrated in 1906, the church is sited on an estate in an area of low employment and social deprivation and became part of the MB in 2017. The existing congregation of approximately 30 are, predominantly, late middle-aged and elderly. This congregation longs to love and reach out into their local area, and their passion and heart are evident in the warm welcome and family feel of the congregation, with firm friendships and mutual support happening outside the church building. The Sunday Communion follows the common teaching series within the Benefice, though has a more liturgical format involving both lay and ordained people. Currently, accompanying music mainly comprises Songs of Fellowship together with other contemporary songs using guitar and piano. In addition, mid-week activities include: a weekly prayer meeting and a traditional HC service.

Both before and since becoming part of the MB, St Barnabas reached out to the parishioners through family and youth outreach, connecting with the local schools and organisations and organising community fun days, all with varying success. Presently occurring (though subject to pause due to COVID) are; Community Activity days with Sports Factory involvement; Noah's Boat (parents & toddlers); Café Shine (women's pamper and craft café) and Love your Neighbour Scheme participation. The adjacent building is rented out to the Prince's Trust (Parish Hall) and a Counselling Centre. This provides valuable income to the Church.

There has been some fruit from the work of the church through the years. One of the hurdles which comes up is the next step following these things, including looking hard at the style of church service on offer. The congregation has made some big changes since 2017 but questions remain about whether it could be a better fit for the un/de-churched from the local area. To accommodate the different needs it is envisaged that two different services will, in time, be provided, using patterns and experience from other effective estates' ministry elsewhere in the country.





The Mission

House Groups

Across the MB, there are 20 House Groups, comprising a total of approx 200 members. Our vision for our groups is scattered people loving God and one another, seeing the Kingdom of Heaven break-in. We believe that House Groups provide opportunities for creating multiple discipleship pathways, encouraging people on their journey of faith and mobilising their gifts in different areas so that we can aim to function well as part of the body of Christ. With the wide catchment area of the church, we have (in normal times) people travelling from the surrounding villages as well as from the city itself and our groups provide everyone with a vehicle for them to experience the local church.

We recognise the importance of groups in cultivating fellowship and community, particularly in this current season where restrictions prevent all of us from gathering together. Our network of groups have continued to run virtually, with our leaders utilising creative ways to engage and facilitate sessions. Group leaders discern the content and format of their sessions, often encouraging group members to lead regularly. Group leaders attend monthly drop-in sessions with a member of the clergy to share updates, ideas, challenges and prayer requests with one another. At the MB, we are passionate about seeing people's lives transformed by the power of the Gospel.



Worship through Music

Here at the MB, we are passionate about the presence of God and encountering Him through worship and serving at all the church sites. Worship is at the core of everything we do, and sung worship plays a huge part of that. With a growing worship and production team over our sites, there is a range of worship styles: traditional, relaxed, folk and contemporary, to allow different members of our church family to connect best with God. Over the last 18 months, the team have been pressing into what God is saying to our church at this time and have been writing and singing home-grown worship songs. This has led to the release of a worship album called Restoration. It has been an exciting challenge to explore how we worship in the midst of a pandemic and the team have been working creatively to provide online worship from home, which the wider church family have been able to engage with and enjoy.

[@stnworship](#)



Students

We are delighted to have a significant number of university students who find their home with us. The two universities (UEA and NUA) have easy access to our churches. Our evening service tends to be the ones students choose to make their home, with discipleship happening through small groups, one-on-one investment and encouragement to get involved in serving the life of the church. The large number of students provides a pool of talent to support other ministries within the church including children's work, worship and sports work. Each year, we host a weekend away for students and young adults, a highlight of the year. We are extremely grateful for close links to UEA's CU, which many of our students attend and are actively involved. The CU has a big presence and seeks to make the Gospel known on campus. Many of our students have chosen to remain serving the church after graduating either as interns or permanent staff. Our heart is to see students find family, be built up in their faith and to be equipped to share the good news with those around them. The inclusion of vibrant student work within the church adds to the sense of life and mission within the whole congregation.

@stnstudents

STUDENT2



Youth

We are blessed with an ever-growing, ever-changing youth group. Our numbers range between 15-35 with the majority being unchurched. It is a real blessing to accompany them as they discover Christ. In January 2020, on our weekend away, we saw over 25 give their lives to Christ for the first time. Since, we have focussed on mission and reaching young people in the city e.g. before lockdown, we had started a youth gathering in Norwich City School gym to pray for the city. Adapting to the times this past year, this has meant our focus has shifted to small groups on zoom, Friday night Youth online and our new YouTube channel. We have grown as we shared struggles, tackled injustice and had a lot of fun and seen our numbers grow.

Following the Black lives Matter movement in May, we tackled themes of justice in the Bible as well as in society today. As a result, the young people started 'ARK' (Acts of Random Kindness) and raised £529 towards the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Focussed on prayer and rest using the new YouTube channel for 21 days of prayer, we have prayed for our city, church and youth group. Over Christmas 2020, we delivered 25 parcels to the young people's homes with gifts, a gospel and treats whilst joining our youth Christmas party online. Some young people requested additional parcels as gifts to friends. We continue to focus on a rhythm of rest and intentional discipleship, allowing the young people to lead and pioneer in whatever they feel God is calling them. They resonate the light and freedom of Jesus: as a team we often find ourselves ministered to and are extremely blessed by them.

@stnyouth





Kids

Our vision for Kids in the MB is to see a flourishing ministry built upon families and volunteers discipling and encouraging one another. Prior to the pandemic, we had sessions for 40-50 children at St Thomas and between 15-20 in the afternoon at St Albans. St Barnabas hosts mums' and toddlers' groups with an array of other activities such as 'mums' and toddlers' pilates' which regularly sees over 80 attendees. We have a fantastic team of fifteen core volunteers, who are committed and hardworking.

Since the first lockdown, we have created booklets with activities and stories for the children and family which are distributed monthly. These are a fantastic resource for us at the MB and churches across the country. We also have a YouTube live session for the Kids every Sunday at 9am which often has over 100 views. We have seen a rise in the number of families with children attending church online. Our online Light Party and a Christingle Party had over 420 attendees on YouTube.

We are also involved with local schools, delivering assemblies and supporting the Sports' Factory ministry. We have created video content explaining Christian beliefs which has been used in three primary schools and have already been asked to continue to build on these relationships. In the coming months, we're hoping to set up Years 5 and 6 groups and run a Family service at the church once a month. We also plan to make an STN Kids EP! We pray that through the fearless faith of our kids, Norfolk would see revival!

@stn.kids

STN KIDS



Sports Factory

The Sports Factory is a ministry team based at the MB that wants to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the local community. The world of sports has an incredible ability to draw people in, break down barriers and create room for relationships to flourish. Therefore, we have a team that loves sports and are passionate about sharing their faith and we have found a number of ways to engage with the local community.

We go into schools and deliver PE lessons; we run lunch and after school clubs with an invite to our 'Legacy Holiday Club' during school holidays. These include a gospel message and an invitation to join us for celebration services in the church. Furthermore, we run social sports groups for adults to get involved with playing football, netball and more. This gives the opportunity for members of our church congregation to invite their friends along to play sports together with regular invitations to Alpha groups or sports quizzes in the church where the message can be shared again. Our vision is built on Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 2:8: 'Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well'. Sports gives us the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life to share our lives and our faith in an exciting, brave and trusted way on a regular basis.

@sportsfactoryuk





Rooted Women

A group for women of all ages, with a focus on growing and developing positive relationships with each other, with ourselves, with the world and most importantly with God. As a large, scattered worshipping community, it can be a challenge to build the deep and resourcing relationships that point us towards a deeper relationship with God. Our aim is to encourage women to explore what it means to live in the truth of their identity as a daughter of the King.

Each session has social, worship and teaching elements. The group has met at various venues across the Benefice and prior to the arrival of Covid 19 had a full programme of events planned. Rooted Women has fed into the development of Café Shine; a women's pamper and craft café run fortnightly by a team of volunteers in St Barnabas Church Hall reaching women in the local community. We have also run the Hillsong course, Shine, designed to develop positive self-esteem, with many of our Café Shine women and for the women in the church too. More Rooted Women's events are planned online in 2021.



Love Your Neighbour

We have been part of Love Your Neighbour since spring 2020. We took part in the Love Christmas campaign, distributing over 1500 Christmas parcels across our local communities. We followed Love Christmas with a Valentine's Day - Love Sunday outreach, and we supported 300 key workers with care parcels. At the heart of Love Your Neighbour is the aim for us to share the love of God with our neighbours, particularly in practical ways. We have developed a wide range of projects involving 60 volunteers supported by a core team. We run some projects ourselves and others in partnership with other churches, local organisations and charities. A key aim for us is to build sustainable local networks with community partners. Projects operate across the Mission Partnership with Earlham Parish and include, amongst other things: a Community food project twice a week; food support for a sheltered housing centre; telephone support calls to help combat isolation; regular help for refugees and asylum seekers; and providing gifts and help for local nursing homes, GPs, pharmacies and 8 primary schools.

Since 2016, the MB has worked closely with HMP Norwich, leading services and Alpha there. Sustained work has developed from this amongst ex-offenders, and an active involvement with the mentoring support offered by the local Community Chaplaincy, chaired by Rev'd Matthew Hutton, who is a member of the clergy team. Through Hope into Action, who provide a house for men coming out of prison, the MB provides mentoring and practical support. The MB is also currently developing opportunities for volunteering.

Overall, it is a wonderful outreach programme which continues to grow; it is such a blessing for the MB to be involved, as much as it is a blessing for our communities.



Mission Partnership

The MB has a clear role as a resource church and one of the ways that it has resourced others is through Mission Partnerships. The Mission Partnership with Earlham Parish was established before the Church Planting and Revitalisation programme started in 2019. Earlham is a diverse parish of over 20,000 people and is situated adjacent to the MB and the UEA. It is home to many UEA students and is, in parts, one of the most deprived areas in the UK. The church staff teams work closely together with a number of volunteers on community projects, such as community meals and community food programmes. The Sports Factory runs sessions in several schools in Earlham. There are new groups emerging to pray, study and worship together too. The largest project involving the Partnership will be the redevelopment of one of the churches in Earlham as a student centre as part of a larger Diocesan-backed project.

Our second Mission Partnership is with St Edmund & St Helen in Costessey, Norwich where Ed Land is the priest in charge, having been a curate with the MB.



Missional Community

In Autumn 2020 we began a new initiative in partnership with Di Rowlandson, vicar of Earlham Parish, establishing a “New Missional Community” in St Elizabeth’s vicarage in the Parish. This built on existing links via our Mission Partnership with them. October 2020 saw three recent graduates and a “house leader” moving into the Vicarage as an incarnational presence within Earlham parish. The community is developing an agreed “Rule of life”: a rhythm of prayer, eating together, rest and service for the mission and ministry of the church across the Mission Partnership.

Our aim is that they will be a witness as a Christian community living among the Earlham community, connecting with the neighbourhood and providing a much-needed people-resource for community engagement and activities. We also aim to develop each member in their gifts and Christian discipleship. The interns are resourced and trained via ministry involvement at the MB and live out their ministry and mission in Earlham Parish. Our current interns serve in the areas of worship, students, media and social action.



Global

We have partnered with Street Child in Sierra Leone since 2013 where we have helped fund the creation of 4 schools in extreme rural areas for over 400 children who would otherwise have no access to education, including providing a toilet block and drinking well. We have enjoyed sending a church team every year to run in the Street Child Sierra Leone Marathon and to visit the schools, encourage the pastors and teachers and raise funds. We have, as a church raised well over £50,000 over the last few years. In 2018 we welcome Street Child's lead coordinator for rural schools in Sierra Leone to visit England for the first time and stay with us and preach to us. The most recent street school was planted this year: "The St Thomas Norwich Primary School".

We have also worked with IJM and the Big Life fellowships in India, visiting and working with some of the churches led by Ben Francis. In 2019, we initiated, chaired and hosted the first gathering of agencies from across Norfolk, the Norfolk Modern Slavery Partnership, working collaboratively raising awareness of modern slavery and improving care of victims. We were invited to be part of the government's review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. We have continued to fight against slavery through the development of "Sajil's Story" which we wrote and produced and arranged distribution of 30,000 copies in West Bengal through the Big Life Church. We have funded a 2nd street school for 40 children facing homelessness in Kolkata, working to prevent children being trafficked. We have piloted and evaluated a 6-week small group series on modern slavery in House Groups. This was then adapted, translated into Bengali and adopted by Big Life for use in their church groups. Going forward, this work has been on hold whilst we wait and pray for the next steps.

We also have an informal partnership with a church in Haltern, Germany which began as a friendship between a member of each of the church congregations in 1991. They have participated in exchanges and supporting each other through existing and new friendships built through this connection ever since.

St Barnabas has recently started supporting financially, through prayer and letters, a project in Burundi called Restoration of Hope, which has connections with one of the STN church family. It works in taking children and young people off the street and supporting them through education along with a variety of other community projects.



The Mitre

“The Mitre”, the aptly named public house and part of the community since 1867, stands next to St Thomas church. When vacant in 2016, the congregation realised a dream to buy and refurbish it. It has been transformed and the light has been let in. The community is welcome and experiences outrageous hospitality and the love of God, establishing a connection to the church. It offers valuable work experience to students with special needs. Also, it is a safe refuge for the homeless, ex offenders and those struggling, where a hot drink and a shower can be found. The upper floor of the Mitre is used as the MB offices. The Mitre’s primary purpose is as part of the mission of the church. A thought that it might also make a financial contribution to the charitable work of the church has not been realised but remains an ambition.

@mitrenorwich
mitrenorwich.org





Garden

The MB, as a resource church, seeks to play its part in the revitalisation and planting of churches within the County. Since September 2019, in partnership with the Diocesan Church Planting and Revitalisation Programme, we have been encouraging the planting of missional communities into agricultural villages and housing estates through our network called The Garden.

The Garden is a network of missional communities that flow out of MB. We are encouraging people to see their home and local areas as their primary expression of the Kingdom of God. We live out our faith alone, but together across the County in order to encourage local initiatives, discipleship in villages and the sharing of resources across the Network. The Network has shared values and practices and aims to be a cost effective and agile means by which the gospel can spread. We meet three times a month in houses as church and also once a month at a gathered location. We like to invite others to join and hope to provide children, sports and youth work. We have 10 Garden Churches so far and two of them are funded by SDF funding (Sprowston and Upper Nar Villages) with everyone seeking to follow this vision.

@garden.nfk
garden-church.org

G A R —
— D E N



Creative

The past year posed more challenges for our creative department than ever before. We moved the church online and created the brand 'House' for everything we were doing from afar. This included pre-recorded and live gatherings, daily podcasts, vlogs, feature films, kids ministry & working with our Mission Partners on their Sunday offerings. This has resulted in a YouTube subscriber jump of more than 400% over the last 12 months and a strong Instagram following.

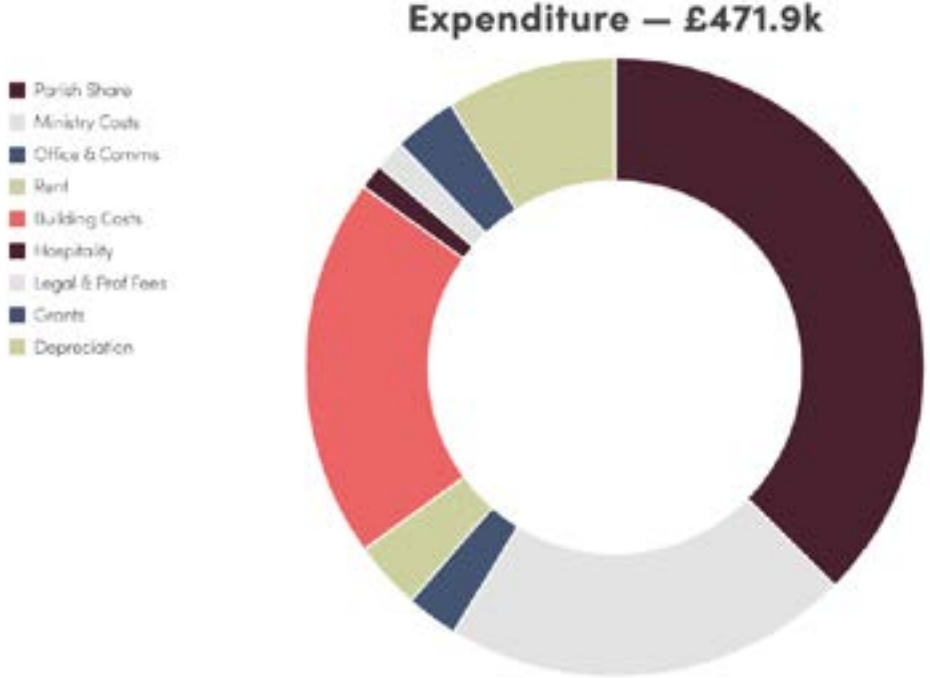
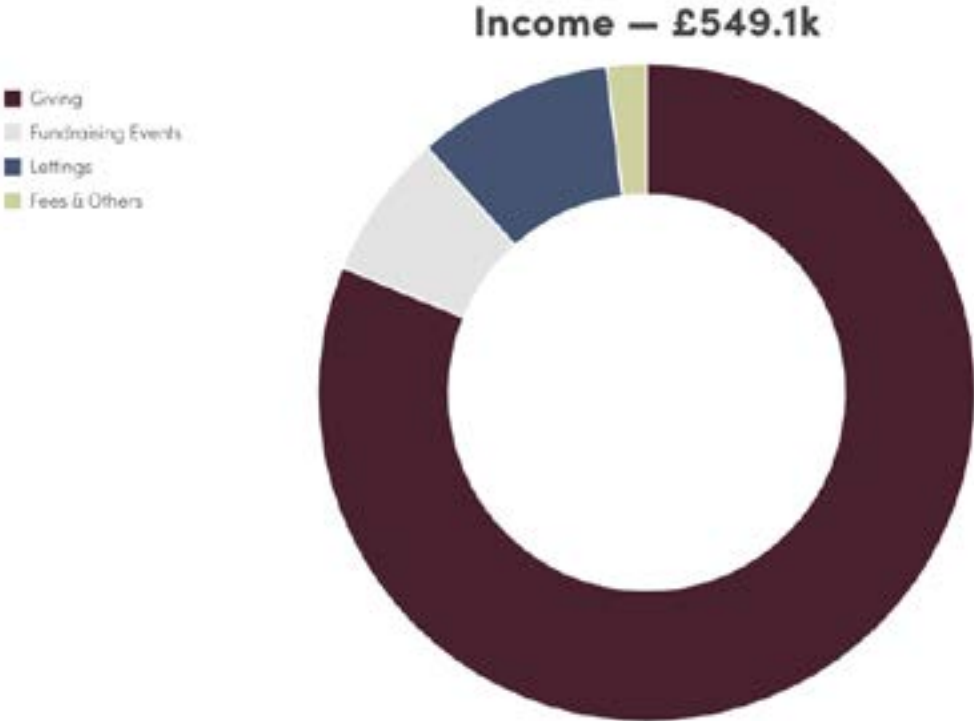
Creativity is at the centre of everything we do — seeking creative excellence both within a church context but also further afield. We have a talented team of creatives producing high-quality web and print content, film and audio pieces and superb photography. We were privileged to receive the Premier Digital Award for 'Best Church Website' 3 years in a row and released our John Lewis Christmas advert parody video on YouTube, receiving over 50k views.

We seek to embody a spirit of simplicity and minimalism, resulting in clear communication, beautiful imagery and film. We pursue environmental gain through our actions, to live lightly on our planet and celebrate our city, community and countryside in our work.

An entrepreneurial passion runs through the team, looking to the future as to how we can use creativity to reach new people through our work. We have worked with multiple other churches on their creative endeavours including their web, film and IT structures. We also have the vision to create and operate high-spec coworking spaces in our buildings, to bring like-minded creatives into a new environment. The quality of these spaces upholds and strengthens our core brand, exhibiting excellence in what the church does — not mediocrity. Through sharing these spaces we seek to grow together in creativity, mission and faith. Throwing open the doors of the church in a new and diverse way.

Finances – STN Church

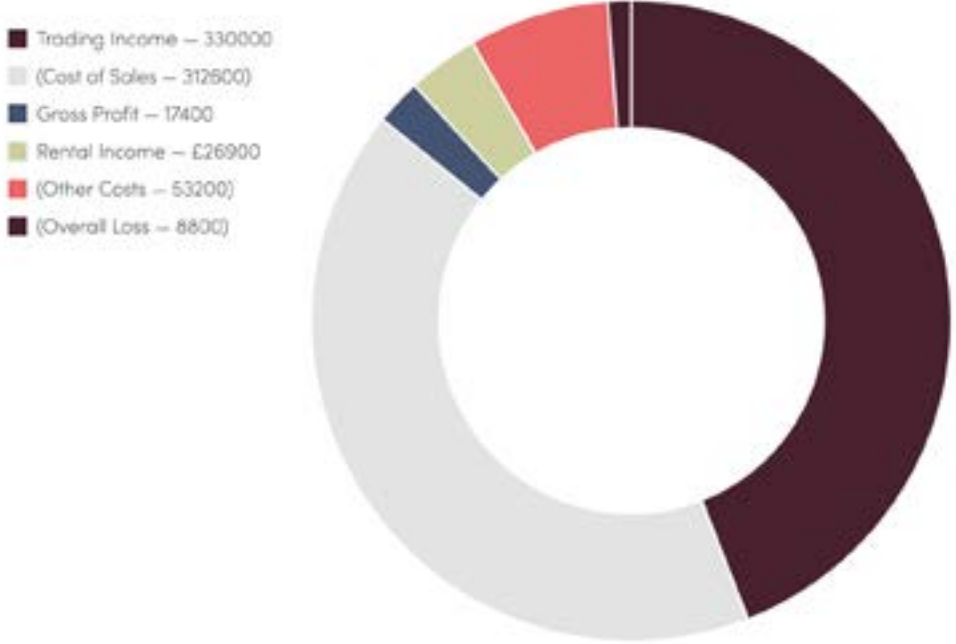
Financial results of all three churches within the Mitre benefice (2019).



Finances – STN Trading

STN Trading is a company limited by guarantee of which the PCC of St Thomas' Church is the sole shareholder. The company operates the Mitre and the Sanctuary at St Alban's.

Income & Expenditure



(2019)





Local Community

Norwich

The city of Norwich is an excellent place to live with a rich history as one of the most important medieval cities in Britain. The urban area of Norwich has a population of around 230,000. There is a thriving arts scene with theatres featuring West End productions, multi-screen cinemas and a large selection of bars, cafes and restaurants. The local football team, Norwich City FC is at present in the EFL Championship and there are many excellent sports facilities across the city. The city is located only a short drive from the beautiful, unspoilt Norfolk Coast with opportunities to enjoy wonderful sandy beaches, water sports and stunning coastal walks. The crime rate in Norwich is one of the lowest of any city in England and this contributes to it being an ideal place in which to bring up a family. There are excellent local primary and senior schools serving the area. It is a jewel in the East of England.

The Vicarage

The vicarage is a modern detached 4 bedroom property adjacent to St Thomas church (just a few steps away) with a large sunny garden. It is situated in an area known as the Golden Triangle where many young professionals, families and students live. It is within walking distance of local shops and schools and the surrounding residential area is very popular with families.