

## **FRIENDS OF HOLY TRINITY, BLYTHBURGH**

### **Chair's Report 2024**

The aims of the Friends of Holy Trinity are to sustain a broad membership in order to support the fabric and thereby the ministry of Holy Trinity, and to spread information and increase interest in our historic church.

### **Trustees**

Our Trustees remain Sue Powell (Chair and Secretary), Sue Gerrard (Membership & Treasurer), Meryl Doney (Newsletter Editor), Roselyn Crane, and Terry Goss.

### **Membership**

As of May 2025 we have a total membership of 77 Friends (with four Honorary Friends, Roy Tricker (notable author of many books on Suffolk churches and our Open Afternoon speaker in 2019), Rev. Canon Simon Pitcher (Rector of the Sole Bay team until 2023 and now Vicar of Lavenham with Preston), Charles Morris (Blythburgh resident, architect/designer, and member of Holy Trinity PCC), and Dr Alan Mackley (Blythburgh resident and scholar of Suffolk history).

### **Friends Open Afternoon**

The 2024 Open Afternoon, an event focussed on the churchman and author Ronald Blythe, was postponed because of the illness of the speaker, the Rev. Malcolm Doney. The event has been re-arranged for our usual date, the third Saturday in May 2025, in a slightly different format, an interview between Malcolm Doney and Ian Collins, Blythe's biographer.

### **Finances**

The total income for 2024 was £11,903 (including a £5,000 bequest from Kate Chapman in memory of the Marchmont family). The total expenditure was £3,618.42 (the Friends paid £2,600 towards the £3,600 cost of the nave altar, designed by Charles Morris, while the remaining £1,000 was paid by John O'Brien). Balances at 31/12/24: Flagstone investment £95,273.38; Barclays bank account £4,352.58 = £99,625.96.

### **Initiatives**

1. The Friends' offer of a substantial grant towards the reglazing of the east window of the church still stands, although PCC discussions have reached a pause, partly because of a need to concentrate on the project to install toilets and a small kitchen in the tower space.
2. The gift by John O'Brien (see Finances above) encouraged the Friends to ask Charles Morris to design a new nave altar, which was made by Sean Fetherstone of Woodland Joinery, using oak donated by Sir John White. It was dedicated at a ceremony on 9 June at which the Bishop of Dunwich presided.
3. The bequest of Kate Chapman (see Finances above) has prompted the Friends to request Charles Morris to design a matching lectern in memory of the Marchmonts.
4. The Trustees wish to thank the Parish Council for the reinstatement in a very fine format of the lapsed Welcome Packs, which we requested be rewritten to give to new residents of Blythburgh, and to which Friends material is contributed.

### **Thank you**

I would like, as ever, to thank our small but engaged and energetic team of Trustees, who work together to raise the profile of, and funds for, Holy Trinity Blythburgh through both special events and regular communication with our Friends in church and by email.

Sue Powell

