

08 Feb 2026 2nd Sunday before Lent

One of the roles of being an incumbent is to try and interpret the times, to stand on the watch tower and see what God is doing and where he is going, to seek God's Kingdom for the entire parish and trust that the outworking for each individual will be one of life to the full to God's glory.

I believe we are riding a wave, an action of the holy spirit. A wave that has been formed by those who have gone before us in prayer and those who are faithfully seeking God's purpose and will now. And I know many of us are all feeling this to some extent or another. I want to share what this wave looks like to me.

Gifted families ministers changing the way people in our community view our church, making worship more relevant for families, creatively drawing in those who are already here and those whom God is calling.

A Hall that we have renovated being used to love and support the weakest members of our community with food, with household necessities, with friendship, with healing and community building activities and celebration. A hall that was largely empty 5 years ago is filled brimming to the top with life and more life.

A small church where worshipping numbers are dwindling, now being regularly filled during the week with families, families that have wondered about church, but hadn't realised that God might be calling them right in their own neighbourhood.

A coffee morning that seems more like the best party in The Bourne and it happens every week over and over again, where people are valued and loved and love in return.

A people who are interested in learning about Racial Justice, who are loving those who are isolated, who are feeding those who cannot feed themselves. A people who are seeking God's Kingdom. We are really doing this.

And We are growing. Growth is joyful, but growth carries responsibilities.

I love you all so dearly, I love meeting together and worshipping God, as we do in this place, but here's the rub.

God is calling us to growth and Growth costs money. Our finances are about £ 20,000 in the red and the projection is that this will continue year on year until we run out of reserves. It takes

£7,000 every week to operate our parish. We are only short of three out of 52 weeks' expenses. This is something we can achieve, but only if each of us can find it in our heart to increase our regular giving or give in legacies, in lump sums as we receive.

This amount does not include all of our buildings works special projects. We have raised enough to save our stained glass windows for future generations, now we need to repair the gutters at St T as they protect our church home, so please be ready to fundraise and give generously. Forever thus in a big, beautiful, but older building...

And here's the rub

God is calling us to growth and Growth requires people. We know that All over the country organisations are experiencing difficulty in finding volunteers. But it is different with us. We are Christians; we are here to serve the Lord in whatever way he calls us. We are not volunteers, because this is our home, whether you are new to this place or have been here almost as long as the stained glass windows; we are all servers in God's temple, we are all sons and daughters of God who have been given a responsibility even as we are being given an abundant and extravagant inheritance. If you are in doubt of this inheritance, I invite you to take your redemptorist sheet home and ponder

God's goodness in creation by slowly studying the beautiful Genesis reading and know that God's mercy endures forever. I invite you to join in fully with Lent as it comes to relive Jesus's love for us in his passion to join in with humanity and to die for each one of us that we may live

Seeking God's kingdom means we have to step out and try something new because God wants us for his Glory.

Seeking God's Kingdom means we have to give till it hurts sometimes.

But always we find more, something better, something unexpected, we find him in us, him in each other him in the stranger or the mess and it all becomes real in a way that speaks only of Jesus.

And we don't have to worry, God does love us infinitely more than the lillies of the fields if for no other reason than we simply need more love. He has given us everything we need in this place to ride this wave the Holy Spirit is fuelling. If we are all playing our part, all listening to God's call, all responding prayerfully and faithfully to the niggles of could I? should I? all will be well. He doesn't call us to serve without giving us the gifts we need to do

the role. All we need is to take that first step. It is just that simple. If we are all seeking God's Kingdom, truly seeking God's kingdom, regular Giving will increase, the essential roles in our church will be filled alongside those acts of love we haven't even imagined and our community will flourish and grow beyond our wildest dreams in accordance with God's will.

Your Kingdom come, your will be done almighty God. How may we serve you today Lord Jesus? May we seek your kingdom first to your glory in this place. Amen.