

**WELCOME TO THIS PROFILE
of the
PARISH of EASINGWOLD
With
RASKELF**



WHO WE ARE

Our Benefice covers Easingwold, a growing market town in North Yorkshire, and Raskelf, a farming village that has also increased rapidly over the last few years. As a congregation, we consider ourselves friendly and welcoming to new members.

We are part of Christ's body working in Easingwold and Raskelf, and we long to share His love in our corner of North Yorkshire.

Our parish life is rooted in prayer, and Lent and Advent courses are attended by members of our congregation eager to learn more from Christ's teaching, and providing an opportunity to share our faith.

Our worship is fairly traditional, with priests wearing vestments and we have a sung Eucharist accompanied by excellent organ music. Lay church members provide readings, intercessions and ministrant duties at our main Sunday service.



We consider it important to develop disciples, willing to learn and then share their knowledge and faith. Laity in our churches are empowered and encouraged to get involved in many ways.

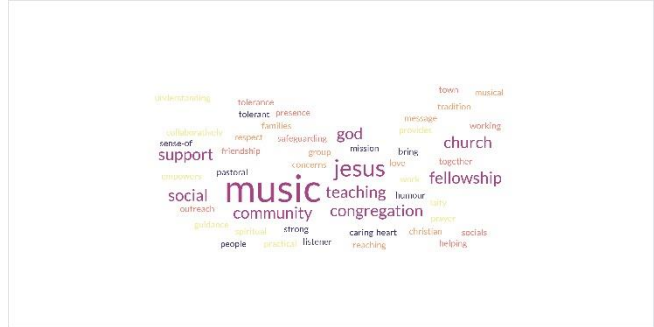


We are a caring community and engage in many initiatives in all parts of our town and village, reaching out to those in need, as well as supporting each other through life's difficulties.

In both Easingwold and Raskelf, there is a fringe of church members who are strong supporters of our churches practically and financially.

THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO US

It is important to us to hear Christ's teaching in a friendly atmosphere; sermons that teach and challenge us all. Our services are largely based on Eucharistic worship but we are open to alternative ideas if this will help to grow our congregations and encourage younger members and families.



Love, respect, tolerance, unprejudiced, with strong pastoral support and practical guidance are all important aspects of our church here.

Music at Easingwold and Raskelf is important and we are fortunate to have very talented organists to lead our musical worship. We would love to have a full choir again.



A regular deanery sung evensong takes place in Easingwold church and is always well-attended.

Our excellent acoustics attract a number of visiting musicians.

Social events are enjoyed by a large number of our congregation. We also work collaboratively with other denominations in our area.





Let's share the Christian message in Easingwold and Raskelf in a way that is relevant. Help us to attract people of all backgrounds, ages and genders to join our number, reaching out through our local schools and youth club into the wider community.

We want to :

- maintain our local tradition, while introducing new initiatives that appeal to younger members
- develop our mission, to build on what already exists in our churches
- look outwards into our town and village and ask what folks want from us
- establish activities for young families and teenagers and develop social outreach
- look beyond our existing congregation without alienating them
- continue to care for the elderly
- increase the number of volunteers within our congregation



IN SUMMARY WE ARE LOOKING FOR A VICAR

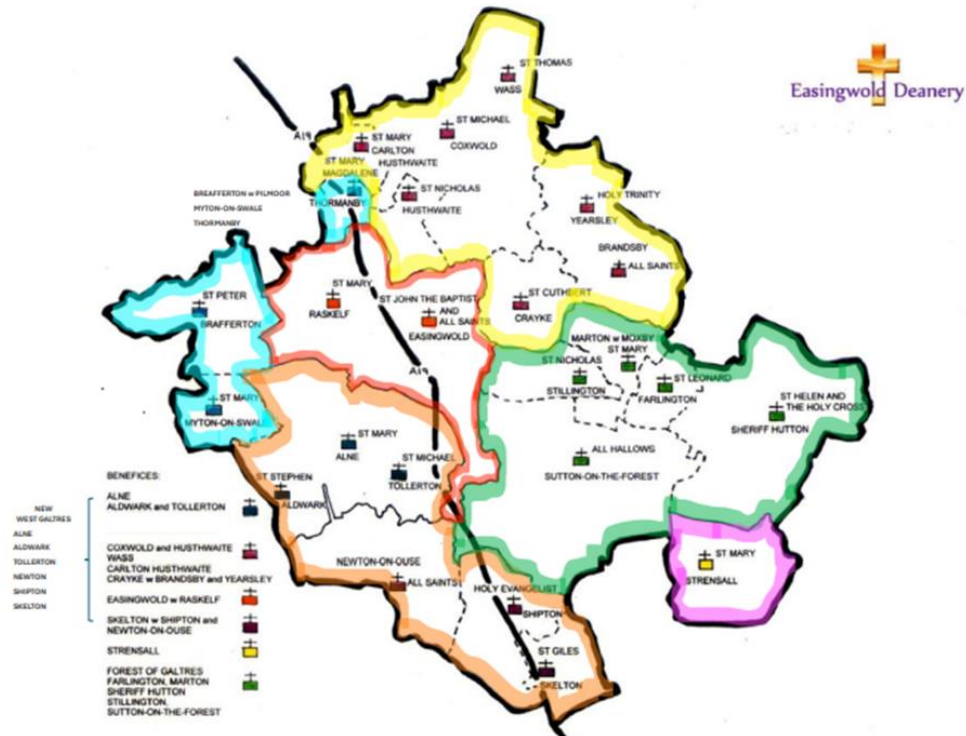
- to help us to reach our goals
- to teach us more about Christ
- to help us learn what he is calling each of us to do within our church and the wider community
- to help us keep up to date with new ideas and approaches for younger generations
- to widen our congregation and appeal throughout Easingwold and Raskelf
- to reach out to our growing community and to engage in other possible outlets which may be more relevant in today's society
- to create fun and engaging services inside and outside our church buildings
- to continue with fundraising for restoration of church building (Raskelf)
- to find different ways of attracting more people to be involved in the church, and not just through services, by reaching out to the community with an understanding of rural life. Raskelf is a farming village
- to make our church more part of the community, considering changes to the church interior and facilities to enable it to be a more useful building. (Easingwold)
- to be approachable, empathetic, kind, enthusiastic, tolerant, a spiritual mentor, thought-provoking, inspirational
- to have a bit of drive and lots of energy



THE BROADER PICTURE – DIOCESE AND DEANERY

The benefice lies within the Diocese of York.

EASINGWOLD DEANERY



The Parish of Easingwold with Raskelf is part of Easingwold Deanery, a grouping of 24 churches within 6 benefices in York Diocese. The Area Dean is currently the Priest-in-charge of St Mary's Strensall.

EASINGWOLD TOWN AND THE VILLAGE OF RASKELF

EASINGWOLD

The historic town of Easingwold, mentioned in the Domesday Book as Eiscwald, is situated about 12 miles north of York, midway between the city and Thirsk. It has excellent transport links, being close to the A19 and A1 trunk roads, whilst York is a major rail hub. Regular bus services run between the town and York, Thirsk and Helmsley, as well as the nearby villages.

The Town has a good range of shops, a bank, a post office and local services distributed along the main road through the town, and grouped around the friendly cobbled market square which has green areas in front of 18th and 19th century houses.



There is a weekly open-air market on Fridays and monthly farmers and artisan markets.

Easingwold had a population of around 5,000 in 2021; this is set to further increase as planned new housing developments are completed. The Town has a community hospital, St Monica's, providing convalescent, respite and end-of-life care, and physiotherapy services. There are also doctor's and dental surgeries and an NHS health centre.

Education is provided by a community primary school and a secondary school with a pupil roll of around 650. Youth facilities include Scouts, Guides, Air Training Corps, and COZIE, a Youth club.

A local registered Charity – Easingwold District Community Care Association (EDCCA) is staffed largely by volunteers. It provides a wide range of support to the Town and nearby villages including Meals on Wheels, a local food bank, transport for medical appointments, a Dementia 'Hub Club', 'Men in Sheds', and a charity shop. A community library is run by volunteers, and there are concerts by the Easingwold Town Band and other music groups, especially in the summer months in the Town's market place.

The Town has small light industrial areas on the southern and eastern edges and there are various sporting facilities provided by football, cricket, crown green bowling, golf and tennis clubs.

Many entertainment and leisure activities, including gym and sports facilities, are provided by Easingwold Galtres Centre, sited at the corner of the Market Place. The Centre is run mainly by volunteers and most of the organisations in the town, including the Town Council and the Parish Church, have representation on its management committee.

There is a strong community spirit in Easingwold. There are very active local branches of the Lions International and the Royal British Legion. It is a friendly town with a lot of voluntary activity, as is evident from the town website <http://www.visit-easingwold.com>.

RASKELF VILLAGE

Raskelf (which has a population of over 500) has a rural setting with a significant farming community and lies about three miles west of Easingwold. There is a vibrant pub (The Old Black Bull) in the centre of the village, the landlord of which, in common with the villagers, is very supportive of the church and generous towards fund-raising events. The modern village hall has an active committee, with various social events, including those of the Church, held there. It also features thriving tennis, cricket and bowls clubs.

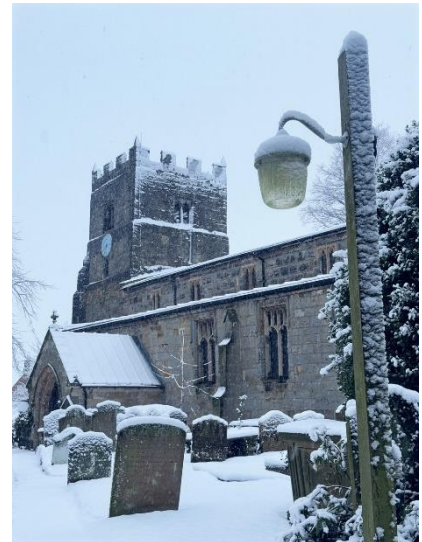
Over the last few years, a small team of dedicated volunteers from church have been organising events - raffles, coffee mornings, curry evenings, racing nights and so on - which villagers and friends from both churches have supported and enjoyed.

OUR CHURCHES

EASINGWOLD PARISH CHURCH

Tradition suggests that there been a church in Easingwold since St Paulinus preached in the area. Certainly there was a church and priest here at the time of the Domesday Survey. Nothing remains of this building but a newer structure, which was at least partly stone-built, existed by about 1150. It was completely re-built between 1388 and 1418 and the existing church dates largely from that time.

When built, the church had no tower, and this was added around the end of the 15th century. The building was extensively remodelled in the mid-Victorian period (1858); the chancel roof, which originally had a shallow pitch like the nave, was raised and the east window was inserted as a memorial to three former vicars. The pews, gallery, and south porch also date from this time.



Further modernisation took place in the 1980s with the shortening of the gallery and removal of the pews beneath it. The chancel beams were also decorated in what may have been their medieval colours. A new vestry was added behind the tower north wall. Twentieth century additions to the furnishings include restoration of the organ and case (1903), the pulpit (1906) and communion rails (1915). The high altar, reredos, sanctuary panelling, and screen in the Lady Chapel, are the work of the renowned Robert

Thompson of Kilburn (the “Mouseman”), given to the church in 1948.

The church has a peal of 8 bells which are rung every Sunday, for Festivals, and at other times as required.

The stained glass includes both traditional and contemporary artwork, and there are notable memorials throughout the church.

Notwithstanding its history, a recent vicar wrote “We do not live in the past, nor is our Church this building. This is where we worship God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in word and sacrament. The building stands as an outward sign of God’s presence in the whole life of the community, its past, present, and future”.

RASKELF CHURCH



St Mary’s Church (described by Sir John Betjeman as “exceptionally attractive”) is a Chapel of Ease in the village of Raskelf, some three miles from Easingwold, and dates from 11th century. Little of the original structure remains, the church having been largely rebuilt in 1879, although the front is Norman and its cover and the screen in the north chapel are 17th century. A rare wooden tower (unique in Yorkshire) was added in the 15th century and this benefitted from a major renovation in 1954; further renovation is currently in hand together

with improvements to the tower room at its base, roof repairs, new drainage, heating, and toilet facilities.

Raskelf is historically associated with the Neville family of Raby castle (the first Earls of Westmorland) who had a moated manor house in the village and the 14th century glass in the east and south windows depict the Neville arms and those of Lord Dacre and the Scropes of Masham and Bolton.

THE VICARAGE

The vicarage was built in the 1950s and is in an elevated position opposite the churchyard. It has 4 bedrooms, with the usual facilities, a hall, a kitchen / dining room and a through lounge, which overlook the attractive garden and the town. There is a utility room, garage, and a large study, also overlooking the large garden, which can be reached via a separate entrance.



CHURCHYARDS

Easingwold's churchyard is extensive and serves both the parish and the community at large. The parish accordingly receives an annual donation from the town council towards its professional maintenance. An older and unused section is fenced off and is kept tidy by sheep.

Raskelf churchyard has recently been extended and parts of this equally provide nourishment in rotation for a small flock of rare-breed sheep

CHURCH POPULATIONS

Easingwold's Electoral Roll is currently 131, and that of Raskelf 36. The population is predominantly senior and traditional in outlook and age. Our churchmanship reflects this.

PATTERNS OF WORSHIP

The major weekly service is the Sunday morning Eucharist in Easingwold with an attendance of between 40 and 60 communicants; this is supplemented by an earlier Sunday Communion attracting an average of 15, and a mid-week Communion with 6-10 communicants. Choral Evensong is held in the Church every two months.

A Sunday Eucharist is also held at Raskelf twice per month with an average of around 10 worshippers.

Regular Sunday services are as follows:

1 st Sunday	Easingwold	9.00 am	Holy Communion
		10.30 am	Holy Communion with hymns
	Raskelf	9.30 am	Holy Communion with hymns
2 nd Sunday	Easingwold	9.00 am	Holy Communion
		10.30 am	Holy Communion with hymns
3 rd Sunday	Easingwold	9.00 am	Holy Communion
		10.30 am	Holy Communion with hymns
	Raskelf	9.30 am	Holy Communion with hymns
4 th Sunday	Easingwold	9.00 am	Holy Communion
		10.30 am	Holy Communion with hymns
5 th Sunday	Easingwold	9.00 am	Holy Communion
		10.30 am	Holy Communion with hymns

There is also Holy Communion each Wednesday at 9.00am in Easingwold.

The Mothers Union meets on the second Thursday in the month at 10.15 am at MCAT in Long Street. During term time, the Little Seeds group for 4 to 9 year olds meets in the Church at 3.45 pm each Thursday.

Additional Services to celebrate major festivals are held as required in both churches, supported where appropriate by Easingwold Town Band.

PASTORAL CARE, CHURCH VOLUNTEERS, AND OUTREACH

Prayer

Prayer is at the centre of all that we do:

- We pray as individuals; in services; and twice a month in church between services
- Prayer Circle – a few pray confidentially for the sick and any others in need
- Prayer Cycle – there is prayer via the monthly magazine for the wider community
- Ecumenical – once a month praying for the churches, the country and the world

Visiting, Pastoral and Spiritual Care

With a rural community and high proportion of people over 65 years of age the spiritual needs of the elderly is always at risk of being marginalised, especially if they are unable to physically attend Church through frailty or the remoteness of their homes. The desire to be respected and understood does not diminish with age but many people can feel invisible and undervalued. As a parish we have several initiatives to help address this need through a small group of workers comprising a retired Distinctive Deacon, an Authorised Lay Minister / Anna Chaplain, and a small number of volunteers.

- We visit the elderly and the sick in their own homes to chat and / or administer Holy Communion.
- We hold a monthly Holy Communion service at the local sheltered housing complex followed by tea, biscuits and a natter.
- We work with Easingwold Methodist Church to jointly celebrate Christmas, Easter and Harvest at the sheltered housing complex.
- We visit the local hospital (when needed) to chat with patients and offer Holy Communion.

Our most recent initiative is the support and training of an Authorised Lay Minister to become an Anna Chaplain and prioritise the spiritual needs of the elderly through a ministry of presence and the acknowledgement of the value of their lives.

The retired Clergy currently visit in connection with Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals.

Church Volunteers

We are extremely fortunate that we have a large number of people who serve the church in a variety of ways: sacristy team; social – coffee and events; readers, intercessors, administrators

and sidespeople; Little Seeds children's Group; health and safety provision; setting the heating; flower arrangers; locking / unlocking the church, cleaning, and so on.

Outreach

Our Church members volunteer in a number of ways in the community – at the Galtres Centre, U3A, COZIE (youth group), Community Care. As a Church we also support some charities (Cancer Research, Children's Society, Friends of Springhill Court, Community Care, Carecent (for the Homeless in York)).

We outreach through: hosting concerts; the Boot Shop (for those with learning difficulties), Primary School and Tiddly Winks Nursery visits and carol services; 'Open the Book' at the primary school, Community Care's food bank at Harvest, and Winter Warm Space and welcome.

FINANCE SUMMARY

The Parish is financially viable – it has always met its Parish Share in full and maintains a reserve of six months' unrestricted expenditure.

We are able to draw down on the accumulated interest from three trust funds and, additionally, we have conditional access to the proceeds of the recent sale of the parish church rooms (parish hall) which were under-used and costly to run.

Raskelf church is particularly active in fundraising towards its forthcoming capital projects. Funding has been secured from the National Churches Trust and North Yorkshire for a feasibility study into the work involved in the tower restoration.

The whole Parish has embraced the Parish Giving Scheme to promote regular giving.

More detailed financial information is given in Annex A.

CHURCH MUSIC

The music at sung services is provided by a two-manual pipe organ which is in good condition and is played by competent, qualified organists.

There is an ad-hoc choir which leads the singing on most Sundays whilst the ecumenical choir of Easingwold Deanery leads the bi-monthly Choral Evensong



The church has good acoustics, and is a popular venue for visiting choirs and orchestras

BELL-RINGING

Easingwold Church has eight bells which are usually rung for the 10:30 Sunday service and on Thursday practice night; they are also available for special services. Currently we have low numbers of ringers, and the bells need some work.

Raskelf has three bells which may be chimed.as need arises.

MOTHERS UNION

Mothers' Union has a small group of members who meet monthly. Fortunately at Diocesan level all the Trustee roles are filled, and retreats are held at Wydale retreat centre twice a year. The Diocese owns a caravan which is based at a holiday park in Filey and which provides free holidays to families in need. The Branch organised a recent Coffee Morning, the proceeds going towards the upkeep of the caravan. As a global charity we also support projects worldwide including the very successful and long-running campaign to improve literacy among women, and thus support families. The Christmas Appeal will focus on Burundi. Our annual Wave of Prayer unites us with members in many parts of the world.

WIDOWS' GROUP

The Widows Group began in October 2023 following realisation that there were a number of women in our church who had lost husbands and partners over the years, from death or divorce. It seeks to give women who have had in the past, or are experiencing at the present, an opportunity to discuss the life changes that have happened to them. From being part of a couple they can now find themselves in charge of the whole of their lives possibly without any support at all.

The meetings are informal and give the opportunity for exchanges of advice or discussions on how someone can be helped, either with the groups backing or a reference to some organisation which can be useful to the person in need. It thus extends the hand of friendship to one another in the hope that the people in the group can overcome loneliness.

YOUTHWORK

A children's group, Ignite, began a number of years ago and had a regular group of youngsters who started at the age of 4 or 5, and then continued until recently when the children had become teenagers and other commitments started to intrude.

More recently, there is now a replacement group of young children ("Little Seeds") which meets every Thursday after school. They have a snack, and a bible story, and continue with related fun activities followed by prayers. We would very much like to be able to continue with this club with the new Incumbent's active support, and would also like to see children more involved with

church services and any other Christian- related activities. Children are our new congregation and without them our church will not flourish in the future.

PARISH MAGAZINE

The Parish Magazine is a 16-page publication produced monthly and containing a list of contacts within the church family, as well as information about services and events for both Easingwold and Raskelf. It also lists the weekly bible readings and details of who to include in our prayers in the prayer corner. Special notices and reports of any events are published, as well as notices from other organisations such as EDCCA (Easingwold & District Community Care Association), U3A, and the monthly OASIS coffee mornings held at the Methodist church.

The magazine is printed locally and is supported by advertisements from local businesses. The current suggested donation is 60p per copy which contributes toward printing costs.

This is also available online via the Parish website (www.easingwoldraskelfanglican.org).

SOCIAL ACTIVITY

'You and Me' began in January 2023 after a delay owing to Covid. It was conceived in response to the Diocesan-led initiative to grow in numbers. Its aim is to use monthly social events as a means of outreach to increase the diversity in age of the congregation and raise the profile of St John's in the community.

The events cater for different ages and interests, are low cost, include refreshments, and are open to anyone whether they attend the church on a regular basis or not. They are held in different venues, some offsite. Members of the congregation are encouraged to bring a friend or neighbour. The numbers have grown steadily and some events have been very well attended. The cost of events is minimal and is funded by voluntary donation.

CONTACT DETAILS

Further details of the post can be obtained from the church wardens as follows:

Easingwold – Laura Varney lv67church@gmail.com

Raskelf – Pat Allen pateallen@hotmail.co.uk

The Parish website is www.easingwoldraskelfanglican.org

ANNEX A – EXTRACT FROM THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Financial Statement

The net result for 2023 across all funds is a surplus of £35,132 (2022: a deficit of £1,134). However, without the benefit of a generous legacy amounting to £25,000, fundraising income in Raskelf of £5,077, grants received from the two councils of £6,124 and drawdown from the three Easingwold trusts of £21,494, the net result across all funds would have been a deficit of £22,563.

Total receipts on unrestricted funds, including legacies, were £104,102 (2022: £88,272), of which £41,169 (2022: £41,968) was unrestricted planned voluntary donations, and a further income of £10,274 (2022: £10,051) from Gift Aid. Overall giving to support the work of the two churches has been maintained at a very similar level to 2022.

The Diocesan Free will offering for the year 2023 was £67,000 (2022: £66,000). For 2024, the payment has been increased to £68,000. This contribution goes towards provision of stipends, housing and Diocesan expenses and is a voluntary but expected contribution. The Diocese have indicated that a contribution of £70,000 would be expected by the year 2030.

Restricted and Other Designated Revenue Funds

Under the Charities Act accounting regulations, the restricted and designated funds must be identified separately. The restricted funds are the Church Fabric Fund, Missions Fund and the Raskelf R&D Fund. The designated funds are the Parish Church Rooms Fund and the Raskelf General Fund.

Following the sale of the Parish Church Rooms (PCR), the PCC passed a motion on 20th March 2024 to close the no longer needed PCR Fund and to transfer its balance (around £5.5K) to the Easingwold General Unrestricted Fund.

Full details of income and expenditure are provided in the financial statements and a summary with reconciliation figures to the net assets is shown in the report.

Investments & Capital Reserves:

These are shown at cost value in the PCC Balance Sheet of the Financial Statements. Market valuations, where available, are shown in the notes to the accounts, for information.

Revenue Reserves Policy

It is the PCC policy to maintain a balance on non-restricted funds which equates to approximately six months' unrestricted payments, to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time. The balance on unrestricted and designated funds as at 31st December 2023 is satisfactory for this purpose.

Other Accounting Considerations

The accruals basis of accounting has been applied in the production of the Financial Statements and the PCC is registered with the Charity Commissioners in accordance with The Charities Act 2011, the registration number being 1145021.