

The Village Green



Hidden away at the edge of Thetford Forest lies Mundford which for many is seen only as a busy traffic roundabout on the way to somewhere else. A little behind all this however is a small triangular village green. On one side sits the old Chapel alongside a Ladies Hairstylist and a Fish and Chip shop. They nestle together and keep good company all week without too much of a flurry and no words spoken. On another side of the Green is the Crown Public House which has a loyal customer following, especially on Sundays.

Most weeks the Church is quietly closed until 2.45pm every Sunday when the old blue doors open wide. The building has no water and has no toilets, it never has had these even though across the years it has held out hopes that it might one day. Thankfully the Crown pub allow Local Preachers the use of their toilets and somehow we have this working relationship not often said. Water is carried in a plastic bottle each Sunday for tea and coffee at the close of afternoon worship along with milk and biscuits. On an average Sunday just four retired ladies gather together and sit on the left hand side to worship. A CD player is plugged in to accompany "Singing the Faith" hymn book. Only in the past year did it become a class of Thetford Methodist Church nearby and this arrangement seems to be working very well.

Frequently we have trouble with cars who park across our door entrance despite clear "No Parking" signs and so we now put out orange plastic cones to deter or at least remind car owners that the little Chapel is alive, well and open today. At Harvest we still sell off produce from the Sunday and enjoy an afternoon tea even with very few people. It is a puzzle as to how we have a ministry at our stage of Church life to those in the village who walk past but seldom look in. There is a slow slumber kind of feel about the village although old photographs show that once it was altogether very different. Once there were all manner of shops and with no cars and limited public transport the village was self contained and provided everything needed. Genuine heartfelt prayers are said every Sunday and our hymns are heard across the green but we are part of a time past though God is all around us in our spirit and in the clues of nature which all villages display. Our witness is steadfast and stubborn, we too have a loyal clientele and just as much history. But the cars are not parked outside for worship even though the truths of God remain unchanged, they are just unread.

Rev Chris White. Minister of Mundford Methodist Church.

