

Churchwardens' Report

St. Mary's, Chesterton

It is a pleasure for us to submit this report to the Annual General Meeting. As always, a busy year.

We have celebrated all parts of the Christian year with once again Christmas and Easter being of note. At Christmas it was wonderful to - finally - have a "live" crib service. A packed church enjoyed a traditional nativity with, naturally, Sue's occasional twists to the tale. Deep thanks To Sue Ashdown for her hard work throughout the year and how she gets the children to act so well is a mystery to us.

School services were held, Chesterton Primary now having to hold two services with the increase in pupil numbers. It is great to have the schools use our facilities. Special thanks goes to Bruern for continued support.

We would also like to thank Phillip Clarke for ably leading the Tuesday prayers throughout the year. A small and dedicated band of worshippers.

Regular services continue to be supported, albeit with a small congregation. Perhaps the Church is having its own version of Long Covid. It is difficult to attract new members. That said we have had several new families this year so there is always hope.

Café Church continues as does Big Breakfast, the last of these being particularly memorable as having a very large attendance.

The annual Fete and Craft Fair was successful with its move to the Community Centre.

Churchyard

Lots of work throughout the year with a merry band of helpers. Recently we have had the Community Payback people doing great work and thanks to Fiona Rowe for enabling this. They have already made a difference and it is hoped that we can continue to use them for some time to come. We do have an "Everest" of cutting and trimmings. Ideas as to how to dispose if these (cheaply) would be well received.

Church Building

During the year we have changed all the light bulbs to energy saving as result of the energy audit. Other suggestions from the audit are more problematic and we looking at them. Major electrical works have been conducted and the chancel in particular is much better lit as a result.

Some pews were "temporarily" removed in the south aisle to give an idea of the space created. Generally we have a had positive comments to this and intend do the same with some other pews - never the central aisles of course.

A generous gift of a piano, courtesy of the Hutts, is a welcome addition.

We have started to have permanent tea and coffee facilities available to try and encourage people to come for private prayer, quiet times and have refreshment. Thanks to Jill and others for enabling this.

Re-order

At least one of your Churchwardens became a little depressed about this during the year, but things are moving - hopefully in the right direction. We have a good group looking at fundraising

and already a number of companies and organisations have been approached.

A church meeting with the DAC was surprise as we had about 15 people from a number of organisations attend. It was productive and it may be that we have the final? draft of the plans available at this meeting. Watch this space!!

Finally, and importantly, we give thanks to all who help towards the running of the church, flowers, cleaning, bell ringing and all the other tasks that are essential.

We give thanks to the PCC for its support and help throughout the year.

There will always be a challenge in running a small village church and we try very hard to rise to it.

David Attwood

Andrew Thomas