

21st Feb 2019

Dear sisters and brothers of St Michael's Church,

You will probably have heard by now that the church building was broken into on Tuesday night 19th February.

A lot of damage has been caused to the building, and a number of items of church property have been stolen, damaged or destroyed.

This act of destruction and desecration has shocked and saddened all those who have witnessed it.

A number of church members have been giving of their time, love and action to clean up and begin to make arrangements to restore church life to some normality.

Please pray for all involved in responding to this assault on St Michael's, especially Rosemary Thomson, Peter Rixson and Terry Pigram, Churchwarden and Deputies, and Philip Smith, Chairman of Fabric Committee.

We shall hold prayers for our church in St Michael's at 9.30 a.m. on Saturday 23rd February. Services will be held as usual on Sunday 24th at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Please come and join together as a community on any of these occasions as you are able, so that we can support one another and seek God's grace after this shocking event.

Please pray for the perpetrators as you are able. And remember the words of Jesus: ***In the world you have tribulation - but be of good courage; I have overcome the world!***

With my prayers and blessing,

Derwyn.

14th March 2019

Dear sisters and brothers of St Michael's Church,

THANK YOU - for all the prayers, messages of sympathy and concern, and the practical help offered and given in responding to the break-in on 20 February. Our congregation and community has truly come together in a really positive way following this shocking event.

Two people have been arrested in connection with the break-in and are on police bail. The property that was stolen has been recovered and is with the police as evidence.

Repairing the extensive damage is the main current focus. Estimates are being gathered and plans made in liaison with our architect, our insurers and the diocese. Please pray for this work to be as swift and uncomplicated as possible.

We anticipate that insurance will cover most of the costs involved. But there will be an excess to pay. And it may be that some repairs turn out not to be 'like for like' but enhance security in some way, in which case we may bear some additional cost to do this.

There is a Go Fund Me page set up by a parishioner, in case supporters in the community may wish to help St Michael's at this time. <https://www.gofundme.com/fjw3sz-breakin-at-st-michaels-church>

In due course we will be reviewing our security and considering if further helpful measures can be put in place to make St Michael's safer.

In the meantime thank you for being vigilant in and around the church. And thank you for continuing to pray and worship together, restoring peace, holiness and love to our building, after its recent painful desecration.

Derwyn Williams, Vicar.