

Churchwardens' Report on Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

In a post on Churchwardens England Facebook recently, a church warden admitted to falling asleep and missing a PCC meeting. For our wardens team, this is the stuff of nightmares, which I am sure Derwyn might share from time to time. As we come to the end of our third year, we have much for which to be thankful. We continue to seek to provide careful maintenance of our buildings, and the creation of welcoming and safe spaces in our church. We try to ensure compliance and continuity. None of this takes place without background structure and support from you, our church community.

Acknowledgement and sincere thanks are due to those who spend many hours offering such support: Graziana and the Finance Committee; the PCC; Katharine, our Parish Administrator; the Tower Committee, and band; the various sub-groups such as CSG, and the Music and Worship Group. To all who participate in, and support us in these, we extend our deep gratitude.

The liturgical year provides a gentle framework for our worship and church activities. The past twelve months has exceeded the previous year for output. We have welcomed more schools to end of term services, local choral groups, and societies; held recitals, welcomed the Women's Institute. All these are representative of but a few. We are always looking for more members of the congregation to steward our events so do approach one of the team if you would like to help.

Our congregation numbers are thriving, and the church is alive with joyful and prayerful worship, inspired by the choir and organ, readers, intercessors, and enthusiastic, praiseful participation from our younger members on First Sundays. We give thanks to Katharine's team, who deliver a Godly Play with such commitment each Sunday. This is an early and profound introduction to church life for our smallest ones, and a moment of reflection for parents and carers. Thus, it provides a really vital adjunct to our combined worship.

A highlight of the year for outreach has been the re-configuring of the Tiny Tots on Thursdays, under Heather's exemplary leadership, and her group of volunteers. The toddlers and pre-schoolers have a rambunctious time, and their adults receive welcome hot drinks, and fellowship. Helpers are always very much appreciated. (DBS checking is required.)

Fellowship has continued to flourish at St Michael's. We have enjoyed Quiz evenings, Barbecues and Coffee Mornings as well as Lenten lunches. Our sincere thanks go to those, who provide, cook and serve food for these occasions, including the Holly Fair. To those who tirelessly bake cakes and serve on the tea and coffee rotas throughout the year, including the Coffee Mornings, you are greatly appreciated.

As conservators of this beautiful Grade 1 listed building, and its curtilage, routine maintenance continues throughout the year. Just two weeks ago, a team of volunteers from the congregation led by Peter and Andrew worked on the roof, and grounds, tidying

Monuments and graves, removing weeds, and unblocking drains and gutters. They truly earned their tea and cake afterwards. We put out a call roughly three times a year for help with interior and exterior maintenance, in order to support the heavy load which otherwise falls on the shoulders of Terry and Peter. We are thankful to Martyn, who keeps the WCC garden under control and to Katharine also for the benches, funded by her incredible coastal walk with her husband.

Cowell House remains tenanted, providing a useful source of income for St Michael's and we thank Terry, once again for keeping on top of the maintenance on this valuable asset.

Our beautiful church is kept fragrant with arrangements created by Claire and her inspirational team throughout much of the year. Not forgetting to mention also our brilliant band of cleaning volunteers, who work tirelessly, even on the coldest of winter days to keep the church clean and in good order. We offer you our sincere gratitude.

This is a transformative time for churchwardens, and as we grapple with our other important concerns, health and safety, safeguarding, environmental issues and the General Synod's target for achieving net zero, there is some light on the horizon. We hope you are able to take time to look at the architect's drawings for the refurbishment of the ground floor Tower Room and the installation of a fully accessible lavatory. Our hopes are that this will provide a safer, lighter, warmer and more energy efficient area of the church.

Finally, I would like to echo our words of last year. It has been a great privilege to serve with such devoted and committed people, to have such willing and gifted volunteers, to be able to share worship, and the opportunity to go deeper into God together. Derwyn, the clergy team, and you our congregation, we thank you for guiding us, supporting us, and praying for us, and for giving us your trust, love and support.

The heart of being a churchwarden is responding to God's call, through God's people.

"Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor 10:31b

Claire and Gill

Peter, Terry, and Jonathan

Churchwardens

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