

Churchwardens Report 2020

Reflection on the year

We were once again privileged to be elected as your Churchwardens. We were both able to attend the Archdeacons Visitation in June in Tadley where we were officially admitted as Churchwardens by The Venerable Richard Brand, Archdeacon of Winchester.

Marion has continued her pastoral care work, making home visits in support of those in need in our community. This is a vital part of the ministry at St. Gabriel's it is hoped that this will continue to develop.

The final payment for the Buildings Project was made in 2019 and the works finally signed off as complete.

Both Kelvin and Marion have continued in the role of acting Treasurer for the last year working together to ensure that the money the church has is spent wisely to further our works in the community.

Sadly in June 2019 the Church was broken into, the office door forced open and the safe was stolen. Although the safe was then found the following day, it had been cut open and after taking the cash inside the contents were then set on fire. This resulted in the loss of our Marriage Registers and certificates, various other items kept in the safe, as well as damaging beyond repair our silverware. There was also considerable damage to the doors and the office. After spending much time speaking with the police, our insurers, the Registrars Office and the Diocese to get the break in reported we were able to make sure everyone who needed to know had been notified. Thankfully our insurance was able to ensure that the stolen and damaged items were replaced and new doors were fitted.

The Log Book and Terrier were lost when the safe was taken in the break in. A new one will be produced once current restrictions are eased.

Looking forward

A big part of the coming years will be continuing to focus on Giving and Stewardship, and also fundraising.

Stewardship put simply is the conscious act of how we give/use our time, skills and money in thanksgiving to all that God has provided. The Familiar offertory response “all things come from you, and of your own do we give you” reminds us that all that we have is sourced from God’s provision. Offering these gifts is a joyful act for the sake of God’s world and can be experienced and expressed in many ways.

We are encouraged to give time, skills and money to support the work of St Gabriel’s Church and that of other charities that build God’s Kingdom. Much of this giving may be regular giving from our income, but we should also consider what we will do with the wealth we accumulate.

We are asking everyone here at St. Gabriel’s to search their hearts and find the best way they can give to the family life of St. Gabriel’s. Whether it is time to help out, tea making, flower arranging, grass cutting, painting, cleaning, helping with children’s activities, or supporting others in need. Giving doesn’t have to be just about the money, and we are sure that everyone has a talent to offer to St. Gabriel’s.

While this report is a reflection on the year ending 2019 we are now nearer to the end of 2020. An APCM is normally held in April but obviously this just wasn’t possible this year. 2020 has turned out to be a difficult year for many, and a very different year to the one we were expecting and wishing for. We know that for many 2021 may bring challenges and difficulties and we hope and pray that we at St. Gabriel’s will continue to help and support each other with love and care.

Marion Davies and Kelvin Lewington

Churchwardens for St. Gabriel's Church