

## **St Mary's Church Temple Guiting**

The life of St Mary's is so intertwined with the lives of the local people. There were 6 weddings at the church in 2016 and 3 of these were local couples, which is always an especial joy. We had 5 baptisms- including the grandchild of Rex & Julia Bovill and, earlier this year, the great grandchild of Daphne Hickman.

The link between St Mary's and the farming community is very strong and we celebrate this at three major festivals. Our first Plough Sunday service was in January 2016 and we repeated it again this year. The service is for the blessing of the plough and the star of the show on both occasions has been Jimmy Arkell's vintage 'Fergie'. We moved October's Harvest Festival to a Saturday to link it explicitly with the Harvest Supper. This worked really well and we plan to do the same thing this year. Harvest Festival was even filmed as part of the Green Energy project! We also celebrate Rogation-tide (blessing of the crops) with a walk across the benefice. This year's Rogation Walk is on 21<sup>st</sup> May from Farmcote via Cutsdean and TG to Guiting Power. A second group will walk from the other end of the benefice; Lower Slaughter to GP. The walk will culminate with a celebratory Barn Service at GP. Anyone from across the benefice is most welcome to join us for all or part of the walk.

St Mary's link with Temple Guiting School is also very important to us. 2016 has been a difficult year for the school; a change of Headteacher, followed by the resignation of the new head on health grounds has been unsettling enough but this was very sadly compounded by the tragic death of a parent during the Christmas holidays. Members of the church have been very involved in supporting staff, parents and children, in particular Rev Katrina Scott who is one of the Governors as well as a parent of two children at the school and Tanya Robbins as Foundation Governor (appointed by the Parochial Church Council).

In addition to this supportive role Katrina has led many special services both for and involving the school.

I explained to the Parish Council at last year's AGM about the plans to transform the West End of the church building into a community space. Since then, we have held an 'open day' inviting people to view a display and to discuss the plans. Members of the Diocesan Advisory Committee have visited the church and encouraged us to apply for a Faculty. This is quite a lengthy process but we heard a couple of weeks ago that the DAC has approved the

plans subject to two minor amendments, which the architect is in the process of dealing with.

We are looking forward to hosting the Upper Windrush History Society next Monday and their guest speaker, the Grand Prior of the Knights Templar. Given the historical links between St Mary's and the Knights Templar, this promises to be a fascinating evening.

The PCC would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued financial contribution towards to maintenance of the churchyard. Running the church does cost money, both to maintain such an historic building and to pay for the ministry of our Rector. We are very grateful to all who contribute regularly and to the fantastic fundraising team. We try to make our fundraisers real village events, so our next one is the Summer Party at Sue Finlator's. Publicity and tickets will be out soon.

We are trying to get into the C21st and now have a Facebook page which advertises our services and other events. We also have a page on the 'A Church Near You' website.

Ali Clifton Barnard  
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