

St Mary's Church, Temple Guiting

We value the place of St Mary's in our local community and are encouraged that the link between the church, the local community and the school is a strong one. St Mary's is often a focus during times of celebration such as baptisms and weddings but also during times of suffering and loss. In 2018 we lost Geoff Wyatt who had been connected with St Mary's over many years and Bruce Coles, who had been PCC secretary and also Lay Chair of the North Cotswold Deanery. Bruce was significantly involved with St Mary's 'west end project' and had been instrumental in raising funds for this.

St Mary's is a rural church and we attach great importance to celebrating the changing seasons and their agricultural significance. We begin the year with a service for Plough Sunday in January. In May we celebrate Rogation-tide (blessing of the crops) with a walk across the benefice. This year's Rogation Walk is on 26th May from Farmcote via Cutsdean and TG culminating with a celebratory Barn Service at Guiting Power. Anyone from across the benefice is most welcome to join us for all or part of the walk.

The other great seasonal celebration is the Village Harvest Festival which is now held on a Saturday evening before the Harvest Supper. The gifts of produce from the village and school are donated to the North Cotswold Foodbank.

The major Christian festivals of Easter and Christmas are always well attended with over 140 people coming to the village Carol Service.

St Mary's link with Temple Guiting School is also very important to us. We welcome children, staff and parents from to special services throughout the year, including a Welcome Service, Harvest, Remembrance. Experience Easter and the annual Leavers' Service. A wonderful exhibition of artwork from the school, based on various spiritual themes was hosted at St Mary's in May 2018. A number of families with children at the school are regularly involved in our monthly Eleven4All services. The school choir regularly sings at the Carol Service and last month they joined our Party Pieces evening to great acclaim! Members of the church support the school by helping at the fete and attending other school events.

The PCC would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued financial contribution towards the 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. Our total outgoings last year were £20,523 with the Parish Share element of that being £13, 839.

We are very grateful to all who contribute regularly and to the fantastic fundraising team, which is a mix of regular, occasional and non-churchgoers. We always try to make our fundraising events real village occasions and in 2018 we ran two major events; a highly successful Safari Supper and the ever-popular annual Quiz Night. Our recent 'Party Pieces' evening was a great success, involving local acts from TG, Kineton and GP. Our next event in September is a performance of Shakespeare's 'As You Like It' by the Rain or Shine Theatre Company at Temple Guiting House. Publicity and tickets will be out soon.

Our fundraising is absolutely critical to the financial viability of St Mary's

The PCC is continuing to raise funds to transform the West End of the church building into a community space. We have raised over £20,000 from applications to various funders and currently have an application being considered by the Big Lottery Communities Fund. This is entirely separate from our regular fundraising for the work of the church.

We have a Facebook page which advertises our services and other events and a page on the 'A Church Near You' website.

Ali Clifton Barnard
15/05/2019