

 

 Vicar: John Rainer BA MBA

**May 1st Newsletter**

Dear friends,

Thank you to all who attended our Annual Parochial Meeting last Sunday and to all of you who tuned in to the live broadcast. If you haven’t been able to look at the documentation for this meeting yet, it remains available via the church website. The following business was transacted:-

* Hazel Wilmshurst was elected as Churchwarden for the coming twelve months. She continues in current responsibilities and will be officially sworn in at the Archdeacon’s Visitation on 29th June. With no other nominations, our search for a second Warden continues. Karen Parkinson will be seeking the Bishop’s permission to stand down. A presentation was made to Karen for her work as Warden in recent years.
* A number of statutory reports were received or passed, including the Fabric Report on our buildings, during which Karen reported that the recent appeal for extensive work on our Hall roof had raised £45,162. This is a very encouraging result : the group steering this appeal have now applied to eight funding bodies for assistance with the work. It is still possible to donate to this appeal if you haven’t done so – we are going to need to raise around £125,000 to complete it, and we would like to see it done this year.
* At the PCC election, thanks were expressed to Andy Thorlby and Elizabeth Wightman, both of whom are standing down having completed their terms. Four members were elected, Mark Davies, Karen Parkinson, Sue Pedley and Gemma Richards. We continue to carry one vacancy on the PCC and one on the Deanery Synod.
* In my report I thanked the Staff Team for their immense contribution to the work of the church over the past year. I very much hope that they will be able to find space for holidays and refreshment over the coming months as things open up. However, I also emphasised the need for us not to expect to move back to pre-Pandemic church life once restrictions come off. The remainder of this year is likely to be quite challenging in a lot of ways. I passed on the news that I have applied to the Diocese for a period of sabbatical leave in 2022, although it is by no means certain that this will be approved.

I was also able to mention that by the beginning of June, our neighbouring parishes of Windhill and St Paul’s Shipley will both be vacant and will enter the process of deciding what form of Anglican ministry might be appropriate there in the future. There will be encouragement from the Diocese to us to come together where possible, and one moment when this will happen will be on Ascension Day (May 13) when we will be opening our evening service of Holy Communion to friends from those parishes. You are encouraged to pray for Windhill, a very small congregation who are considering an interesting new approach to Anglican worship in their Local Ecumenical Project; and also to pray for Rev John Butler, Associate Minister at St Paul’s who will be shouldering the responsibility for the two church schools in the parish ; and for all those with responsibility for deciding the future shape of ministry at St Paul’s and throughout Shipley.

Finally I would ask for your prayers for the first meeting of our new PCC in May, as we begin to consider how our worship might look as we emerge from lockdown, how we can address environmental concerns meaningfully, and how we can prevent the rest of this year from being dominated by financial considerations as a result of the church roof appeal. As a church, may we come to know God’s love and provision more deeply as we trust Him for our future needs.

With love and prayers,

**John Rainer**

God of all, we cry out to you for help.
In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Protect us, Lord, and be with us
especially those of us most vulnerable
during this coronavirus crisis.

Move us to reach out in love
to our neighbours near and far.
So that the humble may be exalted,
the hungry filled with good things.

Grant us the courage
not to rush back to our old ways,
but to rebuild our world together,
creating foundations of justice,
with equality and peace for all.

Amen.



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