

Warden's Report 2009/10

Some parts of the report refer to the whole parish, i.e. St Thomas' and St Peter's, some specifically to St Thomas' as there is a separate report for St Peter's.

I start this year's Warden's Report with the same words as last year's report: *'this year has been one of great change and activity'*.

Leadership

The leadership structure has been re-modeled. A DCC for St Thomas' has been formed, as approved at last year's APCM. The new DCC has worked well, sorting out many of the day to day issues that affect the running of the church and leading from the front when things need doing. The work St Thomas' DCC and the existing St Peter's DCC does frees up the PCC to concentrate on strategic items concerning the parish.

St Thomas' Fabric Report

St Thomas' Church is generally in good repair. The lead that was stolen off the roof last year has been replaced, extra storage has been built in 'Ted's Vestry' and the Church Office has been refurbished (partly to accommodate CVM). There is an issue with some peeling plaster in the nave and a small hole in the ceiling in the south west corner of the nave. These are being addressed. One sour note –the small safe that was in the wall in the west porch was ripped out and stolen during the year.

Staff

Ruth Turner joined us as **Curate**, Gaz Simmonds as **Worship and Parish Assistant** and Karen Herrick part time as **Children's Ministry and Community Outreach Co-ordinator**. They have brought an added dimension to our church with several new initiatives and they complement our existing staff team of Matt Barnes (Rector), Audrey Smith (Minister at St Peter's), Anne Hewitt (Parish Administrator) and Gemma Machin (Youth and Children's Worker). We have also been formed a partnership with the organisation CVM (Christian Vision for Men) who are based in our church office. Kat Witham, who was our Assistant Youth Worker, left us to study at Chester University.

The New St Thomas' Parish Centre

It has been a year of planning, forms, permissions etc. Last autumn we 'broke the ground' and physically tested the ground. We have now appointed contractors and work should start in May.

St Thomas' New Initiatives

Several new initiatives have been started up including 'Messy Church', church family walks, six a side football and men's nights out. One of the main purposes of these initiatives is to encourage non church goers to have contact with the church and church people in an environment they are comfortable with. The other major initiative is our '1000 Days of Prayer' and having St Thomas' open every morning for prayer.

View from the Pews

We must be doing something right at St Thomas' and St Peter's. The easiest way to show this is because our numbers are up. In fact it is quite hard as Warden to keep up with all new arrivals. However numbers are not the only measure. Someone remarked to me the other day that they could really sense the Holy Spirit in St Thomas'. This is true both on Sundays and on weekday morning when the church is open.

Thanks

There are too many people to thank by name for the work they do, most of it behind the scenes. One of the roles of a Church Warden is to ensure that the clergy 'can conduct their services without hindrance'. Our Wardens at St Peter's and Deputy Wardens at St Thomas' have an

important role in helping the Church Wardens ensure this happens. So I would like to thank Mark Marsden and Diana Hinchliffe, Wardens at St Peter's, for their service during the last year. (Mark is standing down and to date we have not got a replacement.) Also Bernard Blanksby, Michael Mann, Phil Bird, Sian Benson, Tim Wheeler and Graham Brown, Deputy Wardens at St Thomas' for all their invaluable help each Sunday. In addition, thanks to Irene Jones, who stood down as Deputy Warden at the end of 2009. My final thanks go to my fellow warden, Karen Riley who has done an enormous amount of work both on Sundays and the rest of the week.

To conclude

It has been a busy year and I am sure next year will be equally as busy. We will need the Holy Spirit, personal generosity and hard work to help us. I can't wait for the World Cup to start in June. Multiply my excitement by a factor of a million for the Parish Centre to start in May!

However as well as the Parish Centre there are lots of other things to be done. They may appear small but are vitally important. For example the welcome we give people. Everyone new or who comes occasionally needs to be welcomed. There are fifty or so new people on the electoral role. How many of these people do you know? Could you come on a Sunday a bit earlier and be ready to welcome people? Refreshments are an important way of welcoming. Could you volunteer to help?

Ruth brought us a word from God a couple of weeks ago:

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? (Isaiah 43:19)

God is giving us the tools: the new Parish Centre, new staff, new church members, new services and the CVM partnership to name a few. We need to perceive what God wants us to do with them and get on and do it!

Mark Hoare and on behalf of Karen Riley, Church Wardens