

Vicar's Letter for August 2017

Dear Friends

What a wonderful day we had for our **Garden Party** on Saturday July 8th! The sunny weather certainly helped to make it such a good day and we raised over £1,000 which was fantastic, but more than that there was such a positive atmosphere with a happy buzz due to the many people who came and really enjoyed themselves. Thank you to everyone who made it such a success: those who organised and set up the tables and gazebos, those who ran stalls and prepared the food and refreshments, those who cleared up afterwards as well as those who made donations of money and items to sell and those who came and spent their money. It all made for a very friendly, happy and relaxed community day.

Our next event will be our **Parish Barbecue** on Sunday August 13th from 12noon. All are welcome to come to this. There will be sausages and burgers for all. But if you are coming please may we ask you to bring a salad or a desert or non-alcoholic drinks to share? Let's hope for good weather again so we can sit outside.

In my last letter I talked of the new **singing group** which will start up in September - a Gareth Malone style for all those who enjoy singing but who perhaps don't have a lot of musical knowledge. Steven Robinson, our new organist and director of music, will run it. The first monthly practice of the group will be in church on **Friday 15th September 7-8pm**. It will practice items for our 175th Anniversary Service on 17th September. Do let me know if you'd like to be part of the singing group. I already have a number of people interested and excited about it. Or just turn up on 15th September and join in.

Our new style **Worship @ 10** service is going well. People say how much they are enjoying it. If you haven't tried it yet, do come along. It takes place on every 3rd Sunday of the month at 10am. With a relaxed, informal structure on power-point with hymns, we hope it will be something everyone can enjoy - those who have been members of St Matthew's for a long time, as well as those who aren't used to church but want to explore faith and those who perhaps are looking for a way to return to church. Do let people know and invite them to come along. They will be sure of a warm welcome!

Our shared services with the **Deaf church** are a firm fixture at St Matthew's, and have been for many years. In order to further develop and strengthen our shared worship we will from September be having every 4th Sunday of the month's service signed with an interpreter. Our service will remain as a Parish Eucharist, using the High Altar and our service booklets as normal. All that will be different is that it will be signed.

At our recent PCC meeting last month, we decided to work towards getting a proper **projector screen** installed which would be raised and lowered electronically and a fixed projector. When not in use the screen would be raised and hidden from view. This will all be of great benefit for our Deaf friends during our shared services as well as for our more informal services, such as **Worship @ 10**, when we have the service projected onto a screen. To have one permanently in place will make things easier and safer. Of course, this project will cost a lot of money - we are looking at £7,000-8,000 - so we are looking at fundraising, funding and donations for this. Is this something you would like to give to?

Our **Church Garden** is enjoyed by so many people, either by walking through or sitting on one of our benches in the sunshine to enjoy a bit of peace and stillness with the beautiful roses and the lovely planting outside the choir vestry. Likewise, a local nursery come when the weather is kind and the little children are able to run around and play games on the grass. We are pleased that we can offer this green space for our community. And we have some generous members of St Matthew's who pick up the litter on a regular basis and give their time to cut back the shrubs and bushes, weed and plant to ensure it is looking well cared for and attractive for those who use it. We will now be installing a compost heap in one corner, and we hope that we can develop our garden to encourage more people to enjoy it. Is this something you would like to help with?

We wish you a happy August and some time for relaxation and holiday.

With every blessing  
Kate