

Churchwarden's Chatterbox A review of 2017

I hope you all had a peaceful and relaxing Christmas.

2017 was an eventful year for St. Matthew's Church as it was the 175th Anniversary of the consecration of the present building, although there has been a church or chapel on the site since the 14th Century and maybe longer.

We were very sad to lose our Choirmaster Philip Holt, who passed away in the first week of the year after 40 years of faithful service at St Matthew's.

Our first event of the year was on January 22nd which was our Away Day. We held this at St Clements Branch Church, Urmston, it was well attended and there were many ideas and wishes forthcoming for our plans for the future of St Matthew's and our mission in the community of Stretford.

On 11th February, we held our first Quiz Night then also on 3rd June & 7th October in the Church Hall. During these events there were a series of questions based on a variety of subjects. Nibbles and refreshments were also provided. These quiz nights were popular and more are planned for the future.

An auction was held on March 11th at which £500 was raised. All proceeds went to the church clock repair fund.

During the year we have hosted three choral concerts, Duodecimo, an evening with a male voice choir and a ladies choir then in October the Urmston Choral Society presented "Songs From The Shows"

On May 20th, we had our annual Plant & Ploughman's lunch.

At our annual Garden Party which was held on July 8th, we had various stalls and games such as hook-a-duck, name the teddy, tombola and many more including "Soak the Churchwarden" where I got locked in the stocks, drenched by sopping wet sponges and forgotten about!

On August 13th we had our Parish BBQ in the church grounds, this event was well attended and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The following weekend August 17th–21st a small group visited the apostle church in Leipzig Germany with whom we have close connections with regular exchange visits to share in celebrating their 800th anniversary of the church and the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's Reformation.

During the weekend of September 16th & 17th we celebrated our 175th anniversary. On the Saturday we had our annual Flower & Craft Festival Exhibition in church and on the Sunday we had a special celebration service attended by many with past connections with St Matthews.

On the weekend of Nov 11th & 12th we held our annual Charities Fair in the Church Hall. This turned out to be a great success for all with various charities, they were very happy with all the support and contribution from all who attended this event.

At the time of writing, we are looking forward to all of our Advent and Christmas Services!

Thank you all for your support this special year of 2017
I wish you all a very happy new year!

Colin Hooley

(Thank you to Sara & Kim Boskovic and Anne Hooley for their input towards this article)