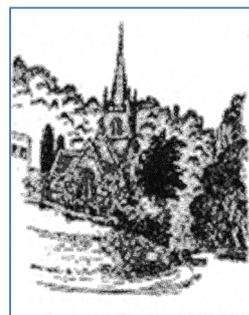


The United Benefice of

St. Mary's Church Cromford and Holy Trinity Church Matlock Bath

Vicar's Report for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2016



Creating Cultures of

Welcome,

Fun,

Expectation,

Evangelism

Do you juggle? With skittles or balls?

Or just with life which is often a juggling act!

Sometimes it'll be easy or cool



Sometimes fun!



Or busy



Or dangerous!



Or confusing!



Even messy!



Aaah! Life!

Aaah! Church Life!

Philippians chapter 1 verses 3-6:

“ I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

This year I'm thanking you all for your love, prayers and service to the Lord without naming anyone. Apart from Val that is. So thank you all and thank you Val.

1 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 27:

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” We are in it together!

In the monthly Notices we have Nick's Notes the idea of which is to keep you clearly informed on what's going on in our Churches, and some extras about the Parishes and wider afield. They are also intended to increase our sense of ownership of all that we do, for we are 'one body', called by the Lord to fulfill His purposes at this time in this place. I've spent sometime reviewing all twelve of them in order to write this report. They cover a lot of ground and show how much goes on at St. Mary's and at Holy Trinity. So many ministries and gifts are exercised in all that goes on, thank you for your love, prayers, work and faithfulness. One thing I've noticed that we need to be better at is seeing things through. The classic example is how long it took to reorder the kitchen and toilets - which are great. However this is the first phase and we don't seem to be able to progress with the next phase such as replacing the pews with chairs. Mission Action Plans (MAPs) is another thing that seems to be stuck. We also need to refocus on the overseas Missions that we've supported for years and continue with Following and Fishing.

There are numerous reasons for some things not being seen through to the end.

Firstly, starting with me! I'm good at ideas and starting things and weaker at seeing them through, and need the complimentary skills and gifts of "finishers" that we have in the congregations

Secondly, the Agendas and conduct of both PCCs. Both are very good Councils and work hard. St. Mary's is the more relaxed of the two reflecting the gentler church life in general. Holy Trinity PCC has mellowed and become less confrontational and we are growing in relationship and trust. The addition of new folk, all ladies, has helped this a lot. Again thinking of Holy Trinity PCC we need to meet more often and be stricter with the Agenda. You may remember that in one of Nick's Notes last year I quoted Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury from his Lambeth Lecture:

“I want to start by saying just two simple sentences about the church.

First, the church exists to worship God in Jesus Christ.

Second, the Church exists to make new disciples of Jesus Christ. Everything else is decoration.

Some of it may be very necessary, useful, or wonderful decoration – but it’s decoration.”

When our new PCC’s meet perhaps we’ll divide the Agendas into two; “wonderful decorations” and “the Church existing to worship God in Jesus Christ and making disciples of Jesus Christ.”

Thirdly, we’re smallish congregations though with much experience and maturity. We have many retired people who have different priorities and may not have the energy they used to. They may also have family commitments which quite rightly take up time and energy.

Fourthly, we need more prayer and abiding in the vine (John chapter 15.) The monthly Church Prayer Meetings have been so good as we listen and talk, sing, read the Scripture and have times of stillness. I’d like to have these Prayer Meetings more often.

Fifthly, spiritual warfare. We have a defeated enemy who hates the Lord and His Church.

Sixth and lastly, see juggling above!

Visitors love coming to both Churches and make positive comments on the welcome and the services - thank you, a great reflection on us all. You probably realise that visitors often come as a result of looking us up on line. Complimen to our webmasters. Some vsitors are on holiday, others house and/or church hunting. Some of the latter stay, are “added to our number” as Acts says. Definitely our gain!

Both Cromford and Holy Trinity Schools are doing well, do continue to pray for them. A special thank you to the Slawson Trust who generously provide books and publicity for the schools.

Many thanks for your faithful giving over the years which has enabled both Churches to pay their 2015 Common Fund in full - previously Parish Share. St.Mary’s are grateful for the Arkwright Trust and St. Mary’s Restoration Committee, both are independent of St. Mary’s, who finance building work and repairs. Holy Trinity have benefited from their faithful giving over the years which will enable the quinquennial roof repairs to be done and paid for. Both Churches will use all undesignated funds up this year so we’ll need to have some more prayer, teaching and increased giving.

We should always remember and give thanks for those in the wider Diocese. I have excellent clergy colleagues in the Wirksworth Deanery – soon to be joined to the Ashbourne Deanery and called the Carsington Deanery. The staff at Church House in Derby are very friendly and work hard on our behalf. Bishop Alastair leads us so well, envisioning us, and encouraging love for the Lord with devotion to prayer and Scripture.

With every blessing for the remainder of this year.

2016 Church Text

***Simon Peter answered Jesus,
“Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.”***

John 6 v 68



When we commit to a vision to do something that has never been done before, there is no way of knowing how to get there. We simply have to build the bridge while we walk on it.

Who we become in the process is as important as the achievements on the ground.