

St. Mary's – What do you think?

YOUR FEEDBACK – February 2017 Update

In April last year we collected feedback from the congregation on a number of issues: on the Lent programme (the Lent groups and the Lent Midweek Communion), the changes made to the Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday services, the trial changes to the North Transept, the back of the church and the porch, as well as any other general comments anyone had about any aspect of church life.

The response was wonderful; 61 questionnaires and 45 other comments (comment slips, letters and emails) were returned.

Since then the Ministry Team and the PCC have considered all the data and responded as follows:

The **North Transept** was the area that was causing the most concern and was completely reinstated.

A working party is continuing to draft proposals for permanent changes to the **Back of the Church and Porch**, in accordance with the feedback.

The feedback about **Lent and Easter** is being taken into account as the Ministry Team plans for the same period this year.

The remaining **Anything Else?** feedback was reviewed at the PCC meetings held in September and November. From that section of the feedback (199 separate statements in all) there were 3 main conclusions:

We are experienced as a welcoming, friendly church, but not far under the surface is discontent and division.

Many of the problems reported can be related to poor communication.

There is strong feeling that the necessary repairs/improvements to the building/lighting/sound etc should be done as soon as possible.

The PCC was very keen that these findings should be reported back to the congregation with information about how they are being addressed.

Discontent and Division

The PCC agreed that it was critical to address the discontent and division, and that the place to begin with that, was with the PCC itself. So, starting at the PCC meeting held on 31st January 2017, the PCC is following a six-session programme called *PCC Tonight?* which will help us learn to communicate more effectively and to function well so that we may better help the church fulfil the mission and ministry of Christ in our parish.

Communication

A Communications Team (Liz, Rachel, Elaine and Ruth) has been in existence since April last year and has considered many aspects of internal and external communication. At a recent PCC meeting (November), we presented our proposals for work on 6 priority

areas: Website, rotas, future feedback/consultation, dissemination of meeting information (PCC and other groups), external church noticeboards and the parish administration role and function. Work on each of these areas is ongoing. The Communications Team will continue to meet throughout 2017 and is pleased to welcome Stevyn Walder as another member.

Building Work

The most urgent repairs and building projects are being attended to as part of an agreed schedule of work.

Following the recent Quinquennial Report, the Finance & General Purpose Committee is undertaking the following actions (among many others):

- Work to repair the vestry flat roof has now been completed. This work has a 20-year guarantee.
- We are working with our insurers to consider the chimney flue leak and subsequent damage to the murals in the chancel. We will then take this forward using approved contractors, ensuring that the work is undertaken ASAP to prevent further damage. We will then look to repair the murals.
- Consideration of a range of new lighting schemes is underway, with a view to choosing our preferred solution and applying for a faculty for this work to be undertaken.
- Porch gutters have been cleared and vegetation has been removed. The working party will continue to replace the damaged porch window oak strips and remove/treat fungus growth.
- All the noted slipped slates to the church roof are to be repaired.

Further work has begun to seek quotes for a new sound system and other repairs (e.g. to the bell tower door and the organ swell shutters) have been carried out. The current organ problems are being dealt with. Also, the House & Hall Committee that is responsible for maintaining Church House has drawn up and fully costed a large list of required maintenance matters. The PCC has given approval for the majority of these to be undertaken in 2017.

Once again, the PCC thanks you very much for your involvement in the feedback exercise. Another opportunity for feedback will be offered this year, from mid-March onwards, in advance of the APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) to be held on Sunday 30th April. Further information will be available shortly.

If you would like any more information, please talk with any member of the PCC.

The Ministry Team
6th February 2017