

## View from the pew

*Janet Bird*

Can you believe it? This really is my last View from the Pew. Where have the last 4 years gone? They do say that time flies when you are enjoying yourself and I have to say that it has been both a pleasure and a privilege to serve a second term as Churchwarden here at All Saints.

Much has changed over the last 4 years. We now have new noticeboards, replacing the old one just before it gave up and fell down. The lighting scheme in the Memorial Chapel has been completed, as well as improved lighting around the font and in the choir rehearsal area. We have had to repair the Kempe window and also to replace one of our boilers and the pump.

We have had some spectacular fund raising events, including Christmas Tree and Posy festivals and we have taken part in some very special services. These included a Christian Unity service on a day in January when we had thick snow and most people had to walk to get here, the services last year to commemorate World War I, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and most especially Ginni's ordination to the Priesthood, surrounded by her family and friends.

There has been sadness as we have had to come to terms with the passing of many of our good friends and in my own life the passing of both my Mum and Dad, but there has also been great joy. Colin and I were blessed with the arrival of our second granddaughter Florence May, Jo and Doug were blessed with the arrival of their first grandchild and even allowed us all to share in the pleasure by holding his baptism on Easter Day and we were all so proud when Jo was made an honorary Canon of St Albans Abbey.

This is just a very small part of what has happened during the last 4 years but what is common to everything is that without the family of All Saints, supporting, encouraging and working really hard in so many ways,

providing wonderful music, flowers, refreshments and spiritual leadership and ministry, we would have achieved very little.

When finances have been difficult many people have dug deep to give sacrificially or have thought up brilliant fund raising ideas to avoid our Treasurer having too many sleepless nights. We have enjoyed many social events and seem to have fed the 5,000 on a number of occasions, and, of course, all this will carry on under the leadership of Janet and Helen.

There is much to look forward to in the next few months as we welcome Bishop Michael on 17th May and then cater for the Archdeacon's visitation on 19th May (offers of help will be gratefully received).

We will also be hosting the Reader Licensing Service in June.

Our usual Plant Sale and Coffee Morning will be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May followed the next day by the Civic Service to welcome our new Town Mayor. Looking further ahead Colin and I look forward to welcoming you to a fund raising Garden Party on 18<sup>th</sup> July when (weather permitting) you will be able to come and enjoy afternoon tea in our garden.

Thank you

to Andrew and Janet for their support and friendship during the last 4 years,  
to Derek for keeping me on my toes regarding the fabric of the church,  
to Dorothy for her enthusiasm and artistry,  
to Martin for the uplifting music,  
to Jo and Ginni for their support and encouragement in my ministry,  
to Colin and Martin for their love and their attempts to curb my enthusiasm when it threatens to run amok, and to Team All Saints for being there.

Yours in Christ, Janet.