

## View from the pew

Colin Bird

My main focus this quarter has been on our finances. We budgeted to lose £10,000 in the first half of the year – and we did!! Hopefully we'll break even or better in the second half but the budget for the year presented to the APCM and which projected a loss of £9,000 over the whole year looks like coming to pass. Our General reserves at 30 June 2017 are £24,000 so at the present rate we have 2 years or so to get straight.

As I have said on a number of occasions now, we are too reliant on too few people giving substantial amounts. What is described as the "Stewardship" model (that is when the congregation stump up more and more money year on year to keep things going), some would say has had its day; even though it has been successful in the past. It succeeded the old model of Patronage (where rich benefactors paid for the church and its upkeep).

Whatever we call the new model, it has to create a sustainable future for All Saints and the church has to take its mission out into the community rather than basing mission primarily within the walls – the building needs to become a space the community wants to use extensively, so that the burden of upkeep falls less on us.

In June we published the major topics for the PCC so that at our July meeting we debated our vision and strategy. We considered, as planned, a draft report to HeartEdge and expect to finalise this by the end of August so that we can welcome them into All Saints in the autumn. After this we really have to put plans into action to give All Saints a sustainable future.

In July, the Diocese was awarded development funding by the Church Commissioners for a major project to create 180 new Fresh Expressions of Church over the next 5 years and to support growth in the 100 or so we already have.

The investment will put in excess of £3 million over 5 years into the growth agenda. Many lay leaders will be identified for training and the great push will come from the parishes, seeking to make 8,000 new disciples of Christ. This will be a major challenge. Are we up to it at All Saints?

On 9<sup>th</sup> September we are hosting a coffee morning. This is when the Bike & Hike event runs across Hertfordshire in support of the Historic Churches Trust and brings us many visitors. Also taking place on that day is the striking (bell ringing) competition, when we are expecting 100 ringers and supporters to be with us. All Saints will be providing lunches on the day and offers of help would be gratefully received by Janet B. Please support everyone involved on that day, which promises to be a very busy one!

A few dates in October for your diaries:-

On 1<sup>st</sup> October we will be having a Harvest Lunch in St John's Hall

On 21<sup>st</sup> October there will be a wine tasting at the Bird's house

On 23<sup>rd</sup> October the PCC will be meeting to consider Worship, Outreach, Mission and Young People. Please come to the meeting to contribute your views – all are welcome for this agenda item

*Yours in Christ, Colin Bird*

## Cleaning crisis

We are desperately short of volunteers in our cleaning teams to keep our church looking spick and span.

Are any of you able to help in any small way even if it is only for an hour, it would be very much appreciated. Times can be arranged to suit your availability.

Please talk to Andrew Povey-Richards.'