

Churchwardens' Report

2021 was a difficult year with the lockdown restrictions and the need for the congregation to be safe when in the church. With masks, hand gel and sitting in every other pew as well as doors and windows open we managed and the churchwardens were pleased to ensure Richard had a good number to minister to each week throughout. Unfortunately right at the end of the year we found our electrical heating was not able to operate fully and so the church remains rather chilly in temperature but not hopefully in its welcome.

We were delighted to finalise the extension of the Churchyard by Bishop Debbie coming to consecrate the new ground and now we have a fine headstone in place to mark the extension.

Andy Ward & Pat Mennie



St. Mary's music 2021 - 2022

The report begins with a familiar sentence: Music continues to be an important part of our worship. The choir numbers are still low, except at Evensong when on many occasions the choir is boosted by singers from St. John's and the larger group of churches. Gradually, music making is recovering from its Covid restrictions. We are able to offer a choir for weddings and funerals, often sourcing and rehearsing chosen pieces at short notice. Vespers have become a regular and delightful addition to Evensong since Richard joined us. The organist would love to hear requests for favourite hymns and anthems – we love variety, but also a reminder of old favourites. We anticipate organising our own 'Songs of Praise' service which will include favourite hymns with a short introduction by those who have chosen them.

However, finding someone to play the organ at short notice is still a problem. Family commitments and the occasional holiday do make this necessary. Peter Roper-Curzon delights us by playing for some of our special services and Gillian Fissler is finding her pedalling feet at our organ and has played for many services in the last year. We have enjoyed her playing and look forward to hearing more at services in the future. Thanks to both of you!

Our outdoor Christmas Eve service was a resounding success. It became instantly 'indoor' when a deluge struck us just as the service was starting! This did not deter the congregation of over 100, who sang lustily and enjoyed carol requests. 'Jingle Bells' was somehow included in the programme! St. Mary's needs new recruits to its choir; we meet for an hour before Evensong services, so do please come along. No experience is necessary, just a desire to sing. Residents or visiting musicians who would like to play our organ are always welcomed. Please contact Leo for information.

Leo Gibb (01590 626603)

leogibb@btinternet.com