

Reading All Saints

News

Friday Lunches in Lent

Now that Lent is over the Friday lunches may continue into the summer, probably at monthly intervals. Watch the weekly bulletin for announcements.

New Parish

The new parish of St Mark and All Saints commenced on October 1st last. This will herald many changes to the structures of the parish (including this website) and the ways in which we do things. It will take time. Watch this space.

Free School

All Saints Junior School, one of the first of Michael Gove's Free Schools, commenced operations in the Downshire Room at the Church Hall in September last year after a lengthy gestation period involving much work, principally by CfBT, the charity trust running the School, and also by some Church members and parents. In the autumn of this year the School will transfer to its new premises, the converted August House in Brownlow Road. The contractors Mansell have started work on August House recently (on January 16th). Mansell's motto is "do it on time"; let's hope they live up to it. Meanwhile our Church welcomes the presence of this ground-breaking initiative and we are privileged to have the very first school class working on our premises for one academic year.

Electrical Refurbishments

As a condition of our insurance policies we have had to conduct extensive inspections and remedial works to our electrical installations in both Church and Hall. This has not been without delay, expense and some heart-searching. We are pleased to report that all the necessary work has now been done to bring our systems up to modern standards at a total cost of about £15,000. This seems expensive until you consider that this updating has not been done for fourteen years in the Church, many more years in the case of the Hall. It is hoped that new lighting for the Church may be fitted in the near future.

Friendly Faces

The toddlers group of this name meets every Wednesday morning in the Hall in school terms. A new website advertises its wares - see the link on the home page entitled "for toddlers".

Hard work for the Churchwardens

We all give thanks to our two Churchwardens, Jill and Alison, who have, over recent months, undertaken a wide variety of tasks which have come out of two almost simultaneous inspections which we have received (suffered??). The first was an inspection by our Insurers, Ecclesiastical Insurance, which raised a variety of issues to do with safety, including, amongst

others, fire precautions, lightning conductors and the safety of our electrical systems. The second was the five-yearly inspection by the Diocese-appointed surveyor of the fabric. This raised a number of separate issues concerning the Church Building. All of these issues are being pursued by Jill and Alison. This is on top of the work to expand the Children's Corner which is now finally complete, and has involved sensitive re-arrangement of some of our 130-year-old oak pews, the relocation of the fan heater, provision of extra loudspeakers and re-carpetting, as well as new furniture.

Plans

Embryonic plans are being discussed to visit again the thorny question of having a toilet actually inside the church. There are significant difficulties in deciding where the toilet should go, and these have not yet been fully resolved. The churchwardens have again been to the fore, working hard for our parishioners. After much work and soul-searching they have shown that the only viable place for an internal toilet inside the church building is to place it in the Choir Vestry. However, the PCC are apparently not happy with this, and discussions continue. The difficult issues are (a) the position of existing drains, (b) reluctance to have a toilet towards the front of the church, for reasons of potential embarrassment during services, and (c) aesthetic factors which will require diocesan approval. In spite of the reluctance of the PCC it is hoped that this scheme can be realised quickly and that this facility can then be put in place. The stark alternative is to shelve the project altogether.

We have been talking about this very desirable project for many years. However, it has to go through a plethora of bureaucratic hoops even after we have decided what we want to do - then there is the raising of money!!

The scheme may also involve a "tea point" at the back of the church together with improvements in the lighting in this area. Watch the draft PCC minutes which are now being posted regularly (at least, they should be) on the church noticeboard.