

ALL SAINTS MESSENGER

SUNDAY 3rd FEBRUARY 2019

10.30am Morning Praise

SUNDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2019

10.30am Holy Communion



A very warm welcome to All Saints. If you are a visitor, we do extend a particularly warm welcome to you. If you would like any help or more information about the church or the services, then please speak to one of the welcome team. Back Supports and large print copies of hymns are available, as well as in induction hearing loop – please ask for details of how to make use of this. Toilets & baby changing facilities are located at the back of the church under the bell tower. Children are very welcome at all our services and there are activities available for them. If you have young children, please ask for a ‘pew bag’ which contains some specific toys/activities for them or please make use of the children’s area. Please check the notices for children’s activities.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

WEDNESDAYS

THE JOLLY TEAPOT 11am -1.00pm

You’ll see this sign hanging on the gate of All Saints every Wednesday morning, when the Church is open from 11.00am until 1.00pm. Come in for a chat and coffee and cake, (or tea). It’s also a good opportunity for visitors to look round the Church and avail themselves of the printed guides, or for people to bring food items for the Salvation Army Food Bank. Some people may just want to sit quietly. All will be welcome. Donations for coffee go to All Saints Church Funds.

HOLY COMMUNION 10.30am

Monthly Midweek Holy Communion – First Wednesday in the month, now permanently in the Church, preceding The Jolly Teapot. Join for coffee afterwards.

FIRST STEPS 2pm -3pm (in term time)

For pre-schooler’s & their parents/grandparents/carers – Stories, Songs, Craft, Activities, Refreshments. All Welcome

MOTHERS’ UNION 2pm – 3pm

Held monthly on the 2nd Wednesday of the month in the Methodist Hall. Everyone welcome.

THURSDAYS

LADIES QUEST DISCUSSION GROUP 8pm-9.30pm

Meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursday of the Month further details from Jane Bullock on 711 531

BELL RINGING 6.00pm – 7.00pm

Church Bellingring practice every Thursday, please contact Richard Solesbury-Timms on 07456716031 for details.

SUNDAYS

MENS GROUP 8.00pm – 9.30pm

For further details please contact Peter Mackie on 711 935. *Please check with group leaders as some activities may run differently during holiday periods.*

PRAYER - If you have an urgent prayer request you can activate the prayer chain at any time. Please call or text either Di (01295 713838 or 07711 237 389) or Mary (07842 162 795) *All prayer requests treated with confidentiality.*

January 2019

Report to the Chancellor concerning the Temporary Licence for the reordering of the pews and chairs in All Saints Church, Middleton Cheney.

Purpose of the report

We request a renewal of the temporary licence which expires on 6 February 2019 as we still have no resolution with the DAC on the future seating arrangements for the church.

The journey so far

In 2000 a faculty was granted to permit the removal of some pews within the nave of the church and the introduction of some chairs. The Faculty allowed for some variation of the core seating plan, but at that time the pews were in the front half of the church and the chairs were in the back half with some rows having chairs at the end of the pews. The Faculty granted the Rector the authority to modify the seating arrangements.

2015

In 2015, our then new Rector (now departed) decided to swap these around, putting the pews at the back and chairs at the front. The back half of the church has a more limited space due to the existence of a ramp up to our servery and toilet, so 6 of the pews were moved into storage.

The PCC, some in the church and the village were supportive of this change. However, some of our members were vocal in their opposition to this change.

Retrospectively a licence was applied for, and a temporary licence was granted in January 2016.

2016

The PCC decided that the single issue of the pews was so divisive in the church, that we needed to give a vision and test out in the church and community what support there was for the future use of the building and therefore how we could best arrange the church to meet the various needs. This is especially challenging as we have no church hall.

We therefore drew up potential ideas, consulting with the church members and the village. We worked closely with the DAC during this process, culminating in a visit to the church by 15 people representing the key organisations organised by the DAC on 2 December 2016.

We looked at ideas for new heating, lighting, improving access to the building, changing the vestry, creating a new side chapel, as well as the options for pews and chairs.

2017

A further temporary licence was granted in January 2017.

The DAC reported their recommendations in February 2017, congratulating us for the way we were approaching this work. They required us to use their consultants for lighting and heating to draw up detailed plans for updating our systems, which we have done at considerable expense. Our church architect has also drawn up the plans for improvements to access – which involves building a ramp to access the front of the church, while removing the rear ramp to give easier step-free access to our toilet.

He has also drawn up the plans to reorganise our vestry once the antiquated floor heating boiler is removed, plus the ordering of the new side chapel (using shorted pews) with increased height storage cupboards, an idea which came from the DAC visit. The DAC also required us to have all the pews dated and the history researched, which we also did at considerable expense. All this material was gathered together and submitted to the DAC in December 2017. It has also been on display in the church since this time, where it has been positively received by the church and the village.

2018

A further temporary licence was granted in February 2018.

The DAC responded positively about the lighting and heating systems and the access plans.

They also liked the creation of the side chapel.

On the pews there was apparently significant differences of opinion on the committee, but the overall requirement was for us to bring back all the pews into the church, using some of them in the side chapel, and having the rest in the nave.

This would in effect mean leaving the seating in the nave as it is currently, since the pews in storage is the same number we would shorten to use in the side chapel.

In addition, one member of the DAC, Tony Fleming, wished to make another visit to the church. This he did on 26th March 2018, reporting back to the DAC in April. He also made suggestions for further changes, some of which conflicted with the guidance given to us following the first visit.

We responded to the DAC in July commenting on the DAC proposals and requesting a visit from the chair of the DAC. This occurred on 28th August and led to a further submission to the DAC in October. We received the attached letter in December 2018.

2019

We therefore have to apply to a temporary licence again. This is highly unsatisfactory from our position.

We will respond to the DAC again, but realise they will be contacting the interested parties without any recommendation as to whether to support our proposals or not.

The wider context

We are the largest church in a rural benefice desperately trying to stay open. The Methodist church in our village is just deciding to close its doors. We have made an operating loss financially for most of the last few years. If we cannot create a welcoming, flexible and exciting space this church will continue inexorably down the path to closure as our numbers continue to decline and the demographic of the membership ages.

We have a Grade 1 listed building due to the windows and painted ceiling by William Morris and Co. The DAC repeatedly refer to the importance of the 1865 re-ordering but any coherence of this was lost in 1999 with the installation of a servery and toilet at the back of the church in modern oak, a new ringing floor and with the 2000 removal of one third of the pews. This was recognised by the DAC members who visited in 2016, and was voiced by the Heritage England representative, Dale Dishon. We currently use the church as a significant community space for concerts, film nights, meeting space, as well as church activities. However we face competition from other community facilities which are looking to improve their facilities, which could jeopardise this income. We cannot compete if the DAC continue to insist on the Church being retained as some sort of a museum.

In 2018 we received a Heritage Lottery Grant for the development stage of a project to put terne-coated steel on our roof due to repeated lead theft. A large part of our roof is currently covered by plastic. We have received a Faculty and all other permissions needed, but are awaiting the decision of the HLF whether or not to give us the money for the delivery stage. Our financial contribution to this is £50K.

We have a planning group of three people leading both projects – on the roof and the reordering – and we are getting exhausted and hugely frustrated by the DAC processes.

Conclusion

We are applying yet again for a temporary licence, not because we want the uncertainty to continue, but because we see it as the only way of getting a DAC decision which can keep our church open as a worshipping community.

Bridget Robb and Mike Wilks
Churchwardens
29 January 2019

HYMNS AT CHENEY HOUSE: The next half hour service of hymns, prayer and readings at Cheney House will be on Tuesday February 7th from 11.00 - 11.30 am. More voices and faces would be very welcome.

Notice should be submitted to Heidi Fowler by e-mail to h.fowler@wg-plc.com, or to 18 Astrop Road.

Items for inclusion should be received by 5pm Wednesday to ensure inclusion for the coming Sunday.

Contacts - Church Wardens: Bridget Robb 710192 & Mike Wilks 711516.

For Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms please contact Rector - Rev. Nick Leggett: 07925 419068

Email: leggettluwe@yahoo.co.uk Associate Priest - Carolyn Oley: 01280701311 Email: Carolyn.oley@btinternet.com

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH WHAT IS HAPPENING AT ALL SAINTS CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE

www.allsaints-mc.church or sign up to receive messenger by email by contacting h.fowler@wg-plc.com