

King Charles the Martyr Church, Mutton Lane, Potters Bar

MICHAEL'S MESSAGES

31st Edition

Christmas 2009

Dear KCM Members and Friends,

A Miscellany of Matters!

The Autumn proved to be a very busy period for us all at KCM. We were delighted to be present in Hitchin when Trevor Alexander was licensed as a Reader and are very grateful to him for his strong input. His presence has already made a positive contribution to our life. We were privileged to be able to conduct two marriages in September and continue to remember both couples in our prayers. We enjoyed hosting the new Bishop of St Albans as part of his visit to the Deanery and a splendid Deanery Confirmation was held at KCM when six of our candidates were confirmed by the Bishop of Hertford. We were pleased to be able to host the County Trefoil Service a week later in the Centenary year for the Guide movement. An enjoyable Harvest Supper with some good homemade entertainment was a highlight and then planning was full steam ahead for the Christmas Bazaar which was attended by a record crowd which enabled us to realise a profit of £2,741 – an increase of some £200 over last year. Now we are looking forward to a full round of Christmas services – and to a rest after Christmas!

On November 1st we said farewell to Canon Robin Brown on his retirement and thanked him for all that he has given to the Church. On the same day, we also re-dedicated the newly refurbished font, which has made a big difference to the appearance of the Church. Thanks are due to Phil Emmans for his skilful re-decoration – and to the late Gladys Hawthorn and Kathleen Barker whose remaining legacies paid for the work.

The Parochial Church Council have been working hard, continuing to transact a great deal of business on behalf of the Church, as well as trying to look ahead to the future and plan appropriately. On a practical level, we are currently planning to upgrade the sound system – it will take time to ensure that we get the improvements right for the foreseeable future. To help us think “outside the box” the PCC enjoyed an Awayday at Aldenham School in September. We were pleased that Canon John Kiddle, Diocesan Officer for Mission and Development, was our inspiring morning speaker (he’s coming to preach at KCM on Advent Sunday 2010) and the Reverend Dan Bond, Chaplain at Aldenham School, shared some of the current work of pupils at the school before celebrating Communion for us.

Wednesday evening worship – one result of the PCC’s work has been to review our worship and although the recent questionnaire was inconclusive, we are planning to hold **an evening service on the first Wednesday of each month at 8pm**, for an experimental period of six months. Services are planned as follows – *though note a different date at the end of March:*

Wednesday 6 January – 8pm – Holy Communion with prayer for healing – The Epiphany
Wednesday 3 February – 8pm – Holy Communion with procession of candles – Candlemas
Wednesday 3 March – 8pm – Meditations on the Stations of the Cross – Lent
Wednesday 31 March – 8pm – Penance Service and Holy Communion – Holy Week
No Service on 5 May (Barnet Deanery Synod meeting)
Wednesday 2 June – 8pm – Evening Service of Compline with prayer for healing – Trinity

Financially, we are optimistic that the outturn for 2009 will be a good one with a hope to have balanced our books. However we are aware of costs ever rising – and the most significant change for 2010 is that our Parish Share – our contribution to the Diocese of St Albans, much of which pays for the stipends, housing and pension costs of the clergy – is rising from £46,165 in 2009 to £49,000 in 2010 – that works out at £4,083 per month before we spend anything on the Church running costs and on our outreach work. We do, therefore, encourage all members of KCM to regularly contribute – the best way is either by using the weekly giving envelopes (supplied free of charge) or by Bank Standing Order. In addition, all those who pay tax are urged to gift aid your giving, so that the Church, so that the Church can claim back from the Inland Revenue the tax paid. Jean Emmans, our Honorary Treasurer, is always happy to speak to anyone confidentially. She can be reached on 01707 855396.

We are sorry that we are saying farewell at the end of December to Ray and Janet Smith, who are retiring to their house in Corby. Over the last three years at KCM, Ray and Janet have made an enormous impact on our life. As a retired Baptist Minister, Ray has been able to share some of his theological knowledge, and we have also appreciated their pastoral care and friendship to many at KCM. They have both been active members of the Church Council and been involved in a myriad of other ways. We shall miss them a great deal – as much as they will, I think, miss us. We are hoping that Ray will be able to preach on their last Sunday with us – 27 December at 10.30am. We wish them well.

Pastoral Care Group – one of the other areas where we have been doing some preparatory work is in terms of pastoral care and a small team has been assembled to begin to do some work on ensuring that there is appropriate and effective care of all KCM members and others. Further details will be published in due course – but, in the meantime, if any member of the congregation would like to explore the possibility of joining the group, I would be very glad to speak in confidence – with no obligation on either side!

Lent 2010 sees a new initiative. We are planning to meet at 8pm in Church for the six TUESDAYS in Lent – from Tuesday 23 February to the Tuesday in Holy Week, 30 March to study Luke's Gospel, with a Bible Study based on each of the Sunday's readings compiled by our three Bishops. There will some reflection on the Gospel passage and then we will move into groups for discussion. It is planned that these evenings will include a break for a drink and finish at 9.30pm. Do reserve these Tuesdays in your diaries. The material will also be available on the diocesan website for those housegroups that may decide to continue their normal pattern of meetings.

70 years ago, on 25 November 1939, the Foundation Stone was laid for the building of the new Church of King Charles the Martyr – and Fred Rutter tells us he was present at the service as a choirboy! It seems very clear to me that it was an enormous act of faith for the planned building of the new Church to go ahead, despite war having been declared just over two months earlier. May we take encouragement from the faith of those of previous generations who have handed onto us, the present generation, a wonderful gift to care for and cherish. May we be encouraged to enjoy our faith and our work together as members of this lovely Church – and be full of Advent hope as we move ahead towards the celebrations of Christmas and on into a new decade. May God bless us all.

So thank you for all you do in our Lord's name and for all your support and work for this Church – and a very Happy and Blessed Christmas to you all.
With prayers and all good wishes,

