

## VICAR'S ADDRESS TO APCM 2023

What a year was 2022. The world was opening up around us, giving us such busying but also joy. We lost Liz Lane, Clare Marren and most significantly John Morris. We said goodbye to the Queen and we said it well. We travelled through interregnum, which let's face it, after a pandemic does not hold the terror it used to. And you appointed me to my joy and gratitude. You know I feel only blessed to be here.

Last year we grew, we have welcomed new people to our congregations, We have been purposeful in all of our centres – the significant sum of money needed to renovate the organ was raised, thank you Mike Barter and team, the organ work is now ahead of schedule – thank you Max Hubbard for taking on this phase of the management and Peter Neukom as always,

Brian White has secured Planning permission and a faculty for the construction of a disabled loo and enhancement of the kitchen facilities and St Martin's making it better fit for purpose to serve that community, Thank you Brian.

Keith has been the driving force to make Brambleton hall the centre of a loving community with planning permission agreed for a new building to house the boxing ring, for a remodelling of the hall to make it more useful for community support and engagement. Thank you Keith for your dedication

When Ticia became church warden she couldn't believe how many people are involve in making church work for all, and it's true. You are the blessing of The

Bourne. When my first training incumbent came she was gobsmacked at how well everything works here. Thank you

- Liz Witham and the Sacristy team
- Our holy dusters
- Frank Golding and all the members of Alf our Garden team
- Rob Horton, and those who support the serving team
- Yvonne Bryant and the chalice assistants and gossellers
- Nigel Cuthbert and the prayers and intercessors
- Our sides people
- Our new Welcome team – thank you Hilary again
- And our ministry team without whom I would not be surviving. Our LLMs have stepped up to lead communion by extension, Thank you Jane for taking on funeral ministry this year and for Frances for picking up Junior church with such joy and skill, our Junior Church team who minister to our children, and Viv for pastoral support at Brambleton. Our retired priests and LLMS are all taking on more while Tilford is in vacancy and yet managing to continue in pastoral ministry and in teaching and leading.

And now a brief look to the future.

In our vision day in 2019 and again when the PCC met to form our vision during the appointment process we identified that Growing community of all ages was in our heart,

After presiding at a large funeral on Friday I couldn't help but reflect on how important the centenary rooms and foyer area are to our ministry. 130 people were able to stay and give comfort to each other and this happens over and over again. This ministry is at risk as the roof leaks. This year it is essential that we begun to address these essential repairs.

We identified a desire to grow a deep community of friendship. The pastoral work in our two coffee mornings is just such a place of growth – thank you Judith Waters and all involved at St T's and Sally May and all who support at St M's. This year we will also take time to deepen relationships between all of us, creating deep and meaningful bonds between Christian brothers and sisters, the kind needed to grow into the future and support in love. The Ministry team and the PCC have been planning a new project to address this very need. Look for Foyer groups starting in September which I encourage every person to join and enjoy.

But we also identified and desire to grow a broader community that extends into Farnham and further. Our Masindi project will be moving back on track thanks to Olive Graham's work in Uganda. But here in Farnham our outreach in hospitality through Bern's night and the coronation concert and tea. We have Vanessa and her team to thank for this, Mary, Hilary, Kath at St Thomas and Soe Hoare and team at BH. the community Fridge and warehouse is central to our growth in the community, thank you team for two years of sterling work. And what about the Scarecrow Competition? Sue and Meg brought the whole

community to our doorstep. Please forgive me if I didn't understand how it would work in the beginning, but I think anything the two of you propose will be golden.

And the choir. Oh my goodness, the beginning of the Evensong on Tour has been simply beyond expectation as we grow in community ecumenically. The joy of being together with the Rowledge congregation and the St Joan's congregation was stunning. Thank you choir for your dedication and generosity. We owe so much to what you do.

But to keep our exciting momentum, we need to grow our ministry team. We will be seeking a new Children and Youth minister over the coming weeks. We have also applied to be given a curate. Two more full time members of the ministry team will have an impact on this community beyond belief. It will make all effort we all put in more purposeful, it will give us further reach into schools and into the lives of our young people in this area.

All of this will require money. You know that. But our God goes before us. I am grateful as we flourish here today and take that time to grow into our future.

Amen