

## REPORT OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

I will begin this report with the finances of the church, which the PCC seem to spend too much of their time worrying about.. Last year our quota payable to the diocese was £3110, this year it has risen to £4000. To insure the church is £1000 a year. It is important to have 100% cover, reference the recent fire in the March Church, which luckily was fully insured. One other interesting fact is that we are classed as a business. Therefore our electricity is charged as to a business and the small amount that we used cost nearly £500.

We are concentrating at the moment on getting the church and the graveyards registered with the Land Registry, Our aim is to include the strip of land to the east of the rear graveyard. We have consulted Mr Green at the Diocesan Office about this who has looked at all relevant documents and can see no problem in doing this. This extra strip of land could then be cleared and consecrated and would give us extra space for graves which is badly needed. The cost of this would be in the region of £1000-£1500.

During the year to raise funds we held a Summer Supper, an Advent Fayre and a Harvest Supper. Members of the PCC also helped during Feast Week. The theme of last years Feast Week Service was our Church through the ages. This year it is Education In Woodhurst.

Thanks to the people who organised and helped at these events, thanks also to Sally for continuing her Open Mornings on the First Saturday of every month. These are well attended and we are pleased to welcome people from other parishes. Thanks must also be expressed to Brenda, Lois & Sally who clean the church and Brenda & Lois who have refurbished the frontals for the altars. The well kept graveyards both front and back are a tribute to Rod Clements who regularly mows them. We are lucky in this parish that we have three people who can play the organ for services, and our grateful thanks are due to Jan Norma and Shirley for fulfilling this task.

There were 5 funerals and two baptisms in the church during the year illustrating the importance of the church to the village community. Just to remind people we have four services a month. Evensong on the first Sunday in the month at 6pm; a short communion on the second Thursday at 10am; an evening Communion on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 6pm and our Family service on the third Sunday at 10.30am. We will officially be in the Benefice of Somersham with Pidley & Oldhurst on May 1<sup>st</sup> this year, which means that Chris Barter will then officially be our Rector, rather than priest-in charge.

The church is an essential spiritual part of the community, many people in the village do not wish to take part in services but want the church to remain where it has been for hundreds of years, and we thank them for their support during the year, without them we could not keep the church as a going concern.