

Words from Michael Cudby, Warden



The traditional holy greeting from Rev. Jan in previous Focus magazines is now a thing of the past. Instead, I have volunteered to fill up the first page of Focus with words, which I hope will be informative and keep our church and social groups connected. Before I talk about Interregnum, let me say how wonderful it was to see over 60 church goers, plus children, for the 10.30am Sunday Eucharist on May 8th. The church was buzzing and Rev. Jan was milling about, starry eyed. It was a lovely service, just right for Rev. Jan's last stand.

After the service, the sun shone to welcome us for drinks in the Community Garden. I heard so many compliments about the church ladies' horticultural skills — Monty Don would surely have been mightily impressed. Springtime has definitely come to stay in Hightown!



The garden was the perfect spot for welcoming everyone: the community of Hightown; our neighbours from the camp; past members of the congregation; and, most especially, Jan's family.



The farewell lunch in the church hall, for over 90 people, was well organized.



Geoff Bailey, our other warden, rose to the occasion and presented Rev. Jan with gifts from the congregation: an African nativity scene carved in wood; a print, on canvas, of St. Stephens Church; a bouquet of fragrant flowers; and a beautiful cake made by Hazel. Chris, Jan's husband, was not forgotten and was presented with organ music. Geoff continued, in fine form, to deliver a great speech

The food was delicious, thanks to Janet and her team from the Hightown Club

Now, hold on to your hats!! Here, I turn my attention to Interregnum — every parish’s nightmare. The process of losing Rev. Jan and finding a replacement, started on Sunday 8th May 2022. As of that date, Rev. Jan has had no responsibility for the ministry of St. Stephen’s Church. Earlier in the year, Rev. Annette died, and in June, Julie will be ordained at Liverpool Cathedral. She has already been assigned to another parish, so we have limited fall back to assist in the running of our church services.

However, please don’t worry, as Rev. Jan has trained some of us to read the Morning Prayer services. At the same time, Beryl has been very busy contacting clergy, who will deliver the Eucharistic services each Sunday at 10.30 am . A member of the clergy will also deliver a Eucharistic service one Wednesday per month. The non - eucharistic services (Morning Prayer) will be led by either Judith, Hazel, or one of the church wardens. The form of service will follow the Morning Prayer service on the sheets provided.

You can find the duty rotas on the notice board in the church porch.

It will be strange for a while, but it won’t be too long before we all get used to Interregnum and a new way of doing things.

We all hope that the Diocese will link arms with our PCC to install a new vicar at St Stephen’s without delay.

Our church is not a “house of cards”, but a spring board for spiritual and numerical growth.

