

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. We have celebrated 3 baptisms and held 5 funerals in our church this year. In addition, in the churchyard there was one burial of a Roman Catholic parishioner and the interment of the ashes of a former resident. Two candidates were confirmed by the Bishop of Reading in Reading Minster on Holy Saturday and subsequently received their first communion in our church on Easter Day.

### **Deanery Synod**

There is one person elected to sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church.

### **The Church Building and Churchyard**

Ideally we would like our church to be open to our community for private prayer. Unfortunately, the location of the church on the edge of the parish leads to a potential for theft and vandalism which has happened in the past. Therefore, we have felt unable to leave the church open at all times for private worship. However, the churchwardens are very happy to arrange for the church to be unlocked on request.

A small committee has been attempting to find a solution to the inefficient heating system. At the same time it had hoped to cover the repairs to the church building which were identified by our architect in the latest Quinquennial Inspection Report and to investigate improvements which would make the building more user-friendly. The cost of this proved to be astronomical and although grants are available, the PCC has instructed the committee to investigate a more affordable phased approach making use of our existing funds which have been set aside for this purpose over many years.

An application was made to the Government's Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund but unfortunately this was unsuccessful.

In September, the Area Dean and Assistant Area Dean visited the church to carry out an inspection on behalf of the Archdeacon. They examined the state of the terrier, inventories, log books, plate, altar linen, ornaments, registers, service books, electoral roll, together with the security, safety and disabled accessibility of the buildings and their contents. The inspection was mainly positive and after the visit, they wrote to thank the churchwardens and former churchwarden for all the preparation for the visit and for their care and attention provided for All Saints.

The PCC is grateful to East Garston Parish Council for its annual grant towards the maintenance of the churchyard. In addition, an application was successful this year for a Parish Council grant under the "Grants for the Community" programme towards the cost of a new notice board.