

Friends of St Britius Newsletter No 21 January 2017



Dear Friend(s)

A very Happy New Year to all Friends of St Britius

Looking back to this time last year we reported the completion of two projects, the new heating and the bells, and restoration of the wall around the churchyard. 2016 however has been a much quieter year with no major projects needing fund raising activities. It has been a year of "consolidation", encouraging members of the congregation to commit to monthly standing orders or at least gift aiding if possible so that their attendance in church is supported by a financial commitment. We need this because it costs £400 per week for the basic running of the church (electricity, water, insurance, servicing of appliances, etc., and not least the vicars' expenses). This without any maintenance that may be needed. Regular weekly collections are only on average 1/3rd of this cost.

The church is not there only for weekly services and special occasions such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest but to serve the wider village community for baptisms, weddings, blessings, funerals and memorial thanksgiving services. It is also used by the school for Christmas, Harvest and Remembrance. Members of the community and visitors can come for quiet reflection in times of crisis or thanksgiving.

This means we must continue to involve the wider community who expect the church to be there when they need it but do not necessarily support it financially in any meaningful way. This is why your continued support as Friends is so important and so much appreciated.

Highlights last year

Christingle Service at Candlemass

We have this service during our All Age Family Worship and Communion on the first Sunday of February, Candlemass. Last year all the congregation helped to make the Christingles and it is our last chance after Christmas to have the church lit by candles emphasising Jesus is the Light of the World. This year the service is on February 5th at 10 am. You would be very welcome.

Flower Festival at Gardens Open



As usual this was well supported with over 100 visitors to the Open Gardens and to the Church beautifully decorated with flowers by Dawn Humphris, Kath Bellenger, Jean Butcher, Karen Hawkins, Betty Holmes, Mary Rose & Mary Holmes for which many thanks. We benefitted from a donation of £58 from the NGS participants, part of the ticket money which goes to local charities, for which we are most grateful.

Queen's 90th Birthday

There were two events last year requiring hot soup. The first in which we participated was the April Bonfire on the recreation ground for the Queen's Birthday.



The church then provided cream teas in the village hall at the Queens Birthday Bash in June. This, of course, was combined with the school fete which made for a hugely successful and well supported village event. We made £238 with the teas, thanks to Rhodda Farm Dairy and Tiptree for the donation of the clotted cream and the jam.



Bonfire Night

We served hot soup and one hundred hot dogs on Bonfire Night on the recreation ground. This was so popular that we ran out of hot dogs and had only just enough home-made soup. We raised £103.17 selling these. We hope we can repeat this success if Bonfire Night becomes a regular village event.



Carol Singing

A small group sang carols in Daubigny Mead, Squires Close and Fosse Way the week before Christmas. This was well received, with several residents coming out to listen and join in and saying how much they enjoyed our visit. This raised £58. Please let us know if you would like us to visit your street next year, or even better, come and join us!

Carol Service

The Carol Service was as popular as ever, with the readers representing village organisations, our thanks to them and to Saxophony for the accompanying music and to Timms & Sons for donating the beautiful Christmas Tree.

Specific Fund Raising Activities

We repeated our successful "Fill a Smartie Tube with 20p pieces" during Lent, raising £361. In spite of the rain Jacque Griffin gallantly participated in the OHCT "Ride & Stride" event in September being sponsored for £32.50. Our Christmas quiz was well received and raised £24.



Friends Subscriptions

Friends Subscriptions last year raised over £500. So you see how important your contribution is to keep our church maintained, warm and welcoming to the community. We do hope you will feel able to continue to help by renewing your Friends of St Britius Subscription for this year.

Please use the enclosed form to return your subscription to Dr Phil Holmes at Church Farm House, Carterton Road, Brize Norton, OX18 3LY. Cheques should be made payable to Brize Norton PCC. Monies can also be paid through online banking to Brize Norton PCC, Bank Sort Code 20-97-48, Acct. No. 20205559. Please use the Gift Aid Declaration on the form if possible as this adds 25% to your donation courtesy of HMRC. You must sign and date the form to qualify.

Also please consider setting up an annual standing order or direct debit from your bank using the above information, so we won't have to approach you every year.

Thank you

Once again your continued support is very much appreciated to keep St Britius a visible permanent sign of the Christian community in the village. It hopefully continues to speak, without words, of values and purposes that are important for us as human beings.

We hope this will encourage you to remain a Friend of St Britius. Thank you in anticipation.