

Holy Trinity, Maisons-Laffitte

Chaplain's Report 2018/2019

This past year has been tremendously busy and also filled with many many blessings. We have seen the completion of the PMR Access Project, and we give thanks for the work of the Steering Group. Many people were involved in fundraising for the PMR project, which included a series of concerts, bring and share meals, a wonderful performance of Peter and the Wolf, and the glorious Indian Gala dinner with its highly successful auction. The children's Summer Holiday Club proceeds were also donated to the project. We are immensely grateful to everyone who offered their talents, time, energy, money and prayers in creating a more accessible, inclusive and welcoming church, both physically and spiritually.

We are also delighted to have welcomed a new Youth and Children's Worker, Kirstin Taylor, and her husband Elliot, who arrived at the end of May. Their joy, energy and passion for young people has been a real blessing to our church family. Please hold them in your prayers in this important ministry, and as they seek God's plan for their future.

In the autumn, we had a busy rentrée season, made even busier this year as we ran a seven session Marriage Course. It was a challenging but very rewarding and fruitful time for all participants. The church will be running another Marriage Course in the next couple of years, and I would highly recommend this course to any couple, regardless of how long they have been together, or how happy and well-balanced their relationship is.

Other highlights for me over the past year have included a warm and wonderful Solidarité Logement Christmas party, our Summer and Christmas Fairs in June and December, the ever-joyful Scottish Dance, the British Section Carol Service, and a couple of concerts by the singing students of Maria-Hélène de Oliveira Todaro, my singing teacher, who sadly passed away in December 2018.

We also give thanks and praise to God for His spiritual blessings through our church services over the past year. What keeps us all together and moving forward is faithfully coming together each week for prayer, praise, scripture and eucharist (Acts 2 43-47). However, as any Christian community in a secular society, we face a number of challenges. How do we keep faith with the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? How do we remain caring and compassionate in a predatory economy? How do we live and work alongside the needy and broken in an era where contempt for weakness is commonplace? All these questions have their answer in various strategies for staying close to the centre, which is God's revelation in Jesus Christ made present through the Holy Spirit. It takes a conscious effort and strong determination to keep our eyes on the prize. One way in which we can do this is by prioritising our home groups (or small groups). I encourage you all to join a home group for mutual support, discipleship and spiritual growth. Please speak to myself or Richard Medcalf if you would like to know more.

Finally, brothers and sisters, let me express my deep gratitude for these five years we have spent together. God's transformative power has been at work in us, achieving a greater purpose than our own preferences and predilections. To Him be the glory for ever and ever!