

A few words from the Vicarage ...



The sadness I described in the opening paragraph of this letter last month pales into insignificance when compared with the sadness now being experienced following and tragically premature passing of our dear brother in Christ, Keith Turner.

Keith was a staunch supporter of St Paul's throughout my ministry here and worked tirelessly, spreading the Good News through his active service. As churchwarden and member of the Deanery Synod, I have valued and benefitted hugely from his unstinting support and encouragement. He always rose to the occasion when required and his ever-present good humour and speedy wit guaranteed a smile.

For the last nine years he was a stalwart of the monthly Men's Prayer Breakfast group, running it single-handedly for the last six years. More recently, he renewed his scouting connections and was an enthusiastic advocate for the Scouting group's new Beaver colony and Cub pack based at St Paul's, becoming a member of their executive committee.

As a church family, we will miss Keith immensely; his wisdom and his wit, his candour and his courage ... and our love and prayers go out to all his family - as we each come to the painful realisation that his are difficult boots to fill!

At time of writing, we are greatly indebted to Sheila Swindells who, in recognising the gravity of our situation, very quickly offered to stand in as churchwarden until a more permanent appointment can be made. This, of course, is a post Sheila held until last year. As a consequence, both she and Alan Wrapson attended the recent Archdeacon's Visitation and were duly admitted to office.

Now we seek earnestly, someone to be appointed on a more permanent basis, thereby allowing Sheila to step back into retirement once again.

With regard to the Prayer Breakfast, I am delighted that Kieran Wright has very kindly offered his services by agreeing to coordinate these meetings. Kieran has already deputised in this role when Keith's work commitments meant he was unable to attend. In addition to the position of churchwarden, Keith leaves a vacancy for a Deanery Synod representative for which a volunteer is sought as soon as possible and there will need to be discussions with the Scouting group personnel to consider the options there.

I make no apology for dedicating this month's *'few words from the Vicarage'* to a dear brother in Christ and friend, to Keith, now at rest with the Lord in his eternal Kingdom.

God bless you all,
your Vicar,
Fr D.