

## SACRED SPACE

Since January builders have been in the church altering some things, adding some things and turning old into new. In some cases they seem to have turned old into even older. Let me explain. In this parish we have a wonderful inheritance of a Saxon church, - a Grade 1 listed building, and we are, rightly, very proud of it. We have to take care of it to the best of our ability, maintain it in good order and make it available for the whole community that it serves. This is its purpose, to serve the parish. It has to be a useful building and to provide a place where people can meet each other and God. It's a tall order to expect such an old building to serve a 21<sup>st</sup> century population, and cater for all its needs. That is why we have raised money and had builders in. A toilet was essential and this has been built on to the side of the church. A kitchenette is important and we now have one, created out of a storage cupboard that was originally a porch. Space is necessary for worship, for meetings and for clubs and groups to function and we have a glorious space for everyone to use. Turning the old transepts into something new seemed a good idea, but what has actually happened is that we have re-created the space that the architects and builders put there so many centuries ago. The south transept (the side arm of the church on the school side) has been cleared of all unused items that have been stored there for a long time and an open space has been revealed. The original space that was created in olden times has been found again. This area has walls on three sides, a 'Good Shepherd' window, a small clear window and some glorious stained glass with a picture of Jesus and his disciples on the shore at Easter. With its high ceiling and medieval walls this place is tranquil, calm and prayerful - surely what that Saxon architect intended.

On the day of his resurrection Jesus journeyed from Jerusalem to Emmaus with two of his followers. These companions thought they had met someone new, and it was not until the end of the journey that they realised they were meeting Jesus in his resurrection body.

We have experienced a significant journey from drawing board to completion and only now realise that what has happened is a resurrection of a space that has always been there but had been forgotten. We thought we were doing something new and innovative, but this is not new, it is resurrected. This part of our church was a dead and hardly used storage area but now it has been reclaimed and brought to a new life.

The travellers to Emmaus didn't recognise Jesus at first, but He was there with them. It wasn't until all was revealed that they knew who he was, even though He was walking beside them.

How often have we failed to see things that are there in front of us? How often do we forget that Jesus is our constant companion, travelling with us wherever we go?

I would encourage you to come into church on your own and enjoy the new space. While you are there think about two things. The first is to think creatively about the use of the new room and if you know of a group that could use it, then let them and us know. Secondly, sit quietly and think about your personal journey through life and be aware that Jesus walks with you, wherever that journey may go. Ann Fraser