

Report on the Parish Church to the Parish Council
The year from 16th May 22 to 15th May 23

Overview

In March 22 a committee (which became known as the Benefice Committee) was formed to oversee the arrangements for the retirement of Rev. Nigel Washington, the forthcoming vacancy, and the recruitment of a new priest. There are thirteen members taken from across the benefice of Harlington, Tingrith and Westoning, with Jon Denman as chair.

Nigel Washington retired on 30th September 22, his last service in Westoning being on 4th September 22 when the church was packed.

The recruitment of a new priest is being undertaken by the St. Albans Diocese (principally the Bishop of Bedford and Archdeacon of Bedford) with input from the Benefice Committee. Three unsuccessful attempts have been made to find a new priest (advertising in September and October 22, January and February 23 and April and May 23). On the first occasion it was decided the two candidates were unsatisfactory, on the second occasion the two candidates withdrew before interview and on the third occasion there were no applications. The Benefice Committee is meeting with the Bishop on 17th May to discuss the way forward.

Services

In the early part of the year church attendance continued to increase slowly from Covid pandemic levels. Attendance has not noticeably dropped since Nigel Washington left. Services have been maintained each Sunday with the help of visiting priests (including the Bishop of Bedford and twice the Archdeacon of Bedford) and by the two Readers (Lay Ministers) – Jon Denman and Steve Farmer.

Since Nigel left funerals have been undertaken by Jon Denman with Nigel returning to take a few, baptisms have been conducted by Linda Washington and Linda Washington will be conducting a wedding in August.

Church Activities over the last year in addition to services