



April 2020

Dear Friends,

At the beginning of March I attended the last service to be held at Knightcote Methodist church. Over the last few years I've had the pleasure of worshipping with this church community and I was very sad to find that it was closing. Closing a church is a tragic, heartbreaking and deeply sad phenomenon. At the moment we don't here much about the closing of churches but I fear that soon this will become a regular phenomenon. Churches are not only sacred places where people have worshiped for generations but are also often beautiful, old, historical and hugely important buildings. In my opinion, church's closing are only really acceptable when they result from people completely abandoning a church but when asked the question why they close, the answer is always the same: Those attending church are slowly dying out and there's no replacement, there's no money to maintain the churches, not enough parishioners to do the organising and administration or the ministers to serve these communities.

You may have a Christian faith but not attend church on a regular basis. Many would like church to be there for special, seasonal or family services such weddings, christenings, funerals, Christmas etc. But do you realise that for that to happen there needs to be a group of willing parishioners that the funding comes directly from or who fundraise and do all that is necessary to keep the church doors open. This isn't done by a central body. It's all done locally!

Local parish churches are independent charities, and the members of the church council (the PCC) are trustees. There are many costs involved in operating a parish church, both running costs (energy bills etc.), capital costs (building works, etc), and Parish Share (a donation by the parish to fund their Vicar). In addition to the church services we are involved in:

- activities in the school which include a weekly assembly alternating between our children's ministry team leading Open the Book and myself the Vicar.
- running Fenny Compton Tot's & Toddlers; Just-a-bite lunches; Lego Club Northend and helping run Farnborough Teas, to name a few of our activities.

I'd like to thank those of you who already support the churches financially and actively, but sadly we need more help to save us from following in the shoes of Knightcote Methodist church.

*What can you do to help keep our churches open?*

Please contact me if you'd like to:

- come to church but the services seem outdated or not what you'd like. We're open to suggestions for new services, christian worship and activities. But we may need your help to action this!
- know more about the Christian faith and church.
- help support the churches maintenance and administration.
- financially support the upkeep of the church and it's activities on a regular basis.

I send love and blessings to our Methodist friends and thanks for their help in our hour of need when the lead on Fenny Compton church was stolen.

*Rev'd Nicki*