

St. Nicholas Leicester 2005

During 2005, St. Nicholas continued with its new pattern of worship – replacing the 1100 Eucharist with one at 1830. This has been much appreciated by people and has indicated our openness to change. This openness has also been reflected by discussions which have taken place at our DCC concerning our plans for the future – in the light of new residential and cultural developments in the parish as part of the Regeneration Masterplan. Numbers attending the Eucharist have remained stable, but with such a small congregation the absence of just one or two members has a great effect. The quality of our worship is something which more than makes up for the lack of quantity in our congregational numbers. Our congregations regularly have a higher percentage of men, and of young adults, than would be found in most churches.

Most Sundays, we welcome visitors to Leicester, who come to share in our worship, and we exercise a special ministry of welcome to such people from many countries – China, Colombia, France, Poland, Iran, Iraq, the Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Sudan. The quality of our worship is facilitated by our musical tradition and by the faithfulness of our organist and small choir. This choir has been enhanced on several occasions, by past members and others, who have enriched our worship with their singing. There was a visit to St Alban's Abbey, where Evensong was sung by an enhanced choir from St. Nicholas. We thank those clergy who have assisted at the Eucharist when I have had to preside at the Eucharist elsewhere, or being away on holiday.

We shared in the celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi with a Eucharist at St. Margaret's, the music was provided by the Leicester Liturgical Choir. During the year we hosted, on one occasion, the monthly ecumenical prayer service organised by Churches Together in Leicester City Centre, of which Canon Barry is the Chair. The Eucharist on Ash Wednesday was celebrated in close collaboration with the Cathedral and the music provided by members of the cathedral choir. We hosted a Lenten Devotion for people affected by AIDS and HIV, in collaboration with Fr. Trevor Thurston-Smith. On Advent Sunday we joined with the people of St. Margaret's for a joint Eucharist, at which Bishop Tim presided and preached.

We successfully applied for a large grant from English heritage to assist with repairs to the Church Roof and the South Porch. Important work was also undertaken on our heating system. Throughout 2005 we have been waiting for the results of the work of the Bishop's Commission on City Centre Churches and this waiting is now coloured by our responses to the Diocesan "Shaped by God" Report. I would like to express my thanks to all who have contributed to our Church life over the past year. It is always difficult to mention individuals by name – someone is bound to be left out. I would, however, especially like to thank our Wardens, Christine Ahronson and Anne Beck, our Treasurer, Anne Beck and our Director of Music, Ian Imlay. Thank you to all those who turn up Saturday by Saturday, to keep the Church open for visitors and to do essential maintenance tasks around the place, as well as preparing for the Sunday Eucharist. Thanks to those who have hosted visits by schools and students from both our Universities, students from the last have used St. Nicholas for valuable academic studies. Thanks to Tony Grayson for maintaining our website – which is an important element of our publicity and letting people know about our life and ministry. These people, and others as well, contribute to the richness of our life in a whole variety of ways – thank you to every one.

Canon Barry Naylor Priest responsible for St. Nicholas, Leicester