

July 2022

Reverend Michael writes:

‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am with them’.



As I write this month, the pace of life has slowed a little from business of the past few weeks with the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and the Chelsfield Church Fete held in my Garden. It did feel strange having several hundred people gathering in my back garden two weeks ago but strange in a good way. This event was the first major gathering for St Martin’s since the start of the pandemic and it really was a positive and happy occasion. The weather was fine, and the organisation of the fete went well. More importantly, it was so good to see people interacting with one another – having fun, seeing people they have not seen for months if not years, having an opportunity to share problems, enjoying food together and even taking the opportunity to throw wet sponges at me to raise some money for the church.

In a similar way the Platinum Jubilee Events that I have attended have brought about a similar level of togetherness and even though they have varied immensely from more formal ones with prayers and the singing of the national anthem to less formal social gatherings, they really have demonstrated the importance of community.

Reflecting on all these recent events, the bible verse at the top of this article from Matthew’s gospel sprung into my mind. We usually associate this verse as an encouragement to meet in worship together and of course we do believe that Jesus is with us in our Worship. The opening line of the Eucharistic Prayer begins ‘The Lord is here; His Spirit is with us’. I would suggest though that meeting in Jesus’ name is not confined to formal worship. The positiveness of the recent gatherings is a true representation of

the people of God together. There were no formal prayers or worship at the fete, but Jesus was there in the encounters in the support and encouragement given and in the money raised for the community.

We have another great community event this month in the Village fair and although it is not specifically a 'Church' event, it will have a Church presence and will be another opportunity for Christians to gather in his name.

May God bless you

Rev Michael

A message from Anne Ireland about Gerry Walker of Well Hill:

It is with great sadness that Gerry's son and daughter contacted me to say that Gerry passed away the previous evening (27 June). Those of you who knew him will know that he had been very unwell for some months and had gone back into hospital a few weeks ago, where, in addition to everything else, he caught Covid.

Two family members were with him and he had received a visit from the Chaplain which would have been very important to him. He is now with his beloved Vera and spared the indignities of failing health.

For those of us at Well Hill it will leave an enormous gap. He was treasurer for 71 years and deputy churchwarden for not many fewer years and he and Vera kept Well Hill church going virtually single-handedly through times when the congregation numbers were very small. He was also a member of the PCC representing Well Hill for many years. He will be much missed.



Anne

(pictured in 2016 – 65 years as treasurer)