

St Nicholas Bulletin

No.1

Dear friends in Radford Semele,

You are all aware of the tragic fire that all but destroyed our historic church. The church has been at the centre of village life for over 1000 years, and with the support of the community, will continue for the next 1000 years.

This bulletin is the first of many to keep everyone up to date with the plans to rebuild a church in Radford Semele. Whilst we are all devastated by the loss of our church building, we must look forward to the future and work together to recreate a new place of worship that can be central to village life once again.

The site has been visited by various contractors in the last few days - structural engineers, forensic analysts, insurance representatives, health and safety officers, fire investigators, and of course many from our local media.

The first stage is to make the site safe and you will see that the church is now fenced in, and the churchyard is out of bounds. This is hopefully only temporary, but **it is vital that we all comply with this.**



Although the church is insured, it is unlikely to be enough to fully recreate the facilities to meet today's needs. There are various conflicting figures in the newspapers, but please ignore these. A church restoration fund has been established to make up the difference.

It is called "**The St Nicholas Church Restoration Fund**" and any donations can be sent through Rev Martin Green, 1 Manor Rd, Bishops Itchington, Warks. CV47 2QJ - please enclose a SAE for an acknowledgement.

For the time being, services will be held in the Community Hall at 10am, although our **Easter Sunday service will be at 9.30am** - do join us.

So this is where we are at the moment :

- There is no clue as yet to how the fire started.
- There was no injury, loss of life , or damage to other property
- None of the church registers in the safe were destroyed
- There is no clear assessment yet of costs of rebuilding
- None of the gravestones have been damaged as far as we can see, but parishioners will be unable to visit graves until we have been instructed that it is safe to do so.
- Alternative church venues are being explored for weddings
- Services will continue at the Community Hall

I am enormously grateful to everyone who has offered support and practical help so far. Our community is being prayed for by churches around the Diocese, including the Cathedral, and we have been given items from other local churches so that our worship can continue. It is good to know that in our sadness and weakness, others are there to hold us up.

When I walk round the ruins, I keep telling myself that this is the worst it will look. Easter is about new life and hope emerging from tragedy and death. This will be our story as we look to the future.

So let's keep faith together

18 March 2008