

Barrie Marsh

We were really delighted to welcome Barrie to All Saints Abingdon, where he quickly settled and found his place amongst us, becoming a very active member of the church. All the contributions sent in for today from All Saints, speak of how very fond people were of Barrie, calling him a true gentleman in every sense of the word, and really appreciative of his delightfully dry, but gentle sense of humour. Barrie joined the Quest Study Group at All Saints and was a self-effacing man, but a deep thinker who made valuable contributions to the discussion. By nature, he was a quiet person, but a lively conversationalist.

We can all recount many examples of Barrie's perceptive, practical and gentle grasp of situations, and his contribution to the French evening, shortly after joining us, will be remembered with much affection; he arrived wearing in a fetching beret, Breton stripes and onions around his neck and really looked the part!

When All Saints were looking for ways to celebrate their diamond anniversary, Barrie told us about tiles that were created to celebrate 250 years in his previous church. As a result, he and two others formed a group, where the brains and artistic experience behind the collaboration, felt their way into the project; there was much laughter and scratching of heads, and Barrie's kindly effervescent personality shone out. Consequently, diamonds were created by church members and other users of the church building including the Scouts & Guides and the preschool. The result was a stunning display of 118 diamonds reflecting the wide array of activities which is part of All Saints and the archive is Barrie's legacy to us; we are mightily proud and grateful that he suggested this to us, and it must not be forget that Barrie's was the first one to be completed!

Barrie also had a very deep "interior life" and a real connection and fondness for Celtic spirituality, rooted in the liturgy of Iona. When the opportunity to contribute to a service based upon Celtic worship arose, he jumped at the chance and reflected in the service just how much his visit to Iona had meant to him. Conversation, whether on faith or life were always so meaningful, a true measure of the depths of his soul.

Tina, Barrie's Pastoral Visitor writes, "I had the pleasure of getting to know Barrie as his church pastoral visitor. We enjoyed chatting over tea and cake and he told me a little about his family and life in the army. Barrie was a lovely man with a gentle sense of humour which was very endearing. We had a great rapport and I will miss him. I will be thinking of and praying for his family today."

Jenny speaks of their conversations on art; "we shared many conversations about art with a small "A", and what we each were trying to paint. Not long ago, he phoned Chris and me, in spite of not being well, but delightfully chatty. Barrie told me he was leaving the bedroom curtains open so that he could see the sunrise and was hoping to start an impressionistic picture. I don't know if he achieved what was in his mind's eye. A lovely and dear man, forever young at heart."

All Saints Church will hold his memory with the deepest affection and will miss him immensely. We grieve with his family and friends, but also give thanks for all that he meant and will go on meaning to us; our thoughts and prayers are with you as you lay Barrie to rest in the place of his choosing. And we pray.....

Go forward on your journey good friend. You have passed from the darkness of mortal death into the fullness of life eternal. You have passed from the fretful ways of the world, into the creative peace of the divine. You have passed from the knots of life and death into the seamless tapestry of God's healing grace. We commend you in the name of God the Father who created you; in the name of Jesus Christ who died for you; and in the name of the Holy Spirit who has illumined your way. May you rest this day in the peace and love of your eternal home. Amen (from a Celtic liturgy- Lindisfarne)

Dcn Selina Nisbett

On behalf of All Saints Methodist Church Abingdon