

Everywhere around us we see doors, doors opened and doors closed. We have doors to our houses; doors to each room. Some doors are elaborate, whilst others are plain. Doors can be ancient, and most are contemporary. Doors can keep out and doors can let in. Doors can make us feel secure, and doors can make us feel insecure. Doors are important. In an Eastern Orthodox Church, as shown on the Pew Sheet, the Royal Doors separate the

nave of a Church from the Sanctuary and are elaborately and lavishly decorated with icons of the Christ, His Holy Mother and the saints. This morning as we come through the doors of our Church and at 11:30am hold our Annual Parochial Church Meeting doors must be our theme.

One of the saddest sites seen in England this year was the closed doors of the churches and especially heavy was the

fact that the doors of Sarum St. Martins were closed. It was necessary, but nevertheless sad. The last time that the doors of the churches of England, including the doors of this Church were closed was in the 13th century. For 5 years under the Papal Interdict of Pope Innocent III against King John over the appointment of the Archbishop of Canterbury the doors of the churches of England were closed. That was the only time in our thousand

year history in Salsibury that the doors of St. Martins were closed, not even the Black Death of the 14th century closed the doors of this church for worship and the celebration of the sacraments. But earlier this years the church doors were closed and those who wished to worship and pray in this and other holy spaces were unable to do so. Truly, a sad time. Yet now the doors of this Church of St. Martin are opened again; in fact we

opened them as soon as Government regulations allowed. Why some might ask, why such a haste to open the doors of the Church? Surely, prayer can be offered in any place, and the whole world is after all God's Creation. And both of those statements are true. Yet, in this space, this holy space, God Most High is not only welcome but supreme. His Divine Son is present in the the Blessed Sacrament in the Pyx hanging above the altar.

Prayer it seems, has a particular potency when prayed in this space for this space is no ordinary space. Here, the distance between earth and heaven is lessened and we can hear echoes of the worship of the saints and the angels as we join in worshipping God Most High. And we can and do share this space with all who call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus. We open our doors to welcome strangers and seekers after the truth of Christ and in

opening the doors we also open our hearts to them and quite simple say, ‘Come, and share what we already know and have.’ So it is that on this morning in this extraordinary year of the Covid-19 pandemic we hold our APCM intent upon ensuring that we can continue in this year and in every year to open our doors and invite in all who seeks God in Christ. This is the true importance of the APCM. Yes, there is business to transact, elections

to be held, minutes and accounts to be received. Yet all of these activities have one common aim; to keep the doors of this church open.

It may seem prosaic and very ordinary and not at all ambitious simply to say that our aim is to keep our doors open, but what happens if they are allowed to close? The sacraments are not celebrated, prayers are not offered, God is not worshipped, and nobody



will have the chance simply to look through the glass and see the glories of God; to push through and join in singing the praises of God. So, our aim is not prosaic nor is it ordinary and it is ambitious for we want nothing less than all who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus to be able to do in this place.