
A New Window For Shipton Church

On Sunday, 31 October 2004, the Reverend Wendy Callan dedicated a new stained glass window in the church of St Mary the Virgin, Shipton-under-Wychwood, at a service attended by a large congregation. What started as a glint in the eye of the PCC back in 1999 had, at last, become a bright and shining reality. The Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Hugo Brunner, and Patrick Reyntiens, OBE, designer of the window with his son John who installed it, were present accompanied by members of their families.

The idea was first mooted when a report on the fabric of the church made clear that the plain window in the south-west corner needed its stonework and glazing refurbished. Somebody on the PCC suggested that they might combine this work with a Millennium Window. This started a sequence of activities that took longer than anybody forecast: obtaining design proposals, testing their acceptability in displays in the church and the Wychwood school, satisfying Diocesan and English Heritage requirements, consultations with the

designer and organising the installation, scaffolding, repairs.....

Patrick Reyntiens's design is based on the text *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28v19)* and he says of it: "The window illustrates the parable of the good wheat and the

hazards of sowing where the soil is doubtful. The world is symbolic, not descriptive. The trees are to show the fecundity of the world (as is the ocean). The flames surrounding the composition suggest that everything is infused by God's Holy Spirit. The Saviour is in the traditional flaming mandorla, an almond-shaped

glory of light, to emphasise that He is fully both human and divine - as defined at the Council of Nicaea."

So there it is; all made possible by a legacy from Dr Desmond Bagguley and gifts from other parishioners. A little late for the Millennium but our lovely church has another beautiful window, a melody of greens, oranges, and yellows, to add to its Burne-Jones.

Peter Hills

