

# WRITES OF THE CHURCH

Gripes and grumbles of people in the pews



**Gary Alderson**

Illustrated by Dave Walker

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The Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) is a Registered Charity (233280)

ISBN 978 0 85746 577 1

First published 2017

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

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Illustrations © Dave Walker 2017

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

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# CONTENTS

Welcome.....	7	Social activities.....	88
The people.....	12	The church year.....	92
Social life.....	25	The modern world .....	101
Children.....	37	The curate.....	116
Money .....	50	The building.....	128
Worship .....	62	Christmas .....	143
Committees.....	79		

WELCOME

Dear Everyone

At the last Church Council meeting, we agreed that, in this modern age, we need to use social media. People need to stay in touch and share news! And what better way to reach out to a hyper-connected, web-enabled generation?

We discussed Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Tumblr and Snapchat.

And then decided to introduce a letters page in the church magazine.

Revd Nathan



Dear Sir

The new letters page is a great step forward, but still lacks that face-to-face communication we expect from the church. And when I say the church, I mean of course the vicar.

With 7,000 houses in Tremlett, I have calculated that if the vicar visits ten families a day, he will have covered the whole parish in just two years! He may wear through a few pairs of shoes, but it will be a great step forward.

Constanza Nearby



Dear Sir

If you introduce a letters page to this magazine, people will write stupid, pointless letters complaining unnecessarily.

Bradley Hadleigh

# THE PEOPLE

Dear Sir

Over the last year, the vicar has preached on Jesus throwing the money changers out of the temple; Jesus telling the rich young man to give all his money away; and the early church sharing their possessions and helping the poor.

Not once has he mentioned Paul's exhortation that 'God looks after those who look after themselves'.

Faced with this socialism, I resign as church treasurer.

Norbert Dranesqueezer

Dear Sir

I have now attended St Mary's Tremlett for 85 years.

I am thinking of sitting in a different pew one day.

Dolores McDonald

Dear Sir

Some vicars let the organists pick the hymns. Others decide they want to take direct responsibility for the church music themselves.

I have been explaining to Revd Nathan how tricky it is for newcomers to play the organ at St Mary's. And noting how rare organists are round here. And how much they expect to be paid.

I am pleased to say that I will continue to pick the hymns after all.

Maisie Daisie

What would a church magazine letters page look like if the locals just wrote what they actually thought – and what does it tell us about how we think of our church? In *Writes of the Church*, the locals bicker, complain and wonder; the vicar is overworked and occasionally lets them know they're pushing him over the edge. But through it all, we learn something valuable about ourselves.

It's an unusual and loving angle on the Church of England. The people – and the vicar – are odd, confused, opinionated and frequently get the wrong end of the stick. But their love of the church comes through their threats of boycotts over a tea towel, worries over saving money and complaints that children in church might be children.

Through laughing at them – and ourselves – we learn more about what really makes us tick. Through seeing the funny side of church, we may learn to love it more.

After studying Chemistry, **Gary Alderson** entered a career in the computer department of assorted retailers. As well as his day job, he is an Anglican priest and assists part-time at two churches in Wellingborough. He is married to Sharon and has two sons.



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