

The New Reredos

It is said that the first sign of ageing is an inability to adapt to change, so I have allowed myself a reasonable period of time to both adjust, and ponder the significance of the new reredos that adorns our church. As an exercise in needlecraft it can't be faulted but I seriously question Bromley Parish Church as its setting.

The original reredos enhanced the altar furnishings making them stand out boldly to the congregation. The new reredos with its multicoloured patterns tends camouflage the cross and candlesticks on the altar and they all but disappear.

When viewed at a distance the new reredos loses its intricate detail. I have heard its figures variously described, by fellow members of the congregation as, "looking like seven corpses in shrouds", "the witches of BPC", "looking like soldiers wearing Greek or Spartan helmets" or "like the masks of Bam Owls". When viewed from the back of the church the background material does not look plum coloured but black giving the group of figures a dismal aspect.

Finally I wonder if anyone has gone into costing the maintenance of the reredos for it will obviously require regular professional cleaning. How much is that going to cost a church that is already finding it hard, if not impossible, to make ends meet?

I always thank God that when our church was rebuilt after the war it was built in the traditional Kentish style with knapped flint walls and an interior that was plain and simple. Perhaps in a modern church constructed of brick, stainless steel and glass this reredos would be the crowning glory but to my mind in our "plain Jane" of a church it is out of character and out of place.

David Knight

Celebrity Concert - Saturday, 4th June at 7.30pm



Gordon Stewart was born in Dundee, Scotland. Following study at the Royal Manchester College of Music he spent two years as a student of Lionel Rogg at the Geneva Conservatoire where he won a premier prix de virtuosite.

He was for eleven years organist of Manchester Cathedral and for three years Director of Music at Blackburn Cathedral. For the past fifteen years he has been Borough Organist of Kirklees, where he plays the magnificent Father Willis organ in Huddersfield Town Hall.

Organ playing has taken him to countries across Europe and to the USA, Canada, South Africa and Australia. His repertoire is large and covers all the major schools of organ composition including works written for him by Lionel Rogg, Andrew Carter, Noel Rawsthorne, Dick Koomans and Alan Spedding. He is one of the regular musical directors for BBC Radio 4's Daily Service and television's Songs of Praise.

Gordon is President of the Huddersfield Organists' Association and a Past President of the Incorporated Association of Organists. He has been awarded Honorary Fellowships of both the Royal School of Church Music and the Royal College of Organists.

**The concert will incorporate a giant screen projection of the organ console.
Wine and nibbles in the interval. Programmes £7.00**