

St Jude's new weathervane

REVEREND ALAN WALKER

The new weathervane was installed at St Jude's Church on Thursday 9 July, where a small crowd of parishioners, local residents, and passers-by gathered in the church car park for a short service of blessing and rededication (pictures, back page).

The previous weathervane 'took flight' during 'Storm Barney' late in 2015. Its whereabouts were a mystery until the broken parts were discovered on different parts of the church roof by a drone.

The service included words from the Epistle of Jude, one of the shortest books in the New Testament: a weathervane shows the direction of the wind, and we look to it for safety, guidance and direction, in order (as St Jude warns) that we are not "carried by the winds [like] the wild waves of the sea", and a reading from the Gospel of St Mark in which Jesus stills a storm.

The new weathervane is an exact replica of its predecessor – a cock and a fish – which has been reconstructed and will be displayed in the church.

The cock is the 'proclaimer of the day', but also a reminder of Jesus' prophecy that the cock would not crow until Peter had

denounced him three times. The fish was an early Christian symbol: the Greek word – ichthus – could be read as an acronym for 'Jesus Christ Son of God Saviour'.

'Weather cocks' have topped church steeples for centuries. The Bayeux Tapestry includes a scene of a craftsman attaching one to the spire of Westminster Abbey.

The event concluded with the tradition that a small child (in this case my three year old grandson Raphael Saiman) jumps over a new weathervane to enable him, it is hoped for decades to come, to claim he has leapt over the highest part of the church.



Photo: Michael Eleftheriades