

In celebration of the repair and reinstatement of our church clock – 4 September 2021

A speech given by Matt White, son of David and Mary White who left a legacy to the PCC to help maintain the clock.

David and Mary loved Harberton as their safe harbour and ease following a life of toil, journeys, joys, and travails.

From their home up the lane they could see and hear St Andrew's, recalling churches they had known as youngsters growing up in Cornish villages a few miles apart. At all times of the year, every season and in all weathers, Harberton's church tower was their connection, continuity and steady reference – home, deep in Devon.

David sang, helped wind and maintain the clock when he could, and at the millennium he called all around the parish to gather funds to re-gild the face. Mary passed happy hours singing in choir, arranging flowers on occasion, contributed to the historical recording of other churches in the area and established a fine arts society in Totnes. They were part of the fabric of time.

They valued this community, the sense of place and generations, and David would be very happy to know that thanks to his legacy we are, dearly beloved, 'gathered here' this evening in elevated spirits, to celebrate a *clock of ages*, updated with modern automation that even the Old Watchmaker might look kindly upon. My parents would also be proud of the recent 'heavy lifting' done by the Church Community Fund in the maintenance, repair and fundraising for our amazing Grade 1 listed building and grounds, and its role in keeping the village ticking along together... right here, right now, right here, right now.

What stands in the heart of our village is an awesome medieval structural equivalent of a Saturn V rocket, towering heavenwards. To see that, sit at the base of the tower for a while and slowly raise your gaze; it only needs fuel.

Now, please raise a glass in the east, in which, echoing words from the poem quoted at David's final service, "any-angled light can congregate endlessly", and let us toast CHURCH, CLOCK, CHIMES.