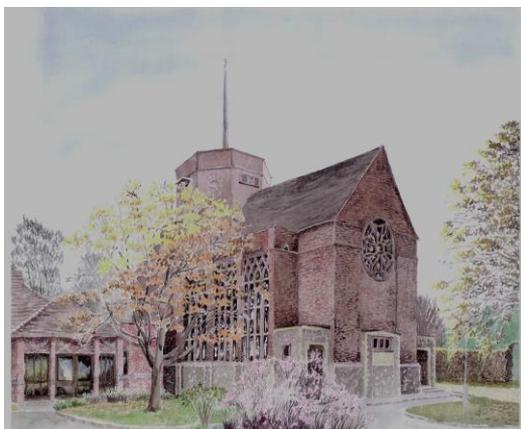


# The Anglican and Methodist Church of St Andrew, Paddock Wood

## ACM MINISTRY REPORTS

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2021



### **MINISTRY TEAM**

*“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”*

### **Romans 12:12-13**

At the beginning of this year these verses seemed to pop up with a great degree of regularity, in a lot of different contexts. Is it any wonder why after the year that has just passed? 2020 for many of us has been a year like no other, and as we write these reports in 2021 it still hasn’t finished.

Yet we want to start by thanking a small team of people who have supported Sharon and I throughout this lockdown. Meeting each Monday morning to pray, reflect and most importantly to plan. our way through the various challenges. Alongside this group have been others who have acted as pastoral links to larger numbers of people, keeping in touch, supporting in practical way where they can. And to all those who took up the call to Love your Neighbour at the beginning of lockdown and are still doing it today, thank you.

If anything this pandemic has given us the opportunity to show the love and transformational power of God's church here on earth. Maybe not in the big plans and projects, yet we had that when we feed a number of people over Christmas, but in the small things; with neighbours, with friends and with strangers. We have to quote Jesus been "salt and light" for this community of God's.

As we eventually emerge out of the lockdowns and Tiers the landscape will be different, and we will be different. Our experiences will colour our thoughts and actions and we hope so will our faith and how we have been able to put it into practice during this time of not being able to meet physically together.

Resilience is an often quoted word in these days whose meaning is the "ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape." But it can also mean "the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness. As Christians our resilience comes from *Being joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer*. Resilience built on God's promises, on his constant presence with us and the transformational power of prayer.

**Rev Canon Bryan Knapp, Rev Sharon Lovelock**

## **WARDENS' REPORT**

As we continue to experience the 3rd lockdown we would like to acknowledge and offer our thanks to everyone who has been involved with either looking after the church building and also the pastoral care to church members and congregation during the last 12 months. It has been unique and sometimes difficult experience for all of us.

This year we are due the quinquennial inspection, which we have delayed until the church buildings are open.

As last year's ACM was delayed until October 2020 and the church has been sadly closed to the public since December there is not much to report. In October 2020 Carol Barnet and Keith Rosser continued as wardens leaving 2 positions open.

This April, Keith Rosser will be stepping down as Warden after serving three years in the role which means we will have three vacancies. Should anyone be interested in becoming a Warden and filling one of these positions please feel free to ask one of the team about what exactly this would involve.

As we move further into 2021, we would ask you to pray for Bryan and Sharon as they continue to lead St. Andrews Church and that the buildings may soon be opened. We also ask for prayers that vacant positions as wardens, stewards and on Church council may be fulfilled.

## **Keith Rosser and Carol Barnett**

### **SAFEGUARDING**

St Andrew's Church continues its commitment to follow the Church of England's safeguarding policy for children, young people and adults: Promoting a Safer Church 2018. The Church applies this to everyone visiting the church and within the community and is based on the following Church of England commitments to:

- Promote a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others

At St Andrew's Church we support the wider Church's philosophy that 'the care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church'.

In order to achieve this, we use the 'Safer Recruitment Process' for all new substantive and volunteer appointments within the Church. This helps us to ensure that staff appointed meet the requirements for working with vulnerable children and adults, which involves an application form with self-declaration to work within our safeguarding guidance, receipt of two references and a DBS check where required. In addition, all staff are required to undertake safeguarding training.

Training levels have changed and St Andrew's has adopted the 'Practice Guidance; Safeguarding Training and Development 2019'.

**The Basic Awareness Course (C0)**, is undertaken by all permanent and voluntary staff. It has also been twice shown this year to members of the congregation to improve awareness of safeguarding principles in the wider congregation.

It provides a basic overview of safeguarding and the recognition of vulnerable individuals.

**Foundation (C1)** safeguarding training is undertaken by any staff who work with vulnerable adults or children and young people within the Church, once C0 has been completed. These two courses are online and can be completed at a time to suit the individual, with a certificate awarded once complete.

**Leadership (C2)** safeguarding training is undertaken by the Clergy, PSOs and all staff in leadership positions working with children and adults in the church. This is face-to-face training. Senior Clergy are required to undertake a higher leadership programme (C4). Safeguarding training is now recorded on ChurchSuite to generate automatic reminders when update training is required.

Safeguarding information is provided on our website, on posters within the church halls and to staff and volunteers with contact details for the PSO. Over the last year, three concerns have been raised and discussed with the Diocesan Office.

## **Carol Williams**

### **ALPHA**

From September to December 9 participants gathered on Zoom for the Alpha course- we are all part of the life of the church and wanted to re-ignite our faith or gain a better understanding of what it is we do believe and seek to live out. We met for an hour on Thursday evenings for an introduction and welcome, a video on the evenings theme followed by conversation. It was relaxed, honest and empowering. People who came along have said they have re-gained confidence in their faith and also in being open about struggles and doubts. We have been able to support one another and strong friendships have formed. We have wanted to keep in touch and so will have the occasional get together to catch up and see how each other is doing. I hope to run another Alpha course soon.

## **Rev. Sharon Lovelock**

## **BEREKO COMMITTEE**

- The past year has brought some disappointments with not being able to fundraise and the cancellation of our visit in October 2020.
- We are though still planning for a quiz this year and are ready to move quickly if lockdown is lifted but, for the immediate future, there will be more dependence on the church's tithe and individual donations for funding.
- The Bereko church family has been keen to continue with the Palm Cross production but we have not been able to order any for this year - partly because most churches are still holding last year's stock and also because we are unable to bring them back to the UK.
- The new Bereko Garden Group, supported by the UK charity Livingstone Tanzania Trust. This group of community elders is doing great work, farming an acre of land using modern agricultural practices.

The project has experienced ups and downs in the year and opportunities to learn from problems and mistakes! It has not yet made an overall profit but was not projected at this stage.

- We have continued to support Rev Richard Suki with £650 to pay his annual salary and also sent £350 to cover the Bereko parish share to Kondo Diocese.
- Electricity was at last connected to the church and pastor's house. We were able to send funds to allow this connection to be completed to the old pastor's house (now a workhouse) and the toilet/shower block.
- We also sent £2,000 to commence the construction of a house for the catechist at Kikilo (with the Bereko parish). This work will commence in March 2021.

The end of year balance in the Bereko Fund was £626.

The Bereko Community Partnership (BCP) coordinates our work within Paddock Wood. Its members are St Andrew's Church, Paddock Wood Primary Academy, Mascalls Academy and Paddock Wood Town Council. Further information is available on the website: [www.bereko.co.uk](http://www.bereko.co.uk).

A major concern as we move into the new financial year is the Covid-19 virus. People are becoming sick and dying and yet the government is denying that the virus exists and resisting a vaccination programme. Please pray for God to protect our friends and keep them well.

**Sue Chalkley**

## **CHAPLAINCY**

I attended Pembury Hospital in the crew welfare vehicle on the anniversary of the suicide of a P/W Paramedic. Other than that (as an over 70, diabetic type 2) I have been shielding. I remain in touch with ambulance crews via Facebook. I shall be appraising my role as chaplain after my wife and I have been vaccinated.

Brian Banks

## **CHILDREN & FAMILIES WORK**

2020 was a challenging year for Children & Families Work. Until March 2020, we held weekly Voyagers sessions for children 3-11-yrs. Monthly Messy Church, Little Pickles, Fun Club, and weekly Assemblies at the school. We also managed two 'Who Let the Dads Out'.

Since the first Lockdown at the end of March, I had to re-think how to still link with the children and their families.

The following are highlights of what we have been able to do:

- Production of online sessions for the Voyagers Sunday Group to watch via the St Andrew's Church YouTube site. With Activity sheets
- Joint session for both 'Survivor' and 'Voyagers' children when we opened
- Messy Church via Zoom, attended by 6 or 7 families.
- Online Assemblies at Paddock Wood Primary Academy, with the link sent weekly out to parents
- Delivered/posted craft materials to Little Pickles families to do at home and had conversations on the door step.
- October Half-Term, we provided a 'Lantern Trail' around Paddock Wood for families to engage with. We had over 50 children attend with their families.
- Advent Window Trail, residents were asked to put up a display of a different Christmas Carol in their window. Children and their families would follow the clues as to where the window was and to guess the carol.

Back in January 2020 I also started a Parenting Course with 4 different families connected with St Andrews, where we met each week in a home together and watched a parenting video from 'Care for the Family'. Each week had a different topic and discussion questions for us to chat about. The parents were able to share with each other some of the struggles they had and others helped make suggestions. Each week finished with a short time of prayer.

Since Lockdown I have kept in regular touch with these families, through email, text and phone-calls, just to encourage them in their family lives.

Although 2020 has been a challenging year, we have still tried to remain in contact with many children and families and hope to keep up the contact in the year ahead, knowing there are still challenging times ahead.

## **Hanna Rosser**

### **CHOIR**

In January 2020 the choir started rehearsing with an extensive programme for Easter 2020 based on Karl Jenkins “Stabat Mater”. We have planned to bring to performance some of the most famous and beautiful movements from the sacred work by one of the greatest composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including performing music on ancient Biblical languages; Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin.

The choir has received an invitation to give performance at Choirs Festival in Rochester Cathedral, initially planned for October 2020. Sadly, in March Covid -19 hit and we have had to put all plans for future performances on hold. Since then, the choir has performed accidentally on services held in church in October and December.

## **Tatyana Angelova**

### **COFFEE SHOP**

The year started off well enough with business as usual but then came Lockdown. The coffee shop was really missed by people. By September, thought had been given by some of the team and Rachel Smith, as to how we could open up again safely. Plans were put in place to use the Wallis Room instead of the foyer, hand sanitiser and track and trace systems were set up and we agreed to meet on a Tuesday morning from 10.30 to 12 noon. Would people feel safe to come was the question we were asking ourselves?

We opened in the middle of September and were just about full for the seven weeks until the second lockdown. We saw new faces, and loyal customers returned too, and it was a really happy place to be – just meeting up with others for a cup of coffee and cake was just what people wanted. We look forward to being open again and bringing God’s love and refreshment to our community sometime in 2021.

## **June Dean**

## **COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

It has been yet another busy year for this committee, with the constant dilemma of shall we or shan't we go to print? During this pandemic we have had to learn, and become more reliant upon digital communication to get the most up to date information out to members and parishioners.

A Youtube channel was quickly obtained for us to record services and to post every week during the lockdowns, and for those unable to join us when we could open. We are indebted to John Dean who has worked tirelessly behind the scenes putting the constituent parts together from lots of different places to make a watchable service each Sunday.

The investment in Churchsuite has allowed us to connect with ease those different groups of people we engage with. The sadness is the amount of members who we can see don't open emails sent with information about how they can connect with services or receive other pieces of information.

Our website and Facebook pages have also been a good source of information to a number of people and the ability we now have to update this ourselves has helped tremendously during Covid.

Items for prayer and follow up:

We need you to produce more articles for Contact

We are looking for more people to be involved in communications, digitally, on paper or in word!

**Rev. Canon Bryan Knapp**

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH TEAM**

Thanks go to Brian Banks who has steered this team and has now stepped down.

We have some new members of the group who have joined us on an ad hoc basis which has proved invaluable. There have been many changes to our plans for 2020! Here are some of the highlights:

An Alpha course; a quiz night; Advent carol window trail around the community; Christmas angels and greetings delivered to all the houses on the new estate; an online outreach carol service (instead of in the car park); Christmas lunches prepared and delivered; pop-up events (youth and children's), plus more!

We are looking forward to possible Easter trails and a quiz, crosses delivered on the new estate, possible engagement with Feast (family meals in the holidays), a garden party, afternoon tea in the summer and a prayer wall.

**Rev. Sharon Lovelock**

### **DEANERY SYNOD**

The Deanery Synod have quarterly meetings and each one is hosted in a different parish in the Deanery. Revd. Andrew Axon is Rural Dean. This year the only meeting held was on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November via Zoom. Revd. Andrew Axon played a video of a shepherd in Central Asia and then we all broke into groups to discuss how are church families how functioned through lockdown.

Bishop James has announced his retirement and an appropriate farewell is hoped come July. Shortfall in finances has prompted concern and it was also revealed that future clergy numbers will have to decrease. Questions were raised about how this would impact the diocese with the fear than remaining ordained ministry could become managerial and that this is a mark of decline when we should be an evangelistic Church.

The meeting closed with concerns for the welfare of the clergy and the uncertainties surrounding ministry this Christmas. We need to look after all our ministers this year especially those who are giving deeply of themselves.

**Linda Hobbs**

### **FAIR TRADE SHOP**

It goes without saying that this year has been extraordinary in many ways. It has been a struggle on many levels but also has brought about some good things. Sadly we had no Spring Craft event or Christmas Event, our shop was closed for the majority of the year and many of our staff have had to self isolate. But despite this, during the first lockdown, orders were received by email and phone and home deliveries made.

This allowed us to continue selling food and keep in contact with many of our loyal customers. At the end of the year online sales became possible. A very big thank you to Steve Pagany who instigated our online project.

With the money made from sales and with the assistance of Government business support and local restriction support obtained by Carl we were able to make grants of £7,000 to various charities and put £5,500 aside to update the shop internally, increase our online presence and buy new stock during the year.

The charities we are supporting this year include overseas and more nearer to home ones than we would normally. They are; Practical Action, ROPE and TFSR, charities which are fighting poverty around the world through practical and sustainable action. MAF a charity that spreads the Gospel and provides medical care, building materials, schools and teachers to remote communities. HART whose international advocacy work has a fundamental role to play in bringing the evidence of oppression and human rights violations to the light of the international community. Local charities we are supporting are Porchlight, Fegans, Hospice in the Weald, the Community Store House, Kenward Trust, Crossways and the Bridge Trust.

Going forward, the committee is putting together a business plan. With the many unknowns this year the committee feel this will help clarify the shop's objectives, set goals, spot potential problems and measure our progress.

The Fair Trade Shop will continue its policy of sourcing its goods from suppliers who are committed to the principles of fair trading and who guarantee to provide a fair and decent return to the primary producers in the developing countries concerned. We are aware of the environmental impact some of the packaging has, as are our suppliers and will continue to look for solutions.

This year (2021) we will be growing our online business with the inclusion of Craft, Easter & Christmas cards etc. We will be developing our links to the community through social media and advertising. We are very grateful to Emily Cammell who is helping the shop with its marketing through local magazine articles and social media.

We would like to thank Charlotte Sisson for all her hard work in the shop, she stepped down in March from the committee as Food Manager due to work commitments and we are currently looking for a replacement. I have taken on the role in a temporary capacity until her replacement can be found.

Staffing has always been one of our biggest challenges, with illness and staff retiring. At the time of writing this there are 29 volunteers (plus the 9 committee members) with 7 people on the emergency list. However when lockdown finishes we do not know how many of these will return. One strategy we will be considering is a more targeted approach to our opening times taking advantage of any groups who are hiring the halls.

I should like to thank the Staff, the Committee, Church Council and the clergy for their support this year. I would ask that the Church Council continue their support for the shop by shopping with us and praying for our suppliers in these very difficult times.

Current members of The Fair Trade Shop Committee: Katharine Garland (Chair), Carl Warren (Treasurer), June Dean, Doreen Dixon, Jan Dyer, Jean Jordan, Jean Sagers, Jackie Fichtmuller, Barbara Farnham.

## **Katharine Garland**

### **GIRLGUIDING PADDOCK WOOD**

Girlguiding in Paddock Wood has continued to thrive, giving girls a space & a voice to be themselves and to offer unique opportunities both locally nationally & internationally.

We celebrated Thinking Day at the church with all the Paddock wood units

Like everyone else we have had to stop meeting face to face but have continued to meet on Zoom.

There have been numerous events hosted on Zoom which the units have attended, these include a Summer picnic, a virtual sleepover and a pantomime.

A few of the units took advantage of a relaxation in the rules to meet outside and then inside during September and October but then they were back to Zoom with everybody else.

#### **Rainbows**

Within the units the Rainbows have worked towards a number of badges both in the new program and outside on Zoom. They have also had fun with lots of craft activities which include Christmas crafts

#### **Brownies**

Brownies have worked towards a number of badges, One unit visited Foal Hurst wood, the Brownies have been working at home on their interest badges, with a couple of Brownies completing all of them. Whilst on Zoom Brownies have been to both picnics and parties.

## **Guides**

Both units managed a weekend away in the Spring before Lockdown came into effect, They have all been meeting on Zoom with one unit taking advantage in the summer and meeting outside for three days of fun whilst keeping within the covid rules.

They have been meeting Zoom and earning lots of badges

## **Rangers**

They managed a trip to London to solve a murder mystery puzzle, They have been meeting on Zoom and also fundraising for their trip to Croatia in 2021, they are currently walking the 1063 miles to Pula. They have also been earning lots of badges.

## **Trefoil**

The Trefoil Guild is currently closed but once the current pandemic is over will be looking for new members. You do not have to be a retired guiding leader to join.

If you think you might like to join please can you contact Doreen Dixon at [doreendixon107@gmail.com](mailto:doreendixon107@gmail.com).

## **Leaders**

A huge thank you to the amazing leadership team that make Girlguiding in Paddock Wood so successful. We are also on the lookout for new members of all ages. If you are interested, please contact

[pwdistrictcommissioners@outlook.com](mailto:pwdistrictcommissioners@outlook.com)

## **Rebecca Hardiman & Jackie Jones**

### **HOME GROUPS**

Our home groups have all continued to offer support and friendship to one another in various ways when they haven't been able to 'physically' meet, continuing the vital role of encouragement and prayer. Some of the groups have moved on to Zoom for their gatherings, others have a mixture of Zoom and telephone calls and one group uses telephone conferencing to gather together. Some people from two of the groups have been able to join with another zoom home group for Bible study and support. Sarah-Joy has recently begun a small group for those in their 20's (ish).

Here are some examples of what home group leaders have said:

*'We try to meet on zoom fortnightly and are currently doing a study on Elijah. Apart from that we keep in regular contact with each other by phone/text etc.'*

*'We are a small group who meet on a Tuesday afternoon during term time. We focus on supporting each other spiritually and follow a variety of courses throughout the year in a friendly unstructured way.'*

*'We have been reading and discussing the book 'Simply Church' which is reminding us of the foundation of our faith'.*

*'We have been using material from the Bible society, especially during Advent'.*

Three sessions on listening and wellbeing have been offered by Sharon and Jacky as a resource to the groups. During Lent 2021 groups will have the chance to share in a wider group looking at 'Fruitfulness on the frontline'.

Thank you to all those who lead home groups. If you would like to be a part of a small/home group, please do let me know as we do see this as an invaluable part of church life for support and discipleship.

**Rev. Sharon Lovelock**

## **HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

The membership of the Committee has reduced to three: Carl Warren (Chair), John Leach and Sue Chalkley. Carol Williams stepped down in the year due to work commitments and we will miss her valuable and considered contributions.

During the year, we have worked on preparation of a revised employment contract for Anne Dunn and provided advice to the Finance Committee and Church Council on furloughing options for the Operations Manager (Steve Talmage), Resident Organist and Choir Leader (Tatyana Angelova) and cleaner (Anne Dunn). This advice included a recommendation that, budget allowing, furloughed staff should have their income topped up to 100% of salary.

During the year, it was agreed that the HR committee would be consulted by the Finance Committee on staff pay recommendations, so that Church Council could receive a combined recommendation.

The Committee also provided advice on the change of line manager for the Operations Manager from a named warden to a named HR Committee member.

Annual appraisals have been carried out for all staff and these are monitored by the Committee.

**Carl Warren**

## **MISSION PARTNERS SUPPORT GROUP**

Making Lent Count 2020: Our Lent Appeal raised £1552.90 (excluding Gift Aid) for the local children's charity Fegans. This was most encouraging in very difficult circumstances and will make a useful amount when all charities were (and still are) unable to raise funds in the community.

St Andrew's Day: Lisa Jones from Scripture Union spoke from her home via Zoom. We also had short videos from Church Army, Scripture Union Hungary and Christians Abroad plus photos and commentary from Bereko, Tanzania.

Mission Opportunity Fund 2020: Grants were made to Hospices of Hope (eastern Europe) £500; Wycliffe Bible Translators £500; Indian Village Ministries £500 and £250 each towards the renovation of the pavilion by Church Army Southampton and Hello World (Uganda). The committee decided that in view of the impact of Covid 19 on UK it would be appropriate to support Christian charities working in this country. £500 grants to Church Urban Fund; Care for the Family; CARE; Restored; and up to £500 for Family Activity Bags for children at PWPS on free school meals over half term and beyond.

Bereko (Sue Chalkley): All continues well with our parish link and communications remain strong with WhatsApp messages and pictures. It was a shame that we were unable to visit in October due to Covid 19. Projects supported through the year included the Bereko Garden Group, Rev Richard Suki's salary and the Bereko parish share to Kondoa Diocese, an electricity connection to the old pastor's house (now a workhouse) and the toilet/shower block and £2000 to commence the construction of a house for the catechist at Kikilo. Main concern now is denial by the government of the existence of Covid 19 and the protection of the population.

Tamas Daxner SU Hungary (Sarah Joy Woodcock): Tamas shared some of the joys and struggles of 2020. They were able to hold 4 English speaking camps out of the 9 that were planned and these went well – the team were very pleased they could go ahead. The team have been able to work on producing new literature to equip churches. There is a new story picture game with a Bible theme for families and they have updated the daily Bible reading notes for teenagers. They have had to cancel some training events but have also been able to hold some training online. They were blessed financially this year by donations, which has enabled them to continue the work.

Al and Rachel Sutton (Christians Abroad)(Jean Jordan): Rachel and Al are now Field Officers for Jordan and the Holy Land. Pray the door opens for outreach to start once more in Jordan, Galilee and West Bank. They are planning a fundraiser in the summer for Christian refugee respite camp(s). These camps bless the local church in Amman, Jordan as they work with young adult refugees and also longstanding friends in Shabab Sahra.

Tim and Kathy Hyde and Ruth Hills (Church Army Southampton Centre of Mission): Many groups closed because of the pandemic. They are producing a community newsletter for older people. Through St Mary's Church Ruth and Tim are participating in online courses. Ruth is seeing very encouraging results from one to one Zoom meetings with mums from the toddler outreach group. Church Army acquired the use of the old sports pavilion on the Verity estate and began work pre-Lockdown. Unfortunately it was vandalised but the team see that God has His hand on the work and will continue with their vision for the pavilion.

Resignation of Mission Secretary: Chris Sutton stood down due to other commitments including work for another charity. We thanked Chris for all the work and commitment he has given. At present we have 3 mission secretaries and 4 mission partners. There is no one covering support of Tim Hyde (Church Army). We are not looking to appoint a replacement for Andrew Parfitt (CMS) at the present time. This is a very difficult situation and there has been no response for a new mission secretary within the church fellowship. The work of the Team continues and enthusiasm to be involved in taking the message of God's love not only abroad but here in our local community is undimmed but please pray that we would see others coming forward to be involved. Perhaps it's you.

## **Jean Jordan**

### **MUSIC GROUP**

As with most activities the music group has been put on hold for the majority of 2020. We were able to practice in a safe socially distanced way for a few weeks in the Autumn months and also provide musical accompaniment to the services that were taking place at that time.

We had started to look at some new music to introduce to the congregation and look forward to returning at some point in the future.

## **Sarah Elliott**

## **PASTORAL COMMITTEE**

With the pandemic taking hold of all of our lives last year it was important that Pastoral Care was at the top of our agenda, and therefore something different had to happen.

From the outset of lockdown the Church family was divided into those who were part of our home group system (approx. 80 people) and those who were not. We asked home group leaders to continue to act in pastoral oversight to those who they regular met with and their families. Whilst the remaining members of our congregation we divided amongst members of the leadership team to make contact with and support where they could. The whole congregation was asked to look out for their immediate neighbours and to post a slip entitled 'Love your Neighbour' where offers of help and support could be offered locally or centrally.

We are indebted to all those who took on the Pastoral Care of individuals and families in whatever way. Sadly, no system is perfect and where people have not felt sufficiently supported we can only apologise.

Funerals in the first half of the first lockdown were numerous, yet thankfully few Covid related. Families were supported throughout, often having to deal with reduced numbers of those able to attend, due to Government restrictions. All were offered at the time an opportunity to hold a subsequent Memorial Service at St Andrew's. We will wait to see one year on who takes up this offer, when we are back to normal.

As we move forward the group is only too well aware that new opportunities for support may be required as people deal with mental health consequences of the past year.

### **Christmas Dinner**

For the last four years we have been able to hold a Christmas day dinner in the Winter Hall, but this year due to Covid-19 it wasn't possible. So the next option was to take dinners out to those people we knew of who couldn't be with their families and friends. We were able to fill boxes with a Christmas dinner and all the trimmings along with Christmas pudding and custard, Mince pies, Cake, a small gift and Chocolates and Apple juice. We were able to deliver 24 meals in the sunshine to various homes. It was so nice to be greeted by smiling faces when we arrived, have a chat and leave them to heat and enjoy Christmas dinner.

Our thanks go to our band of enthusiastic helpers who make this such a success, and to Pomfret Butchers, Waitrose and Paddock Wood Card Shop for their support.

**Friends Together** – has not met during 2020

### **Open House**

Open House meets every Friday morning, except Bank Holidays and through August. We started the year with our normal attendance of between 24 - 30 members, benefiting from the company of others and we enjoyed bingo, keep fit, a Burns night celebration as well as other activity events and sing-alongs. Bryan hosted the monthly chapel times, a moment to stop and reflect and to connect with the spiritual life of the group. Then lockdown. We managed to re-start in September following strict Covid rules and numbers were reduced to a dozen. We were just getting back into our stride when lockdown happened again. The group has remained closed until the it is deemed safe.

**Jacky Taylor, Linda Hobbs, Gloria Crouch**

### **PROPERTY AND FABRIC**

With the buildings being in lockdown for most of 2020, P&F have been unable to progress their regular work. Because of this and the Financial Position, none of our strategic work has taken place. This includes:

1. Decorating of the halls
2. Repairing of the Winter Hall floor
3. We have also been unable to progress the fitting of our extended CCTV system.

We continue to carry out regular maintenance when we have equipment failures.

Major things that have happened include:

1. Repair to church roof following slippage of roof tiles.
2. We only managed to do the Autumn clear-up outdoors. No internal clear-up took place.
3. We have had the new garden shed broken into twice. Nothing stolen but irritating nonetheless.
4. We have had to deal with the Covid situation. This has involved installing sanitisers through the church and halls, planning for a one-way system for people arriving and leaving, safety features for people leaving halls in the dark, and screens on the sound desk in church.
5. Taken action with the acer tree at the front of the halls.

6. We have ordered more chairs for the Winter Hall to replace broken ones. They will come when lockdown is lifted.

We are due for our quinquennial inspection in 2021, but have put that on hold until lockdown is lifted.

**David Farnham**

### **WEALD OF KENT METHODIST CIRCUIT**

We are blessed to be involved in God's mission together as an Anglican Methodist Church and also more widely in the circuit as we minister alongside other denominations. Most worship and prayer has moved online and via written services at various times over the year. Rev John (Otford and Superintendent), Rev Dermot (Sevenoaks), Rev Helen (Tunbridge Wells) and I are also blessed by the role work of lay people both at St Andrew's and also in the rural section pastored and led by Phil Staddon (living at East Peckham) and in the work of lay pastor Richard Cannam. We continue to see where God is leading us, presently there is much focus on the development project for the East Peckham Methodist Church which is very exciting.

We continue to seek God's wisdom as our representatives to the District Synod prepare to take their vote in the God in love unites us conversation about good relating, cohabitation and same sex marriage. Thank you for the blessing St Andrew's is in the circuit (from them and from me personally!).

**Rev. Sharon Lovelock**

### **YOUTHWORK**

Sarah and the youth team worked through a challenging year continuing to meet with and share the good news of Christ to young people. However, this had to be done in a different way!

New Gen have met weekly whether in person when we were able and online using zoom when in lockdown, they have baked together, had music nights, quizzes, and games. Every week there is time to pray together and the young people have been very open to this. For the younger group the Pathfinder leaders have been phoning the young people, recording a regular podcast and delivering gift bags at the beginning of the summer holidays and Christmas.

In the summer we were able to run a trial Pop-Up Café in the memorial ground, this went well and is a project we would like to continue, when restrictions allow. Unfortunately, Sarah was unable to do any work at Mascalls, despite offering to assist in various ways, the doors have been closed to visitors. We have aimed to encourage the young people who attend church to get involved in services, by recording readings, doing dramas and joining us on zoom. When we have been able to meet at the church the older young people have joined with the voyagers in the winter hall, this seemed to go well.

Overall, we have had to adapt and be flexible but continuing relationships has been key. We are optimistic that the young people will want to come back and engage, once the church is reopened. Sarah has been very well supported by the youth team and the wider church and she has worked closely with Hanna to develop a strong link between the children, youth & families work.

**Sarah-Joy Woodcock**

*30<sup>th</sup> March 2021*