

Children's and Family Report 2021-2022

As I write this, we have finished a year of interregnum and another year navigating the uncertain and ever-changing world of covid. Despite these difficulties we have a God who has been faithful to us in so many ways.

So here's a summary of what we have been able to do during this last year.

Sundays

May – November saw our All-Age Service continue to be pre-recorded with lots of people taking part particularly through readings and prayers but also in other ways. Our first in person service/activity particularly aimed at families was our afternoon Harvest Celebration which saw over 50 people engage in activities both inside and outside the church building. We supported One Can again and gathered an amazing amount of produce for them, with the Chair of Trustees coming along to Holy Trinity in the afternoon.



Our first in person All Age Service was our Christingle service in December when we enjoyed making 'Caketingles' this year in a covid friendly manner. It was wonderful to have some of our younger families in church for this special service.

Our All-Age services have continued in person throughout 2022 aiming to provide an opportunity for all ages and all stages to engage on their faith journey together.



Whilst not part of my role as Children's and Family Minister I have continued to sort the music for our services each week, trying to have a mix of traditional hymns with some more modern songs too. It has been amazing how God-inspired some of the choices have been and how aptly they have fitted with the theme of the preach- thank you God. I appreciate we all have differing tastes of music, but I hope that each service has something which helps you to praise and worship.

We continue to work to enhance our worship at home through the use of our AV system and problem solving and training others in how to use the system has also been part of my role this year. I am very grateful to Janine, Lois and Carole for being willing to serve on the AV team.

We have seen a boom in families wanting their children baptised, especially after 18 months being unable to do them. Jenny and I have done three baptism preparation sessions so far in 2022, with 16 families booked in for baptisms this year, some during our 10am services and others at 12 noon. This is an exciting area of mission and ministry, and it is wonderful to welcome these families to church and to the other activities we do.

Special Events

With restrictions gradually lifting from May we remained cautious as the covid cases remained high and we saw a quieter summer, activities and events wise. It was with delight that in May-



July I ran Out OWT (Outside With Toddlers) instead of Toddler Group at SGBC. It was brilliant to be able to connect with lots of the younger families in the village, meeting quite a few who had moved into the village since lockdown and hadn't been able to meet many in the village.

As we headed into the autumn term as a HT ministry team, we spent a lot of time navigating covid regulations, what we felt we could and couldn't yet do and best practise in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. We were also involved in the recruitment process for the new rector, including providing information for the CSG parish profile and being involved in the interview day.

During the summer I spent time with Ali helping behind the scenes to set up 'Toddlers in the Woods.' Ali's enthusiasm for this group is amazing and it has been wonderful to be able to visit the group on a couple of Friday mornings and see how it has grown and developed since September. A lovely community is forming as parents and carers meet each week to activities and time together. Thanks to Ali, Nora, Rachel and Brigit who faithfully serve in running this weekly ministry in Jordans.



This year for Halloween I dressed up in glow sticks and went around the village giving our sweets and being light in the darkness. I had a great time and thoroughly enjoyed the conversations that my outfit provoked.

I coordinated our Remembrance Day Service / Act of remembrance as hundreds from the village gathered at the War Memorial. Without a service in the Jubilee Hall we extended the content of our time at the war memorial, and this will probably be the format in the coming years.

We headed into a busy Christmas season trying to work out what would be possible as covid cases were high locally. Back in September I decided that we were still a way off being able to fill



the church with people for our Crib Services and set in place the plan for our second recorded online Nativity. I was able to film the school choir, Village Voices and Seer Green Singers as part of it. With social distancing rules relaxed filming was slightly easier than in 2020 when we couldn't get groups of people together. Including the choirs nearly 150 people were involved and once again it was a great talking point across the village. With families able to gather intergenerationally this year, and many watching it in groups it has still had over 600 views.

As already mentioned, our 'Caketingle' was a special service remembering Jesus coming as the light of the world. I spent an evening recording carols with members of Village Voices, Seer Green Singers and our church choir which were used in our Carol Service and Online Nativity and then lead our Carol Service at the last minute, due to Jenny isolating. The beginning of the year seems to have flown by, with a significant amount of time going into the recruitment of our new vicar and producing the parish profile.

In February Louise (SGBC) and I started leading an Alpha course, with sessions every 2/3 weeks, with five ladies from the villages enjoying exploring the Christian faith together over prosecco and profiteroles.

As we headed towards Lent all of our connected Church Families received activities to do with their children each day during lent.

This Easter time was very busy. Organising the Maundy Thursday meal in the Three Horseshoes was a lovely way of getting together for the first time since Harvest 2019. It was great to continue with our Easter services as we gathered to worship and witness with our friends from SGBC for our Good Friday Service and Walk of witness.



On Easter Saturday The Great Seer Green Easter Egg Hunt was back. It was a gloriously warm sunny day and over 80 families got involved, wandering around the village solving clues, collecting eggs, finding cheeky chicks and winning chocolate! There was a lovely buzz in the village as families and friends enjoyed doing the hunt together.

As I finish writing this report, we have just had our first 'Explore' – pop up church in Long Grove Woods. This is a new initiative with SGBC as a way of encouraging families in particular, but all ages, to have the opportunity to explore Christianity in a creative and informal way. We had 35 people enjoying 7 activities around the woods and then finished with a gathered time together including a quiz, thought, song and prayer. I look forward to our next Explore on 10th July.

Schools Work

From May – July 2021 Open the Book continued each week on Zoom, sharing films the team had recorded on location in Seer Green. One of my favourites was the parable of the two builders, filmed in the Preschool sandpit and on the school playground, using a hosepipe for the rain! Whilst the filming and editing took a lot of time, we did have lots of fun making these films. In September 2022, Open the Book collective worship resumed physically in school, much to the delight of the children, staff and team. Whilst feeling slightly strange being in a packed school hall again those feelings quickly disappeared when faced with lots of smiling faces. At the beginning of 2022 we reverted back to Zoom Open the Book for a couple of months due to the number of covid cases in school, but returned at the end of March back in person. We would love a couple of new team members, if you are interested please come and speak to me.



In July the Year 6 children at SGCE school received a Bible as a gift from Holy Trinity. Sadly these were not able to be presented to them as the Year 6 Bubble spent the last week of Y6 isolating due to a positive covid case in the class.

In September I returned to Jordans Infant school taking assembly there every 3/4 weeks. It has been great to be able to return after 18 months away and start to get to know the children there and share Bible stories with them. I have also been into Seer Green Preschool and visited Little Ducklings private day nursery (in the Pavilion at the Recreation Ground).

YR, Y1, and Y2 from SGCE School have visited Holy Trinity linking with their RE curriculum and they have enjoyed exploring the building and finding out a bit more about what we do.

Please pray for our children and young people, particularly pray for those transitioning to either school, secondary school, sixth form or university. Please also pray for the staff in our local schools, especially SGCE School as they say goodbye to Headteacher Sandra Park and prepare to welcome new Head Laura Morel.

During this last year it has been a pleasure to work with Jenny and Paul in our services, and more recently Dan. As we look ahead to the coming year I hope and pray we will be welcoming our new vicar soon and look forward to the mission and ministry that we can continue in our parish.



If you would like to know any more about the work we are doing, please do come and have a chat with me.

Janna Holder Children and Families Minister.