

St Edward's Stow – Rectors APCM Report 2020

I begin as always on a heartfelt note of thanks to everyone here for all that you do for St Edward's. There are many contributions that we all know about and just as many that are faithfully offered in quiet ways, often when no one else is around. Whatever you do – thank you.

I also want to say a particularly big thank you to everyone who has shared in leading our worship especially, Tony Whitaker, Jane Gardner, Dilys Neill and pay particular tribute to John Stanley who is not now able to help as much as he once did or would still like to. That said, he has been an ever present at every 1200 noon service since St Edwards re-opened.

I would like to thank all of the PCC for all they have done to help take our church forward. More now falls on the shoulders of all PCC members these because we no longer have a Churchwarden since Stephen Hill's work commitments saw him relocated to Oxford at two week's-notice. In response, we are developing a shared way of working which we think will cover the bases. We have been very fortunate too in that John Parkes has agreed to take on the role of Treasurer and the regular work of paying our bills is now back on an even keel. We are hugely indebted too to Roger Formby who has put hours of work and consultation into presenting us with the Accounts for 2018 and 2019. This will enable us to report to you where we are financially with greater accuracy next April.

This APCM should have been held back in April, but for the lockdown we endured as a result of Covid-19. As you know the pandemic has had major impacts on all life as we have known it and not least on the life of the church.

There has been a real paradigm shift in the way we do things. In days gone by we used to talk about going to Church. Since

April there has been the reverse arrangement. The church now comes to you. A bit like Tesco, we have been doing 'home deliveries' of our Sunday Prayers to around 30 homes and our care home communities. And, in another radical move, we have created services on the Zoom platform that those with a tablet or computer can share in together at home. And you can do this without any worry about Covid-19 transmission. In doing this, we have also opened a window on the wider world through the video storehouse which is youtube. We are particularly grateful to Tony Whitaker who puts these presentations together for us each week.

We have also found that more people have joined our mid-week gatherings. I find it remarkable that there are people who are now very familiar to me on-line who I am yet to meet in person!

So it is almost time to move onto the next item on the agenda, which is to invite your thoughts on what our post-Covid future might look like and how we can best prepare to move into it.

But before that I must just note that since our last APCM, our church and our local communities in Stow and Mangersbury have again lost some wonderful people. Among them I mention those with whom I had closer connections: Beryl Saunders, Bruce Amery, Bill Cheston, Barbara Collier, Cyril Scarrott, Robert Lamb, Rob Hathaway, Anne Beckett, Heather King and Joan Brown.

Thank you, as ever, for kindly listening. Do you have any questions?