

Care Team Report 2021

Worship

We had a year of highs and lows. After only one face-to-face service at the beginning of 2021 we were back in lockdown because of the new Delta Variant of COVID-19, so worship went back online only. Rob and Lynn continued to provide high quality musical worship and a huge number of people recorded readings and prayers to keep the services going. Many thanks to them and to Sarah Tourell, who did most of the editing.

In March we returned to church and kept the online services going at the same time. Our younger people started to play a bigger role in the worship on the 1st Sunday of the month, and we thank them for their ideas and inspiration.

On Easter day, as restrictions on singing outside were lifted we could sing (outside) for the first time, so we finished our service with a rousing 'Thine be the Glory' in the churchyard.

We continued singing outside at the end of the service for several months, until it was deemed safe to sing inside again.

In September, the music group led us over two Sundays as we explored the meaning of some of the Psalms.

We decided to stop the online services in October, as numbers attending virtually had dropped dramatically, and we wanted to encourage those who had not yet returned into the fellowship of the congregation.

Despite another new highly contagious strain of COVID-19 (Omicron) at the end of the year, meaning that many people in the choir and ministry team had to spend time isolating, all the December services went well. The Carol service was excellent, and we had better than expected numbers at the Christingle services, the outdoor Nativity and Crib service and the Midnight Communion and Christmas Day services.

Flowers

In 2021 Julie, along with a dwindling number of volunteers continued to provide flowers when we were in church for services. Thank you to all who make our church beautiful.

Bell Ringing

See note from the Tower Captain below.

It was very good to get back to ringing having been locked down for such a long time. We have been able to have our Tuesday practices and ring for the 10am communion throughout the year. For various reasons the band has become much smaller than ideal.

We are only able to ring all eight bells when we have visiting ringers. We need to attract and recruit some new ringers. Ringing is an enjoyable activity for anyone over 10 years of age. We are always ready to welcome and teach new people.

Deanery – attached as a separate report.

Welcome and Integration

See note below from the chair of the Welcome Team.

The St Peter's Welcome Team comprises of Lulu Button (Chair), Gillian Coates, Martin Daniels, Carolyn Palmer, Vikki Routh, David Shore, Rhiannon Simper and Julie Whing. Thanks go to them all for the work they do to extend the St Peter's welcome.

Post-COVID-19, the team began to meet on Zoom to discuss arrangements for getting back into church, and ideas for integrating the newer congregation members into the St Peter's Family. On the understanding that most people now need to feel that they belong in a church family before a faith journey can begin in earnest, ways of creating this sense of belonging were assessed.

Since knowing who's who is a good starting point, several Badge Sundays were arranged whereby everyone who was willing to be labeled with their name would be easily identifiable; people would be encouraged to strike up a conversation with someone they didn't know. These took place over a series of weeks in September/October with both Breakfast Praise and the 10.00am services being targeted. Feedback was positive and further Badge Days are planned for 2022.

Being invited to specific events or services was also identified as key to relationship building, so flyers for the Pet Service, Harvest Festival, the annual Light Party, and the Christingle and Christmas services were produced and handed out at the preceding service, creating a stepping-stone effect. This also produced positive feedback and the reappearance of some new faces; again, the initiative will be continued into 2022.

Suggestions of activities that were not church service based were also considered, and the introduction of a series of Wellness Walks (long and short), a Women's Breakfast and a Men's Group was agreed, to sit alongside the Light Party. Creation of these is deferred until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted further.

Towards the end of 2021, it was suggested that, as part of her ongoing training for incumbency, our Curate be offered the opportunity to Chair the Team. This was agreed and she will take up this responsibility in 2022.

Pastoral Care

Our dedicated Pastoral team continued to take communion to those not able to attend church when restrictions allowed. Also continued to provide ongoing pastoral care and support for our community suffering from illness, or bereavement. During the lockdown in March, Jackie was given permission from the Bishop's Registrar to conduct a wedding with a very small congregation present, due to a terminal illness in the family. We also held a remembrance event to mark the anniversary of the first lockdown, with the church open with interactive prayer stations. We held a well-attended memorial service for those families who had lost loved ones in the previous year in October. Thank you to all our pastoral team who show God's love in the way they continue to offer care and support to others.

Jackie Richardson

April 2022