

2nd December, 2021

Dear Friends,

A lot has happened in the six months since we said farewell to Maggie and Malcolm in July. In particular, the PCC has met several times and under the guidance of our two churchwardens we have discussed at length what kind of church we are and what we hope to become. These discussions have now been distilled and form the basis of our Parish Profile which will be published along with a job advertisement for our new Team Rector in the New Year. Please continue to pray that God will prompt the right person to realise that their calling is with us and that our time of vacancy will make way for a new period of growth and development.

Meanwhile, despite Covid, church life has returned to some degree of normality. It has been wonderful to be able to sing in church (even with masks) supported by the choir. We have had several memorable services, notably a packed Remembrance Sunday in church and at the cemetery and a very well attended All Souls service. Part of our ability to sustain some degree of normality is due to the generosity of so many of the congregation: the Team Vicar, lay ministers, director of music, vergers, administrator, visiting clergy, church wardens and the many committees on whom we so gratefully depend.

Since June with the easing of lock-down regulations, it has also been a great joy to celebrate several weddings, baptisms, the return of Messy Church and the outreach of Make Lunch to disadvantaged children. Our Parish Profile emphasises that the natural extension to being a worshipping community is to be an outward facing church playing a significant role in our immediate community and beyond. We are all especially grateful to the Events Committee for laying on monthly coffee mornings several of which helped us to raise over £1000 for the Cambridge Sanctuary and their work with refugees. Part of being an outward facing community is to address the pressing issues of our day, one of which has been to consider through sermons, study groups and a questionnaire the complex questions of gender and identity posed by the Church of England's 'Living in Love and Faith' project. I shall publish the results of the questionnaire in the New Year.

So, as we make our Advent journey and light the Advent candles of hope, peace, joy and love may I wish you all a blessed Christmas-tide remembering the greatest gift of all, God's presence on earth in the life of His son. Let us accept that gift with thankful and humble hearts, remembering John Bunyan's memorable words in *Pilgrim's Progress*:

*He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his Guide.*

Yours in Christ,

Michael

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