

Churchwardens' Report 2021-2

This report was given by both David and Charlotte at the meeting. David read the paragraphs in italics and Charlotte the ones in normal font.

This time last year we were facing very uncertain times. We knew Maggie was leaving at the start of July and we faced an interregnum, or vacancy. We were still suffering the effects of Covid and the restraints imposed on our lives to keep everyone safe. I dare say that a number of us faced the coming year with considerable apprehension. I know that I did.

Looking back now it is hard to believe how far we have come. In no small part this is down to Michael whose enthusiasm for meeting the needs of the parish has been hard to keep up with. At the start of this period he said that although he was part-time he was grateful for the opportunity to find out what it was like to be an incumbent. He has taken funerals, baptisms and weddings and been involved in the preparation of these beforehand. He has planned the big services of the last year, Easter, Christmas,

Remembrance Day. He has produced new orders of service for our 10am services and on top of that he has led SMYG. Clearly he has done the job so well that he has impressed others enough to be made Rural Dean in November of last year. We are very blessed to have you Michael and thank you.

In saying this we also need to thank the benefice clergy team who have taken some of the load and given Michael the opportunity for some down time. Ian has taken a bigger share of the services, in particular the Sunday 8ams, for which I am grateful as it is often the hardest to find clergy to preside at, and Thursdays at 10. His organising skills have been to the fore as we have planned services and worked our way through the year.

Lesley's faithful ministry has continued, focussed largely on Thursday Communion and Nicholls Court but we have been lucky to have her lead us on the big occasions too.

Lindi, as well as being a stalwart support to Ian in the villages has also given her time and energy to Linton, sharing her wisdom and preaching at services. We have also enjoyed and benefited from a number of visiting priests who have shared generously of their

time and thinking, and in some cases not even asked for expenses. Thank you.

Nicola's ministry has grown. She has done online services with the Infants' School all through lockdown. Their energy and enthusiasm, now that they can come back into church on Fridays, is a testimony to how important this ministry has been and how much they have enjoyed it. Thank you so much Nicola for keeping this going. Cathy has also found more opportunities for her gifts, as if being Safeguarding Officer was not demanding enough she has shared her wisdom with us in services here as well as at Bartlow and found time to display her artistry with fabric. Together Nicola and Cathy have worked hard each month to make the fourth Sunday truly a time for being Together with God. Thank you. In the last year Sarah has made Make Lunch Linton a central feature of our outward ministry and a real demonstration of care for our community. It has been no small task. Alongside this Messy Church has settled into its monthly late afternoon slot and is finding a new congregation since many had outgrown it in lockdown. Her ability to meet with and listen to young families and their parents has resulted in this lovely new children's corner

which you can often find being used by parents and children at any time in the week. Sarah does not do this alone. Gill's Baptism ministry is often an important forerunner for children and families. Seeds planted in baptism preparation have the opportunity for nurture in Messy Church and the Infants School service. Thank you to all of you for this connected ministry and thank you to all those who volunteer alongside you to work with our children, families and young people.

Thank you to Sue whose ministry has grown. Her Friday meetings at Nichols court have been much affected by Covid but there is no doubting how much they are appreciated when they can take place. Sue's ALM for Pastoral ministry equips and endorses this caring ministry.

Space for the Spirit has become a vital part of our worship.

Thank you to Molly and her team, Helene, Gill and Colleen for your gentle spirituality which draws us on and encourages us.

As we edge cautiously out of lockdown restrictions we have seen the return of roles such as Deacons and Sidepersons. Thank you

for being so willing to return to these roles after so long an absence.

Behind all this is our Rector's administrator. Thank you Anne for all that you do as Rector's Administrator. For the meticulous care in preparing the Powerpoints and paper service copies and weekly pewsheets. For being a point of contact with those seeking services for major life events. For having kept the website and a Church Near You up to date. Our worship and our community are enhanced by what you do each week. Assisting her are Patricia and Kate who deliver the paper services and pewsheets to folk in the village. Thank you both.

Alongside each of these stand partners and families who have so willingly shared their husbands, wives, fathers, and mothers with us. We know that this has not always been easy to do and we are grateful to you for your willingness to do so.

Then there are the army of volunteers who keep this place going and looking so beautiful. Thank you.

Thank you to the Monday Gang who keep the churchyard so beautifully. Thanks to the cleaners, who Hoover and dust weekly. To the brass polishers, especially those who have joined the rota recently.

Thank you to the flower arrangers, to Lian in particular who has organised this for many years and has now stepped back from this role. Each week we have been treated to such a wonderful display.

Thank you to the bellringers who ring for high days and holidays. Whose hard work on a Sunday morning announces our presence in the village and calls people to worship.

Thank you to the choir and music group who lead us in singing at services, and to David our director of music.

Thank you to those who read bible passages or lead intercessions, who act as sidespeople and run the powerpoints in our services. Thank you to John who does so much to keep the technical side of things going.

Thanks to Nanette our verger, Jacqui who so ably assists her and to Linda for all that they have done to prepare services. A huge thank you to Charlotte for being my fellow churchwarden this year. It is a daunting enough task to take on in normal times but especially during a vacancy. That she did take it on speaks volumes for her. Her can do attitude has enabled us to keep up with Michael and all he has planned. She has been a joy to work with.

Thanks to Hilary too for looking after the Pavilion and its bookings.

Thank you to those on the coffee rota and to the events committee who keep us socialising, raise substantial funds with coffee mornings and events which also provide a way to draw others into the church.

And thank you to David, who has been doing this all longer than I have, and for always being there if I have a question to ask.

Thank you to the PCC and its committee members who do so much for this church to keep it running, heated, lit and

weatherproof. Special thanks need to go to David who has been our lay-chair this year and chaired half the meetings, to Sue M as PCC secretary whose care and attention to detail in all the minutes she takes is amazing and to Sue E who has kept a watchful eye on our finances ably supported by the members of the finance committee. Thank you to Richard and Andrew who head up the Fabric Committee and lead working parties when needed. Thanks to the Mothers' Union. Thank you to the Friends who are so generous in providing funds and underwriting projects so that we can look after this wonderful building.

Inevitably with a list like this someone feels left out. I hope that is not the case but in another way it is not surprising since we have all had a part to play in the last year. David and I could not have felt more supported in this. Looking back gives us the confidence to go forward. As we cautiously return to more normal service arrangements, we are going to need more people to volunteer as Sidespeople, to volunteer to run the slideshow, to read and lead us in prayer or take part in healing prayer, to bring the elements to the front as part of the offertory, to offer the chalice, to serve or

even be a deacon. If you are interested in being a part of our worship please let us know at the end of the meeting.

But there is one above all who should be thanked for keeping us safe and steadfast in the last year. The God of our beginnings, our endings and all the places in between. Our God has manifestly been at work in us this year. to be his Church, his people in this place. If our God had not gone before us, prepared us and called us after, then we would not have dared some of the things we have done and we would not have got to this point in such good heart.

We have said a lot of thank yous today. Paul's letters are often filled with thank yous at the beginning which become fuel for his prayers. So in that spirit of gratitude for one another and for all that God has done so far, let's pray together for one another and the year ahead .

May the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—make us intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally. May our

eyes be focused and clear, so that we can see exactly what it is he is calling us to do, and with that vision may we grasp the immensity of the glorious way of life he has for his followers. May we know the utter extravagance of his work in us, and find the endless energy and boundless strength to trust him for the road ahead! Amen.

(Adapted from Ephesians 1: 15-19 The Message)