



ANNUAL REPORTS 2021/22

APCM

Sunday 20th March 2022

The Vicar's Report

As we sit at the beginning of 2022, 2021 seems a bit of a blur and it is easy to think that nothing really happened in 2021 as the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic continued and the virus changed form. However, it is always so good to look back over the year, as you recognise everything that has happened, even when things seemed much more challenging. I would like to say a huge thank you every person who makes up our church family of St Peter's. I am so grateful for your support and innovation over these last 2 years to ensure that we continue to reach out in faith and love.

We continued online worship for the first few months of the year through YouTube and are grateful for the different ways we have been able to communicate, even when this has not been able to be face to face. For those who could not access online worship, we have continued to send out a weekly mailing with Bible reading and thought for the day.

We opened up the Church building for Holy Week and Easter which was a true blessing for us all. After Easter we closed the doors of the church building again, but this time for a positive reason as the work on our servery project started and is just about now completed and has given us wonderful facilities to enhance our ministry and mission here. I would like to thank Chris Grant for his hard work in gaining so much of the finance towards the project in different grants. I would like to thank our Church Wardens Mark Jarrett and Paul Russell and in particular I would like to thank Paul for being our project manager throughout this project, making so much possible. We as a church community are also thankful to The Partridge Family for the legacy that was left to us which we have used to help us complete this project. Thank you also to the generous donations of the church community towards these new facilities, I hope that you are delighted with the new room, servery area and multiple toilets!

We moved back into the church on Pentecost Sunday which was a joy. We continued the online worship until the end of October 2021. At this point filming and editing services in the way it was being done was no longer sustainable. I would very much like to thank Simon Hare for his ongoing commitment to filming and editing the weekly services that went out. We worked out that at this point, we had filmed and put out close to 100 online services and on top of that weekly video assemblies for the schools. It has certainly been a learning process! We now have a group looking at how we take this forward to have a digital presence as well as in person.

Our in-person services have been building slowly over the last few months and in September, a group from the congregation formulated a questionnaire to go out the whole congregation and community covering many subjects. The PCC met in September to look at the results and then following this went away and incredibly prayerfully looked at the results and after a further meeting we started a new way forward with services and a new service pattern started at the end of 2021 with a 10:30am contemporary service and a 4:30pm traditional service. Both congregations have been growing and we have been delighted to welcome new people to the church family and things are starting to feel a little more "normal" (whatever that may be!)

I am grateful to my retired colleagues and to our preachers and worship leaders for their willingness to be part of the worshipping life of the church through the year and taking the new service pattern forward. I would also like to thank our tower captain Ray Porter and our bell ringing team who have rung for services, weddings and tolled for funerals during the year.

Our children and youth ministry started groups again towards the end of the year and we now have pioneers and trailblazers groups for our children aged 3-11 and we are working with our young people to find the right way forward to facilitate and develop their faith and growth. We are delighted to welcome our children and families back to church after what felt such a long time!

Like many churches, we have struggled with volunteers in many areas of the life of the church. Many people have re-evaluated life during the pandemic and for many, family life has changed so we continue to change and adapt to find the right way forward at this point.

We continue to take safeguarding very seriously and it is a standing item on every PCC. Sue Marsh as our Parish Safeguarding Officer with the PCC and myself see safeguarding every person in our church community as a priority. I would like to thank Sue for all her hard work in this area. I am very grateful to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team who have always been on hand to support and advise us through the year. Through 2021, the PCC has to the best of our knowledge complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

We were delighted that Hugh McCurdy preached at one of our online services in May 2021. It was wonderful to welcome Bishop Dagmar for her first visit to St Peter's as she presided and preached at a service in August 2021. Bishop Stephen joined us in October for a service of Confirmation for 3 candidates which was a joyous occasion.

At the start of 2021, it was a joy to be able to apply for Pauline Salmon's Pastoral ALM authorisation to be renewed and this was marked in a morning service. At the end of May, it was wonderful to be part of Laura Ashley's online authorisation service as Children and Families ALM. In October 2021 we were delighted to support Sue Grant as she was Licensed as a Pioneer LLM in October 2021 at Ely Cathedral after 2 years of study (much virtual) at Ridley Hall College in Cambridge. Susan Marsh also completed her Pastoral ALM course in November 2021 and we look forward to her authorisation soon. It is wonderful to be working with other members of the church family who are exploring vocation.

It was very special to be able to hold a Blue Christmas Service, Christingle, Carol Service, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Service after the majority of these were not able to take place due to Covid 19 in 2020. Explorers has continued to run during the year offering bags of crafts and activities and trails around the village around various themes and this has built up many links with individuals, families and different businesses around the village. We are currently exploring how this moves forward. Towards the end of 2021 we were able to restart Encounter and Sparks and these have both continued into 2022 growing in different ways. MU and MU Engage have also now been able to restart after a variety of garden meetings in 2021! Our wellbeing and foster and adoption groups are now both running in person which

has seen more people attending these groups and it is wonderful to be able to offer a space to be for those attending these groups.

Our Homegroups have been a lifeline for those engaged in these during the pandemic and our Homegroup leaders have been amazing at keeping in touch with their groups and being creative in their ways to meeting. The egg box scheme continues working very well in some egg boxes, and others have found this grouping harder and we are relooking at parts of this.

I am very grateful to our amazing foodbank volunteers and those that donate food. Unsurprisingly, the need for some of what we would see as the basics of life has increased as life has been complicated for many. Our Foodbank volunteers and donors have enabled our Foodbank to continue in Yaxley all through the pandemic which has been a lifeline for some individuals.

It has been lovely to restart welcoming families for Occasional Offices and last year 10 weddings took place here and 19 baptisms. It is always a privilege to be involved in these services and to take funerals. The church family have shared in celebrating the lives of some members who have died and we are grateful for all they gave to our church family and continue to hold their loved ones in care and prayer at this time.

We are in a place now of looking forward to what God is doing in this place and what he wants us to be doing and we give thanks for all that has gone before. We give thanks to the God who is the same yesterday, today and forever and is with us through His Holy Spirit in every moment, in our worship, in every prayer, plan and meeting, connection and visit made, foodbank parcel made, school assembly videoed, in every group that comes together and as we look to continue to reach out into our community in this year. There may be much uncertainty in this time, but our God is the sure foundation for our times (Isaiah 33:6).

Thank you so much to the wonderful community of St Peter's, I look forward to working together this year as we stabilise what has been started and look to what is to come.

Rev Sarah Hare
Vicar of St. Peter's Church, Yaxley

Churchwardens' Report

Quinquennial Inspection

This took place in November 2020 and, in accordance with the suggestions therein, we have completed a significant number of roofing lead/flashing/mortaring repairs; along with the replacement of the tower floodlights; but the replacement of the tower door at parapet level still needs actioning.

Project Fund

We would take this opportunity to thank everyone for their ongoing generosity to the Served Project Fund – with a total of £219,000 has already been received (or pledged over the next

year). This total includes almost £89,000 of grants (thanks in no small part to Chris Grant's efforts).

The works are expected to cost a total of ~£202,000 (allowing all costs, including window refurbishment, fees), with any 'surplus' going towards 'mission' (£17,000).

Whilst we were expecting to finish by the end of September 2021, the Covid 19 situation, along with material supply difficulties due to Brexit, have caused us some delays and the project is expected to complete in March 2022. We are, however, very pleased to have kept the works total cost to within £6,300 of the original budget of £195,450, despite the considerable increase in material and labour costs during this challenging period.

Terrier.

Most of our historic documents are held at the Huntingdon Records Office – where they can be viewed by anyone – leaving us with only the most recent records for our use.

Heating.

Heating costs are still being kept in check through our 'use it only when you need it policy' and not depending on the timer for every activity in church, which means we have used very little this year - unfortunately.

Organ

The organ has not had its annual service, due to the contractors being on site, and this will be actioned shortly.

Clock

The Churchwardens would take this opportunity to thank Andrew Burgess for his continued commitment to keeping the clock running.

Bells

The bells rang for the Remembrance Service on Sunday 14th November with the bells half muffled, the new muffles work very well, easy to attach and remove with no slippage during ringing.

The team have checked the stays, clappers and ropes for excessive wear, the clappers and Stays seem in good order, one or two of the ropes show signs of a little wear, however they will check on them periodically to make sure that they are still serviceable.

The broken stay from number 4 bell earlier in the year has been replaced and a replacement stay has been purchased.

We cannot see and signs of bird ingress or rain damage, and the team will continue to check and maintain the bells as required.

The Churchwardens would take this opportunity to thank Roger Austin and our Bell Captain Ray Porter for their fantastic work in maintaining our bells.

General.

The problem with the pump which operates the drainage system, has been sorted during the Project works...!!

Problems with the blocked rainwater system, to the North of the church, which caused water to enter the church during heavy rain, have been resolved by the laying of a new outlet pipe across the churchyard.

Fire extinguishers and portable appliances have not had their annual checks, due to the contractors being on site, but will be actioned, with the periodic electrical installation and lightning protection tests also due, in 2022.

The roof alarm has been inspected on an annual basis

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those members of the congregation who have assisted us throughout this difficult year.

Paul Russell & Mark Jarrett
Churchwardens

Treasurer's Report

What a very challenging two years we have had!

- A 2 year pandemic
- A leaky roof
- Dodgy drains
- And a major building project just to make things really exciting.

My heartfelt thanks go out to all of you for your:

- Standing orders, envelopes, and folding stuff in the beautiful Rwandan collection basket
- Time and expertise!
- Help with cash counting/gift aid and wedding administration
- Grant-finding skills
- Prayers

In addition to our normal very fixed expenses, we had maintenance bills totalling some £16016 in 2021. We used £7000 of our Reserves to partly subsidise this and some more to cover our general shortfall of £2231.

Unfortunately, although we paid what we had pledged plus a small extra amount, we were not able to pay as much to the Diocese in Parish Share as we might have hoped and this is an issue which needs to be addressed. Looking forward into 2022 with our crystal ball, our forecast shows that we could be facing further losses of up to £8000 during the year, which would completely use up all of our reserves, so something for us all to prayerfully consider.

We continue to support Hope's schooling in Rwanda and Christians Against Poverty in the UK.

Berthe's ministry in Kabahire is also funded by separate standing order donations, not through the General Fund.

If you would like more information about any of this, or have any questions, please do ask me over a cup of coffee one Sunday.

Debbie Jarrett
PCC Treasurer

Report of the Proceedings of The Parochial Church Council

The PCC have met virtually three times since April 2021 and four times in person with two of those meetings being emergency meetings. The meetings have discussed a variety of matters and are always commenced with prayer and concluded with The Grace.

Matters discussed include:

- The work with children & young people, including Junior & Youth Church, Youth Group, schools, Explorers
- Financial Matters, including our 2022 Budget, YTD figures, Local Fees, Parish Share, Fundraising,
- Youth Worker
- Served Project including Architect details
- Policies & Procedures, including Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Lone Worker, Privacy, Legacy, Complaints & Social Media
- Risk Assessments, including Foodbank, Online Prayer Ministry
- Occasional Offices: Baptisms, Funerals & Weddings
- Events Planning & Reviews
- Safeguarding
- Eco Church
- Electoral Roll Figure
- Deaf Church
- Deanery Synod
- New service patterns
- The Church Building, including Roof Repairs, heating issues, drainage
- Roles within SPC, including ALMs, LLMs, Parish Communications Officer, Band, Sound Desk, Cleaning, Junior Church, Sparks, Curate, Student Placement
- COVID Times
- Foster & Adoption Support
- Online Church
- Services – Planning & Review
- Soul Survivor
- Revival Prayer
- Foodbank
- Mothers' Union
- MU Engage
- Sparks
- Encounter
- Café Club
- Men's Breakfast
- Wellbeing Group
- Living in Love and Faith
- APCM
- Queen's Jubilee and tree planting
- Toilet twinning

Emma Rodulfo
PCC Secretary

Parish Communications Report

After another ever-changing year working on our communications, I'm currently thinking about what we now need moving forward. Going back to in person services has meant more changes to how we communicate with you and it is not necessarily right to just go back to what we used to do.

Our website is in need of a refresh this year. This was due to take place prior to the pandemic but was put on hold. Our new noticeboards are being prepared and we hope to have a new Welcome Pack soon too!

Over the past year Social Media engagement has steadily grown, we now have over 700 Facebook followers. A great way of using our social media has been to use it to continue Sunday's learning into the week, we've found that these posts have been well received and are a great way of us sharing the Good News and what is happening inside our doors. At Christmas, on Instagram, we did something a little different and ran the Jesse Tree Adventure. Members of the church family have also got involved with creating content by writing prayers and we're building links with local photographers who let us use their photos.

It's important to me that our social media isn't just a noticeboard, that it shares who we are as a church family and acts as a platform to share the Gospel. It acts as a great way for people to explore faith and SPC without the fear of entering through those big heavy doors, and who knows it may encourage them to come along!

Social media is bigger than one person though. Please help us by posting photos (with the people's permission) and tagging us, sharing our posts, commenting, liking – these things all help us reach more people and plant more seeds of faith in our community.

You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard. Acts 22:15

Laura Ashley
Parish Communications Officer

Children's & Families Ministry

Sparks

Sparks started up again in December 2021, after a pause of almost 2 years, due to Covid. Whilst some team members stepped down during COVID, we've also gained 4 new team members. Thank you to Liz, Val, Sue & Sharron for all their work on the Sparks team over previous years.

We have around 15 families regularly attending and whilst numbers are smaller than we are used to seeing, we are excited for the positives this brings in the opportunities to talk with and get to know the families.

COVID gave the Sparks team the opportunity to make some changes to sessions, including a new programme with new crafts and activities and a Sparks prayer. Thank you to everyone who serves on the Sparks team, and to the new team members who have recently joined us.

Children's Ministry on Sundays

Our Sunday's Children's Ministry started back in November 2021. Whilst on a pause due to Covid, the team took the opportunity to make some changes. Our groups are now called Trailblazers and Pioneers and we are creating our own session content using the readings/theme of the main service, which is allowing for conversation between families to continue at home. We've reintroduced music to the sessions, learning songs and actions, and end each session with a short prayer. It has been wonderful to get to know the children, those who we've not seen in some time and those who are new to us.

Our challenges for the coming months are to grow our team. This will give the team more flexibility and enable us to split the Pioneer group into two groups, to provide more age-appropriate sessions for the older ones. Thank you to all the team members for all that you do in providing children's ministry on Sundays.

Explorers

Between Easter and December 2021, 797 Explorer Packs were collected from the church porch. We explored various themes over those months, such as hope, our wellbeing, journeys and light. Packs have been eagerly collected at each school holiday and from some families we receive photos and tales of what they have been up to.

As Explorers collect their packs when we are not around, we don't always get to see the families reactions. However, we got a snippet of the excitement at the Christingle service as children ran to get packs afterwards! During December, we also held two in person outdoor

carol events, which were well attended and created quite a buzz on the Yaxley Gazette Facebook Page.

As we entered 2022, we sought to understand what Explorers would look like in our ever-changing world. We prayed, asked the families what they thought and met as a team. Going forward, Explorers will be a mixture of pop up in person events and holiday packs. We intend to maintain our presence out in the community and continue to build links with schools and businesses. We aim to be missional, providing families with intentional messages and resources to help them explore faith and aim to be adaptable, changing as is needed by our community.

Thank you to all who have helped with Explorers; those on the team and those that have helped with adhoc requests! It is exciting to see what 2022 brings for Explorers!

Laura Ashley

Children's & Families Authorised Lay Minister

Youth Report

We continued to meet on Zoom with our young people during most of 2021 and started to use Apply as a resource to follow. At the end of the summer term, both Sof and Sophie stepped down from being youth leaders and I would like to thank them and Emma for all that they have given to our young people. In the Autumn Term it has been wonderful to watch a youth band coming together to lead worship on a Sunday.

We have yet to start our youth provision on a Sunday but we are currently talking with the leaders and young people to find the best way forward at this time and we are putting plans in place for this.

Rev Sarah

Yaxley Foodbank 2022 Annual Report

The last 12 months have been a busy period for the foodbank as the continuing pandemic with the associated restrictions and changing financial circumstances have made life difficult for our clients. Certainly, 2021 was our busiest year so far as shown in the following figures up to our stocktake in early September:

Routine parcels given out: 331

Christmas Parcels: 53

Weight of food given out: 13675kg

Thanks to our generous supporters donating both food items and funding, we have continued to maintain good stock levels. We have also been able to continue issuing Fruit & Veg

vouchers redeemable through Kemps Greengrocers. Since we started issuing these vouchers just over 18 months ago we have given out approximately 400 vouchers worth £4000. They are highly appreciated by the clients, we have an excellent working arrangement with Kemps and they enable healthier diet options for those in food crisis.

Some of our volunteers have also just started a monthly support group for our more regular clients, helping with simple recipes, advice for healthy diets and budgeting advice. This seems to have started well with the next meeting at the end of March.

We are very grateful to our volunteers who have continued to offer this valuable community service throughout the whole pandemic period. We would also like to thank all those individuals who support us, without whom the foodbank could not function and those organisations such as Hunts District Council, Yaxley Parish Council, Kemps Greengrocers and the Yaxley Community Fridge who offer such great support.

Chris & Sue Grant
Foodbank Co coordinators

Mother's Union

During the summer of last year we were able to have a few MU-Engage meetings in a garden. We had hoped to restart our monthly Mothers' Union meetings in St Peters in September, but, delay by building work and covid restrictions, meant we had to wait until November for our first meeting, this was followed by a Christmas meeting in December. We had a "Transformation Now" service, with Communion and a bring your own lunch in January and a meeting in February. MU-Engage restarted in February and we are using the new upper room for these meetings. On several occasions Mothers' Union prayers from their Facebook page were shared with the Community of St Peters Facebook page.

Irene Porter
St Peters Mothers' Union branch leader.

Encounter

Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions and the church building work, it was not possible for Encounter to resume meeting in 2021. However, it was lovely to meet twice during the summer months on the recreation ground for a catch up with Encounter friends. How to attract new people to engage with Encounter has been an ongoing challenge but we are pleased that Encounter has recommenced at the start of 2022. Encounter leaders will be carefully and prayerfully reviewing the way forward during the coming year.

Pauline Wallace
Encounter Coordinator

Bells Report

During the last year we slowly returned to some sort of normality, ringing for 3 weddings which is an historical low in the 24 years that I have been ringing at St Peter's. I have tolled for 6 or 7 funerals which is a little higher than the norm. We rang the bells half muffled in remembrance of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh in April, to give thanks for his life as a naval officer and devotion to the Queen. We also rang half muffled before the remembrance service in November.

Our muffles have served us very well over many years but have become very worn and difficult to attach to the clapper, I'm delighted to report that Sarah, the churchwardens and PCC sanctioned the purchase of a new double set of purpose made muffles, the double set means that we will be able to ring fully muffled as and when needed.

In April we will be welcoming the Huntingdon District Bell Ringers for an afternoon ring, so we can look forward to some excellent ringing.

For various reasons a lot of St Peter's ringers have moved away from the area, this means that our band is somewhat depleted, however we still manage to hold our weekly Friday night practice most weeks and for the occasional Sunday service.

The bells are checked over and maintained as and when required, I would like to Thank Roger Austin who has kept the bells in good for a number of years and is always available to offer advice and support on any problems that may crop up from time to time.

We practice on Friday evenings from 7:30pm, if you would like to join us you, whether you are a seasoned ringer or would like to learn the art of bell ringing you will be most welcome.

Ray Porter
Tower Captain

Prayer Report

Part of our vision is to be a praying church and even under the varied restrictions of covid 19 during the past year it has been a main focus for many people as everything we do or plan to do needs to be steeped in prayer.

Available to the whole church, Prayer Points have been shared in the weekly news letters, and a "Whats App" group was set up for the prayer ministry team to respond quickly and cover in prayer more serious and personal issues. Now we are back in church in a more normal way we can offer prayer ministry during and at the end of services, but keeping the Whats App group live to cover in prayer issues that crop up during the week.

During the year the Monday Morning Prayer meeting prayed together in church for a few times when restrictions eased momentarily but for most of the year we still joined together to pray remotely (and probably in dressing gowns).

We are now back in church at a slightly later time of 8:00 am and we are growing in our prayer life and in people as God calls us.

Several House Groups have revitalized their prayer lives and understanding of it by reading and studying together Pete Greig's books "How to Pray", "God on Mute" & "Red Moon Rising"

Also some of us have been studying Roy Godwins "Blessing Course" which combined with prayer is very useful for equipping the church to Carry the blessing of God out into the world to transform communities.

If what the church has been doing this past year whets your appetite for prayer there are other resources available to help, but like learning to drive books are helpful but to drive you have to get behind the wheel and go down the road, to help with getting down the road praying there is a regular prayer diary plus a 12 hour prayer day coming very soon.

Mick & Marilyn Debbage
Prayer Team

Foster & Adoption Support

The Fostering & Adoption Support Group launched online in February 2021 and we were able to meet online over the course of a couple of months. During this time, we were able to connect with a couple of families to gain an understanding of their needs and hopes for the group going forward.

The group paused during the second half of 2021 before we were delighted to launch again face tp face at the end of January 2022. This was a wonderful opportunity to meet some of families we had connected with in person and to get their feedback on plans going forward. Our second meeting of the year was held at the Annabelle Davis Centre at the end of February. It was particularly encouraging to see our families interacting and supporting each other with their experiences during this second session.

We are currently connected with around 5 families who are either currently fostering or have adopted. Going forward the plan is to continue meeting on the last Saturday afternoon of the month, and we will be alternating between St Peter's and the Annabelle Davis Centre. We also hope with the support of Annabelle Davis Centre to be able to offer a number of resources for support to the families going forward as well as a safe space to share and connect.

A huge thank you to all our amazing volunteers for their ongoing support to make this group possible particularly during a difficult couple of years.

Imogen Moore