

ANNUAL CHURCH GROUPS REPORTS 2021

Wardens Report

Obviously, all the plans we had about the Buildings and direction of travel were put pretty much on hold.

Very little other than necessary maintenance has been carried out on either Building and so it is fair to say that some money will have to be spent in the next 12 months on improvements/maintenance. Many of the things we notice that are wrong come about when we are using the buildings regularly, so as we return a number of items will undoubtedly crop up.

Money has been spent on guttering/servicing heating and some updates on the electrics in both buildings.

We have used St Barts on a Sunday much more than for a number of years and that will continue.

The outsides of both buildings will need attention, and the gardens at Barts will need to be tended going forward as we start to meet there regularly. The Christmas Service and the Easter Service showed what can be done in the gardens and it would be good to utilise that resource more.

The Rock Christian Fellowship started to use St Stephens for Sunday mornings and some other meetings from Dec 2020 and this will continue until at least the end of May. This has not only been a valuable source of income but alongside the House of Prayer has meant that the building has been regularly used which is great.

As ever the Wardens are very grateful for all the help they get from people who help out on a Sunday morning, from the Standing Commt and the Ops team and from all the others who help the (reasonably) smooth running of the Vine.

A very BIG THANK YOU to Jackie our administrator without whom the Wardens could not hope to function!!

Paul and Andy

THE VINE SHEFFIELD

VICAR'S REPORT TO APCM 2021

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. (Romans 8:14-17)

Jesus gave them this answer: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. (John 5:19)

It has only been a short time since our last APCM because 2020's meeting was covid-delayed from April to October. At that time there was some expectation that the worst was behind us, but two more lockdowns were yet to happen. Only now, with the vaccine rolling out, are we able to begin to imagine what a post-covid world looks like.

It's time to take stock, and breathe.

The grace in the midst of difficult times is in how they "test" us. Adversity reveals something. For Christians it gives insight into our identity: Who are we as followers of Christ? What does following Jesus look like in this here and now moment?

The broad shape of our walk with Jesus is to be "in the world but not of it."

Like Jesus, we participate in this world. We are not seeking to escape; we share in what is happening. This year has reminded us of that. Along with everyone else, we have been impacted by the trauma and disruption of covid.

There are things that we are *grieving*; we will have *lost* something this last year. For some of us that is intense, raw, and personal. For all of us it is some part of our reality. As a church, we will now be different. We have changed. There will be aspects of who we once were that will now be *memory and legacy* rather than

present reality. This is especially so as we have laid down some of our defining activities, including the location of our Sunday gathering.

Similarly, it is right for us to move forward *slowly and carefully*. The so-called “new normal” doesn’t need to be rushed. Some of us will be eager to come back quickly into doing things together with extroverted energy. Others of us will move more carefully and deliberately. After weeks and months of being locked apart we are all more fragile than we think.

In many ways, as a church we have more than enough *change* to be going on with. There are changes happening in our benefice. And we are being deliberate in our pursuit of mission opportunities, as well as Sunday worship. None of this requires a *frantic* pursuit. We move forward gently and simply, sharing in the joy of the Lord together.

In this sense, *we have a Kingdom perspective*. As pursuers of Jesus we are, ourselves, pursued by the Spirit of God who embraces and fills us. By the Spirit we have a view *beyond* our present sufferings. This “reset” moment is an opportunity to be filled with hope. What have we been praying for? How might we pursue the ways of Christ, grounded in our local area, and with a heart for the world? How does the Spirit move us to share together in worship, discipleship and fellowship?

We have, in this current moment, a real freedom to explore *new things*. There is a solid practical aspect to this. As a church we have money in the bank. We have two excellent locations and a soon to be “spare” vicarage. We are joining together with another parish and this brings flexibility and opportunity for experiment.

This freedom runs even deeper, however. The more I consider the ways of Jesus the more I am amazed by the freedom and joy of all that he did. He didn’t act according to the expectations of the world. He wasn’t driven by frantic attempts to perform. He wasn’t caught up in fearfulness or political agendas or the latest movements and fads. He exhibited a life shaped by a devotion, to know the Father and to do what the Father led him to do, whatever that might be.

Therefore, in this moment, before all things, there is a call for us to *abide*, and especially to worship and pray. We *will* need to be decisive at times in the next few months. We *will* need to hone our thoughts and articulate what we intend to do and why. But all of that wells up from our worship, our devotion, and our prayer.

If there is any exhortation in this report, then, it is a call to prayer. In some ways, let us do “more of the same”. Throughout the pandemic we have been able to pray at home, on Sunday, in the House of Prayer at St. Stephen’s, on Monday nights, and through various prayer walks and much more besides. At the same time, if covid has “cleared the slate”, so to speak, then we can first put back rhythms, habits, and shapes of devotion. Let us seek the heart of God, dare to hope, and do what we see our Father doing. May his will be done.

In that light, let me give this report on what has been and what is coming from this strange year.

Covid Response, Sundays & Ministry Team

The early responses to covid were covered in last year's report. At October last year our emphasis was to build a "Sunday team" that could hold the livestream on Sunday mornings. This required new technology, some of it funded by a diocesan grant, and new rotas and arrangements for those willing to contribute. I want to record my thanks to Paul Sheridan, in particular, for filling many of the "holes" that emerged, and for all those whose faces are appearing on youtube as leaders and preachers and contributors. At the same time, in late 2020, we were holding afternoon in-person services at St. Bart's. We give thanks for Tina Powell-Wiffen's leadership and gifts!

I am also grateful for Rachel Widdows, Lucy Smith, Vicki Neath and those involved in leading our children, youth and families. We have had a number of conversations about our engagement with children and youth on Sundays and other gatherings. This informed some of our Advent, Christmas, and Lent activities. As with all aspects of how we increase our physical gathering, there will be more conversations to come.

What is particularly heartening is the *capacity* we have to serve one another in these different forms of leadership in worship and in opening the Word of God. The structural changes that are imminently upon us are more than just a shift in administration. The language that is being used is of the vicar being an "oversight minister" and providing encouragement, facilitation, and enabling of the body of Christ to work and walk together. Much of the rationale of how we have arranged things over the last few months – including lengthy series in which I haven't been in the preacher list – has been to make my involvement more dispensable. The upcoming training and encouragement nights for leaders and preachers are towards this end also.

I am also heartened that the ranks of our licensed ministers are growing. We are looking forward in the next few weeks to receiving Amy Hole – who was an ordinand placed with us at the beginning of 2020 – as our Curate. It was fantastic to have Andy Wier and Kate Cornwell licensed as Lay Readers in February this year.

Benefice

Of course, the forthcoming structural changes with regard to the benefice will be a significant aspect of the life of the parish over the next few months.

I won't reiterate here the process that was covered in last year's report. In my current awareness, there has been some delay to the formal process of implementing the union of our benefice with that of St. Timothy's, Crookes. We are working on the assumption that following the departure of Rev. Malcolm Lambert as

Priest-in-Charge of St. Timothy's in late June, we will begin *acting* as a united benefice, even if the formalities are not yet fully in place.

Since the last APCM the two PCCs appointed members of an "Interim Benefice Council" that has been exploring the ways in which the united benefice can best operate, particularly with regard to shared aspects of our administration and decision-making. There is a report from the Interim Council included in the reports to this APCM.

My main concern, beyond the formalities, is to focus on the daily rhythms within the parish, building a team amongst existing staff and volunteers, and getting to know a lot of new people. It will be a steep learning curve for many of us. One of the difficulties of having activities and personnel dispersed across different locations is to find the time and place where there is heartbeat of living activity and prayer each day of the week. This will require some deliberate decisions to act and pray together.

The Heartbeat of Mission

In, with, and through the myriad of changes and upheaval I have been grateful for the times that our Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) has been able to get together. The MLT's members are Steve Hill, Tina Powell-Wiffen, Dave Neath, Claire Law, Paul Sheridan, and Gill and myself. Our task is to take a step back to consider the "wide-angle" and ponder and discern ways forward.

Our focus has turned, over the course of the last few months, to the imperative of being an outward-looking mission church. To some degree our Sunday focus has its own momentum. The structural changes, also, are "coming to us" as an external factor, in the main. To what can we turn our *deliberate* efforts, in reaching our parish area with the gospel? We have been mindful of the heart that was shared in our 2019 congregational survey that we don't want to abandon either "end" of our parish, but to pursue mission in both places.

To that end, the MLT has brought to the PCC two proposals.

The first has a connection to the Café Zero and other activities that were, pre-Covid, happening at St. Bart's. It also responds to the PCC's decision in early 2020 to set the direction of consolidating our congregational activities at St. Bart's, and we asked, at the time, "What opportunities for mission exist?"

To that end, an S6 Mission Audit group has been commissioned, convened by Phil Townsend. It is tasked with discerning opportunities for mission that we might pursue in and around St. Bart's. What are the felt needs of the community? How might we respond? How do we respond in a way that is integral to the life of our worshipping community? I am grateful for the ongoing work of this team and look forward to what will emerge.

Similarly, we have responded to our ongoing heart for Upperthorpe and Netherthorpe – our "S3 end." There are a number of factors emerging. Firstly, has been the

commencement of the House of Prayer prayer room at St. Stephen's during the second lockdown in November. This has been well used with regular attendance throughout the week, and is making creative use of the smaller rooms at St. Stephen's. Secondly, has been the emergence of an "international community" in the Upperthorpe area – an informal gathering of folk, some of whom are members of The Vine – who have been praying and pondering about God's heart, in particular, for the significant multi-cultural community. And thirdly, the need to develop a plan for the existing vicarage once the Briggs family move to the new benefice vicarage at St. Tim's. It was PCC's express desire that the vicarage be used for ministry purposes. We need to make a plan for those purposes.

To that end, an S3 mission working group has been commissioned, with leadership provided by Gill Briggs, Dave Neath, Anne Kingstone, Steve Hill, and myself. This working group is considering how a sustainable worshipping community can be grown in and around the vicarage using monastic rhythms and community, and inviting partnership with others, especially students and young people. This working group is drawing on the experience of Maral Assadzadeh, one of our supported missionaries, Fusion Student Movement, and other similar ventures in Nottingham and the Diocese of Leicester.

I am keenly aware, in exploring the opportunities in both S3 and S6, that we are, as a parish, relatively rich. We have some significant cash reserves. Some of these funds will need to be spent on some essential maintenance and minor developments of buildings. It is my hope, however, that we can use this resource to invest in *people*, and therefore in activity that stimulates and flourishes the Kingdom of God and the "community of communities" that is our church. Now is not the time to hold onto things "in case of a rainy day" – that day is upon us, and we should invest it wisely in gospel work.

In conclusion.

If 2020 held a lot of uncertainty, 2021 holds lots that is unknown. I do not know what our church community will look like in six months time! I look ahead, into the unknown, however with some excitement that in our being undone, we are exactly where our Lord Jesus needs us to be; reliant upon him, and learning to respond to his heart. We are called to do what we see the Father doing, and Jesus has given us the words for that - to make disciples of all different nationalities, to teach people the way of Christ, and to enjoy his presence with us to the end of the age.

Thanks be to God.

TOWARDS THE UNITED BENEFICE OF ST. TIMOTHY'S AND THE VINE SHEFFIELD

INTERIM COUNCIL

During 2020, and despite the pandemic, the parishes of St. Timothy's Crookes and The Vine Sheffield continued the discussion regarding the formation of a united benefice. Our PCCs gave in-principle approval and the formal process was initiated by the Mission and Pastoral Committee of the Hallam Deanery in June which was acted upon by the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee in July.

A joint PCC meeting in October raised the question of the name of the Benefice, the naming of the new incumbent, and the location of the Vicarage. Both PCCs later individually agreed that

- 1) The name of the new Benefice to be "The Benefice of St. Timothy's and The Vine Sheffield."
- 2) The Rev. Will Briggs to be named as first incumbent of the new benefice.
- 3) The St. Timothy's vicarage to be deemed the parsonage house of the new benefice.

With regard to the vicarage, some additional assurances were sought from the diocese that The Vine's vicarage would be used for mission purposes and managed only with consultation with The Vine. These assurances were given by the Archdeacon.

The formal process of drafting a pastoral scheme is continuing. There have been some covid-related delays but there appear to be no foreseeable obstacles otherwise. A prospective date for the formal commencement of the joint benefice is not yet known. It is likely that there will be some interim arrangements with the new incumbent and an Assistant Curate being licensed to both parishes ahead of the legal union of the benefice.

In November 2020 both PCCs appointed members to an "Interim Council.". The members of this body are Will Briggs, Malcolm Lambert, Siobhan Melville, Ellen Makin, Andy Bryce, Paul Sheridan, Ben Widdows, Jack Hiscock, Jon Smith, and Kate Rogers-Kay.

The Interim Council has met three times via zoom, beginning in December 2020. The main task of the council has been to consider transitional arrangements, and also to consider some of the ways in which we might make decisions in the new benefice. **There will be decisions that each Parish will make on their own, and some decisions which will need to make together.** What are those decisions, and how will we make them?

The Interim Council has therefore made a consideration of some of our existing structures and decision-making processes, guided by three principles:

- 1) **BEING LEAN.** We wish to avoid unnecessary layers of management and having an overload of meetings. It is likely we will need to have new structures, but we should look for as much overlap and complementarity with existing structures as possible.
- 2) **BEING DYNAMIC.** We do not simply wish to bring two “status quos” together such that all we do is maintain the existing. A benefice structure needs to allow new things to emerge well.
- 3) **BEING ORGANIC.** We don’t want to begin by creating a huge new system. Rather, our aim is to start with a “light touch”, bringing together beforehand only that which is absolutely necessary to do so, in a way that will allow the structures to adapt as new synergies and collaborations become apparent over time.

The Interim Council has therefore made some decisions, e.g. recommending that we will try to allocate shared expenses evenly, not on some arbitrary proportion. It has also facilitated some transitional arrangements, e.g. recommending the location of the new Curate’s office, ensuring initial rotas are filled, offering feedback on how the new incumbent might initially draw two ministry teams together.

The Interim Council will also be recommending to the PCCs that, when the benefice is formed, that a **Joint Council** be formed. Under canon law a Joint Council in a united benefice can act with certain powers delegated by the PCCs. It can be formed as part of the forming of the benefice itself, or be formed later after parish meetings. In any case, the initial responsibilities for a Joint Council would be to

- 1) Respond to areas of overlap and coordination between the parishes – e.g. discuss the principles of how clergy will be allocated across services; collaborations and potential areas of shared ministry.
- 2) Manage shared expenses – e.g. vicar’s and curate’s expenses, including those relating to housing.

As life as a united benefice unfolds there will be further opportunities to align the ministry efforts and administrative tasks of the two parishes. The Joint Council will also be able to respond to these opportunities.

The Interim Council will meet at least once more, following the APCMs, before reporting back to PCCs with recommendations for how to proceed in this direction.

In conclusion, there is a lot that is changing, but also much that is not. The ministry of both churches continue into the new season ahead. If you have any questions, concerns, or other thoughts, Malcolm or Will would be very happy to have a conversation with you.

A HOUSE OF PRAYER AT ST. STEPHEN'S

APCM 2021 REPORT

In late 2020 PCC agreed to use St. Stephen's for small group and prayer in accordance with covid restrictions at the time. A prayer room was begun in the old Pebbles room in November. It has become known, and well-used, as a House of Prayer. Much of what has emerged from this activity is now being reported to, and taken into account by, the S3 Working Group.

Reflecting on the year past

In February 2020, as part of our decision-making towards consolidating our congregational life at St. Bart's, there was some wisdom expressed about St. Stephen's: that for God to do something new, old things would need to stop. In hindsight, this was God-given wisdom; shortly following, the pandemic forced the doors of St Stephen's to be closed and the building to lay dormant. Throughout the covid months the people of The Vine gathered differently and grew. We have worshipped, cared for, and disciplined each other while "scattered together."

At the same time, prayer has not stopped. Prayer walking around Netherthorpe, Upperthorpe, and Langsett Estate became part of expressing God's mission for the area and his love poured out through his people. The Monday night fortnightly prayer at St. Bart's became weekly prayer online, and then in the prayer space at St. Stephen's.

A House of Prayer for the Nations

In, with, and through these times of prayer, the "something new that might emerge" has glimmered. This included times of prayer walking and hearing God speak and moments of prayer and worship on The Ponderosa.

The decision to have prayer at St. Stephen's allowed some of it to be tested: to begin creating a space, completely set aside for prayer and worship in the St Stephen's building. It reflected the prayerful posture of surrender, that we had been learning during the pandemic; to continue to pray, worship and follow as His Holy Spirit leads. We allow God alone to do the raising. We abide in him; this is the foundation of God-reliant mission.

From there it has been possible to begin to think, pray and dream of how St. Stephen's might possibly be used and adapted for possible future kingdom mission and ministry. As the numbers of those using the prayer room have grown, we have found ourselves using the language of a 'House of Prayer for the Nations.' (Isaiah 56 and Mark 11).

"The nations" is important. Within the population of Netherthorpe and Upperthorpe are forty plus nationalities, and white urban poor. There are high-rise and low-rise housing estates, two schools and a significant student population.

Apart from regular use during the week (at least three times a week for two hour slots), and by a number of members of The Vine, use of the House of Prayer has been requested by a number of others. A local international community formed around friends of The Vine, David & Glenda Schannen, has been particularly interested. This community is made up of people from a number of nationalities. Many are on the “fringe” of church communities and find life within organic, gentle, shared rhythms of prayer.

The heart of a House of Prayer is to express rhythms of prayer and worship. This is the heartbeat of formation, discipleship, mission, hospitality and creativity, with Jesus at the centre. It appeals to the heritage of movements of God that have been rooted in place and times set aside for prayer and worship: e.g The Moravians, Asuza Street Revival, The Hebridean Revival, Ffald-y-brenin in Wales, and Pete Greig’s 24-7 Prayer Movement and its related Order of the Mustard Seed. A House of Prayer is an opportunity to explore, ourselves, what we can learn from these movements. Consider, for instance, the values of the Order of the Mustard Seed, the can shape the way head: True to Christ; Living Prayerfully; Celebrating Creativity; Kindness towards People; Practicing Hospitality, Expressing Mercy & Justice, Taking the Gospel to the Nations, etc.

In this moment of emerging from covid, there is much that can be explored, including the use of the spaces at St. Stephen’s. Prayer is and has been happening there now, for some months. We are beginning to make use of some of the different rooms – a “Living Room” in what was the Pebbles Room for prayer and conversation; The “Makers Room” for creativity in the St. George’s Room that was used for Godly Play; and the “Upper Room” chapel is ideal for reflective and led prayer. As restrictions ease there is space for expressing hospitality and welcome.

S3 Mission

As we dwell on this last six months of prayer activity at St. Stephen’s, the House of Prayer is now connecting into the S3 Working Group as it develops a strategy of what might be. Please continue to pray as we discover what the Lord is doing.

Gill Briggs

Health Care Chaplaincy

I have been working as a Hospital Chaplain in the multi-faith chaplaincy team at the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals Trust for the past two and a half years. I have the privilege of working alongside my chaplaincy colleagues, (Christian, Muslim, Buddhist and Humanist) three days a week at the Northern General Hospital, Hallamshire Hospital and Jessop sites, offering pastoral, spiritual and religious care to patients, families and staff. I also work one weekend in every four and I am on-call to respond to emergency calls overnight about three times a month.

A hospital chaplain is employed by the NHS and is authorised by their faith community. I was licensed by the Bishop of Sheffield as a Healthcare Chaplain in the Royal Hallamshire Chapel in 2019.

A hospital chaplain's role is incredibly varied. As well as pastorally visiting patients and staff on the wards, we triage, assess and support a huge variety of people from all faiths and none. We provide opportunities to mark significant life-events by e.g. offering end of life prayers, baptising seriously ill babies, blessing relationships in palliative situations and leading adult and baby funerals.

The Covid 19 pandemic has obviously been challenging for everyone in the NHS, including chaplains. Our valued volunteers were stood down, which was a huge loss for us and the patients we serve. However, we have still been able to continue meeting patients face to face, (both covid and non-covid) in all areas of the hospital, wearing full scrubs and PPE. One of the most difficult problems in the last year has been the 'no visitor' policy and patients have often been alone when critically ill or dying. As chaplains, we have regularly been the bridge between patients and loved ones by providing remote support to relatives via phone/face-timing. We've also been pleased to give 1-1 support to members of staff who are working in the most extraordinary circumstances.

I have learnt, so far, that health care chaplaincy is about incarnational presence and paying attention to the meanings and stories of people's lives, hopes, beliefs and doubts. To individuals and the institution we work in, we are a reminder of a transcendent dimension to life. We are at the forefront of God's mission to make his message known to all people. What a privilege to be given such a role!

My chaplaincy identity is rooted in my Christian heritage. For the last 3 years, I have been studying 'Theology, Ministry and Mission' at the School of Ministry and in February this year, became licensed as a Lay Reader. This role compliments my chaplaincy work and equips me to continue leading services and preaching at The Vine.

Kate Cornwell

Pebbles report

In 2020, after a brief stint in a new layout at St Barts for the first few weeks of the year, the under 5s group at church (Pebbles) - unsurprisingly- moved 'online'.

Led by Rachel and Lucy, the group continued to use 'Diddy Disciples' as the primary resource to share Bible stories and songs, but rather than sitting around in a circle to do this, the Pebbles WhatsApp group became the main vehicle for communication.

From March 2020 onwards, short videos were shared on an (almost!) weekly basis, with input from children as appropriate.

Whilst moving to a video format has changed some of the ways that storytelling works and has brought new challenges, it has also provided some new opportunities for creativity.

Children have been able to bake bread in their own homes, practice washing their dolls (or parents!) feet, see their Duplo as the Pharaoh's temple and create 'Last suppers' out of teddy bear picnics! They have also in some cases enjoyed taking part in the filming or casting of roles for the stories which has brought another dimension to it all.

At a time when we have all known a lot of disconnection and isolation, it has been encouraging to see our children connect with God through playing at home.

Towards the end of the year, some of our weekly stories were recorded and shared as part of the wider church livestream. This received really positive feedback so is something that has been continued (where possible) into the new year. Huge thanks to the production team and all those who serve on the livestream Rota for bringing these together faithfully week by week!

Alongside listening to stories and songs and taking part (sometimes!) at home, Pebbles children have engaged in wider church activities throughout the year, sharing news and pictures on the church livestream, taking part in the Nativity, and joining in with the outdoor service at Christmas. These have been a really important way to stay connected, have fun and make new memories together.

During Advent, families were offered a Christian magazine ('Godventure') which included activities to do as part of preparations for Christmas. This was well received and led to another round of Lent magazine distributions ahead of Easter 2021. One other thing that started in the last year was a model of 'Forest Church' led by a group at St Tims. Some families from the Vine were delighted to attend a gathering in October before the second lockdown commenced and look forward to it restarting soon.

Lucy and Rachel

Deanery Synod Report

It's only been a few months since the elections and I am still settling as a Deanery Synod representative for The Vine.

The Synod has met twice since the elections (both over zoom).

The first meeting focussed on the wider churches response to COVID.

The second meeting looked at what the new Focal Ministry roles may be. This is especially important for the Vine as we continue to move towards our benefice with St Tims.

In November, we also had a Deanery prayer day (again via zoom) which went over the diocese "Renewed, Released and Rejuvenated" strategy focussing on clergy redeployment.

I look forward to continuing in the role over the next year and am looking forward to in person meetings as soon as we are able to.

Steve Hill

Godly Play

Godly Play can draw in children and adults alike. It is an incredibly beautiful collection of art that can be used to promote study and appreciation of Biblical truths in many ways, not just for Godly Play stories. Godly Play provides a structured and safe environment for children, including quieter ones. It values every child and creates community through the welcome, sharing, prayer and the feast. The stories help to give a sense of the whole biblical narrative - and how everything relates to everything else. Godly Play is not didactic, allowing children to 'wonder' freely - with the storyteller listening carefully, and encouraging the sense of everyone learning about God and faith together.

At times we've had the privilege of hearing a child express a most profound reflection on God

Godly Play will be missed by many; not just by the children. However, there are other resources and ways of supporting children as they grow in their faith. Even whilst Godly Play itself is in hibernation and not part of children's work at The Vine, at least for the foreseeable future, we hope that its principles of gathering around a story of God's people, listening to children, giving them a safe and structured space, valuing their thoughts, the nurturing and playful atmosphere (for all ages) that is created will continue.

A few days before lockdown Kathryn brought almost all the stories and response materials from church back to her house. She offered Godly Play materials; a desert

bag, story and response materials to Children's Church members. The children had the opportunity to meet every Sunday afternoon (and every day during Holy Week) for a Godly Play zoom session from March till August. Sensing the need amongst all generations for a place to relate to each other and to explore meaning through playing with story, Kathryn also offered an intergenerational Zoom session using Deep Talk on Thursday lunchtimes from May till August that was attended by between 2 and 8 children, teenagers, and adults. In the Zoom sessions the circle is made safe and all come equally to the story to find out what it means for their lives. Kathryn helped write an article for the Church Times about the experience.

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/19-june/features/features/worship-jim-but-not-as-we-know-it>

God bless, Ruth, Ellen and Vicki

Youth

Youth have not met at all since our meeting at Vittles before the first lockdown 2020.

Contact has been maintained via the WhatsApp group.

Some have linked into other church groups or study the bible with a friend.

Please continue to pray for these young people, that they will all discover for themselves how wonderful Jesus is and the security that comes from making choices and decisions about their futures based on their faith and relation with Him.

God bless, Dave and Vicki

Small Group

We have 'met' occasionally via Zoom at teatime for our Thursday Small Group. The children do not always find being on camera so helpful, so this has been limited. We managed to pray for each other and tried low-key activities. The parents have had a few evening catch-ups for prayer and fellowship. Our main communication and support has been via our WhatsApp group and the occasional in-person, covid-safe meet.

God bless, Dave and Vicki