

Good Shepherd - Church Warden's Report 2021

We have just passed the second anniversary of the first Covid lockdown and it feels like we are slowly but surely getting back to some form of normality. We had further lockdowns and restrictions in 2021 but we have kept going, looked out for each other and supporting those unable to physically return to church. It has been an immense effort by everyone.

I am so thankful for all those who have pulled together across both churches so we could maintain our weekly pattern of worship, both online and through the delivery of letters and DVDs each week as well as returning to in person services.

In particular, I want to thank the band of volunteers who have made this all possible: David Fulljames, Rachel Phillips, Stephanie and Ben Hemming. Thank you for all you have done to maintain us through another challenging year and to bring the joy of worship each Sunday for those of us attending in person and in continuing the connection of Christian community to those unable to join us in person.

A big thank you also to those across the parish who have been keeping in contact by phone with our congregation, especially Jane Brough, Chris Nickholds and Stephanie Hemming. My thanks go to all the members of the Good Shepherd committee for their hard work and commitment during the year.

We are blessed by everything that every one of our volunteers does to contribute to the smooth running of our church community.

Our income from hall hire has not only returned back to pre-Covid levels but is growing from strength to strength. It's great to see a number of community and support groups using our hall during the week for the benefit of our community.

I also think its really important in these difficult times that we have continued to meet our commitments for charitable giving to local, national and international organisations, including carrying on our support for Lynn Treneary and CMS. We look forward during 2022 to continue to support the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd, one of our Mission Action Plan priorities. I'm also grateful for the generosity shown through the year in special collections and during Christian Aid week. We have also paid in full our Parish Share to the diocese for 2021.

We are very grateful to those who led our worship and preached, both in church and online during 2021, in particular to Phil, Lin, Carol, Jane, Joy, Caroline and Richard.

I want to say a special word of thanks to Jane Brough, Deputy Warden, Lay Reader and cake maker extraordinaire! Jane continues to keep me sane (no mean feat!) and is a fount of wisdom and common sense! Jane and Trevor are always there and carrying out a variety of differing tasks, a big thank you both!

I know it's been another challenging year financially, as it has for so many individuals and organisations in our community. I would like to thank all at Good Shepherd for their unwavering generosity and support over the past two years. Stephanie Hemming continues to do a marvellous job managing the money and works closely with Richard Humphrey and the Christ Church team to keep our accounts in good order.

It's great to have a number of social events to look forward to in 2022, thanks to all involved at both churches in organising these for us. It was great to see how we worked together on the Christmas Fair and Barbeque last year.

Many thanks to all of our congregation for their generosity, support, prayers, love and friendship in all we do to grow our church family and in the wider community. We remember those who have passed away over the last couple of years, especially Lilian Bashford and Ann Longstaff, they were longstanding members of our Parish and due to the pandemic were unable to have the send offs they both deserved. They are sorely missed. Betty Whitehurst was a founder member of Good Shepherd who sadly passed away late last year. We continue to hold their families and friends in our prayers.

I know it's been a difficult time during lockdown but I've been really impressed with how we've pulled together across the parish. Through all this we have demonstrated God's love for one another and that we can spread His message whatever challenges we face.