

Vicar's report to APCM 2020

A shorter report than usual, and I'm the only one whose report can encompass 2019 as well as these 10 months so far of 2020, as well as looking ahead.

I want to start by thanking all who continue to serve our church; thanks to Sue and Helen our churchwardens who've agreed to serve another year! Thanks particularly to Gary as he stands down from the PCC, but I know he'll still continue to serve us here with practical help and his cheery disposition. One of the sad things about not having the church open for worship from March until September is that he hasn't been able to turn up in shorts!

We started to make progress on planning much needed changes to our church building so it can best serve worshipping needs and practical issues such as improved toilet facilities – covid19 has heightened the need for good sanitation and improved access for all, issues which some of our plans hopefully will address. It would seem right soon to continue to develop our thinking and I ask you to pray about this vision.

The six months when the church was closed for worship were strange times for all of us, I'm sure you would agree. I have kept in touch with as many of you as I could, and while some could not access online worship, for others it has proved a real source of spiritual comfort. Thanks to Denise too for the way she embraced the challenge, and is still producing material for those families who can't be with us every week.

It's been great over the last month to begin working with Rach, and we've already started detailed planning for Christmas and beyond. Our response to covid19 now churches are reopen for worship is to see what we can do, rather than focus on what we can't.

Over the past few weeks we've been focusing on Paul's letter to the church in Philippi – a small church, a church where prayer and personal relationships were important, and Paul reminded them to continue doing what they had been doing – supporting each other practically and prayerfully. I end, then, as Paul did – Philippians 4:8-9 -
⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Amen.

Rev John Musson, October 2020