



All Saints' Church, Milton
Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Parochial Church Meeting

Thursday 11th May 2022 at 7pm

Please read through this booklet before the meeting.

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

Everyone on the church electoral roll, and any person resident in the parish, whose name is entered on a register of local government electors, is entitled to attend and vote at this meeting.

Agenda

Apologies for absence
Election of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Only those on the church electoral roll are entitled to vote at this meeting.

Agenda

Apologies for absence
Minutes of 2021 Annual Parochial Church Meeting ([see reports](#))
Electoral Roll Report ([see reports](#))
PCC Report ([see reports](#))
Annual Accounts (see accounts on separate pages)
Deanery Synod Report ([see reports](#))
Churchwardens' Report ([see reports](#))
Fabric Report ([see reports](#))
Reports from Church organisations ([see reports](#))
Elections
Members of PCC
Sidespersons (Welcome Team)
Assistant Churchwardens
Appointment of auditors

Any other business

Minutes of the Annual Church Meeting held on 17th May 2021

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

Present

James Blandford Baker, Robert & Linda Henderson, Simon Bradford, Paul & Jan Wilkins, Andi Everitt, Daniel & Sarah Bates, Peter & Jackie Cottingham, John & Gill Uttin, Maria Gloag, Richard Hastings, Richard Burrows, Bill Darroch, Beryl Hutchinson, Sue Nunn, Erica Tate, Gerry Metcalfe, David & Roxane Owen, Alan & Pearl Skull, Joy Ajayi, Michael & Kathy English, Jane Fellows, Helen and Terry Moore, Chris Pennant, Roger & Judith Lemon, Andrew Macpherson, Mike & Jackie Dean, Michelle Peters (minutes)

Welcome by James Blandford Baker

Opened in prayer by Simon Bradford

Apologies for absence

Jackie Metcalfe, Charlotte Lemanski, Rob & Anne Aldridge, Neil Hutchinson, Mark Tate, Nicole Pennant, Helen Burrows, Lesley Darroch, Jonny Gloag

Election of Churchwardens

Paul Wilkins and Linda Henderson nominated and elected

On behalf of everyone present James thanked Paul and Linda for serving last year and for serving again this coming year especially with no incumbent. James asked everyone to offer support as much as they are able.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Present

As above

Apologies

As above

Minutes of 2021 Annual Parochial Church Meeting (see reports)

Everyone agreed these to be a true and accurate record of the meeting

No matters arising that are not on current agenda

Electoral Roll Report (see reports)

122 names, 5 down from last year

Thanks to Sally Milligan for doing compiling this.

PCC Report (see reports)

Linda Henderson updated everyone that Planning permission is now in process for repairs to the damaged boundary wall.

Annual Accounts (see accounts on separate pages)

The PCC Treasurer, Roxane Owen went through the report. We are in a positive position, see attached.

The congregational giving has not been affected by pandemic as most giving is done electronically. Thanks was given to everyone for their giving, as a surplus is in place even after a year of needing to spend a lot on the building and maintenance
Huge thanks given to Roxane for all her work as Treasurer

Deanery Synod Report (see reports)

Nothing was added to the report
Thanks given to Maria Gloag and David Owen

Churchwardens' Report (see reports)

A question was raised about the continued mask wearing in church – Paul Wilkins explained this would be discussed in the next PCC meeting along with how communion will be given
The church wardens were thanked for their work and the report

Fabric Report (see reports)

There are ongoing issues with the fan heaters in church. Some have been decommissioned and some condemned. Arc fault detectors found these heaters were tripping the electrics
The under-floor heating is working well in church
The fan heaters are the last thing of the heating issues needing to be dealt with.

Reports from church organisations (see reports)

Safeguarding (see reports)

Safe guarding is a standing item at every PCC meeting, it is an important aspect of the church.
Thanks to Linda for being our Safeguarding officer.

Elections to the PCC

Nominated and seconded – David Owen (3 years), Gerry Metcalfe (2 years), Richard Hastings (3 years), Bill Darroch (1 year), Pearl Skull (1 year), Alan Skull (2 years), Rosana Bienzobas (1 year), Neil Caplan (2 years).
Duly elected, thanks given to them all

Sides persons (Welcome Team)

No longer needing to be voted in

Assistant Churchwardens

Will be decided at first PCC after the APCM

Appointment of auditors

Christophe Arhel nominated. Everyone agreed

Any other business

Governors Report

Kathy English shared that things are looking much more positive for the village primary school after a bad Ofsted report at the beginning of this school year. The staff and governors have worked hard and a recent report has been very good. As it is a church school we need to maintain a church link. Three current church members who are governors are leaving or have already left this year. Only one church member remains on the board of governors. Kathy encouraged everyone to think about whether they could become a governor. She is happy to talk to anyone interested. No questions were raised in the meeting

Deanery Plan

James explained the Dioceses has asked all Deaneries to make a new plan for their Deanery. Each church has had some input already, informing the small working group about each parish. This will help develop the plan with what is needed and how we will work together. This process needs to be complete by the autumn. It will be helpful for Milton as it will aid us with advertising for a new Rector. Before we advertise we will need to draw up a 'Parish Profile' explaining all about the Parish. How All Saints work with Waterbeach and Landbeach may change in the Deanery planning process but this will all be incorporated in the parish profile.

A question was raised about the timeline for getting a new Rector? Once we are in a position to advertise, it is likely to be a month between advertising and interview. There are many ways to advertise. The Bishop will be able to advise.

James closed the meeting with thanks to everyone for attending.

The church wardens offered thanks to James for chairing the meeting.

Reports for the year 2022

Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll has 124 names, up 2 from last year.

Sally Milligan, Administrator

PCC report

Face to face PCC meetings resumed, increasing from bi-monthly to monthly meetings towards the end of the year, as more time was required for discussion of the deanery plan and the planning process for the new priest in charge.

The main topics that were covered included:

Safeguarding

Finance/Charitable giving

Churchyard management

GDPR – appointment of a Data Controller

Fabric

- Plans for the church building and wall
- Noticeboard
- Tree Surgery
- Heating

Children & Youth – Elinor Everitt to train as ALM

Deanery Synod – discussion of Deanery Plan

Planning process for the new incumbent, including meeting with the Archdeacon for Cambridge

Deanery Synod Report

There has only been one Deanery Synod meeting this year, on 11th October 2022 in Madingley Church. The main purpose was to discuss the draft Deanery plan which was the culmination of several months of information gathering and work by the Deanery Working Group.

The 5 recommendations for the Deanery over the next 10 years were:

1. That the sharing of information improved to enable people to have a better understanding of what is happening across the Deanery.
2. That skills and specialist knowledge are shared across the Deanery.
3. That experience is shared through clergy and laity visiting other parishes.
4. That the boundaries of Girton parish are changed to exclude the new development at Eddington.
5. That there are minor changes to the deployment of clergy.

Point 5 is relevant to Milton as it means that our new minister will be designated Priest-in-Charge of Milton rather than Rector, leaving space to create a new ministry team as needed to serve the needs of the rapidly growing population of Waterbeach.

Following the discussions around the Deanery Plan, an updated request was sent from the Diocese asking for deaneries to consider some additional issues around Mission and Ministry as part of the planning process. This led to the postponement of the February Deanery Synod meeting, and at the time of writing we are still awaiting a new date.

Maria Gloag, Deanery Synod representative

Churchwardens' Report

Despite the fact that we have been in interregnum now for over a year there has been a steady return to normality following the pandemic. In person numbers attending services have continued to rise slowly over the course of the year but we still also have an average of 30-40 views each week of the streamed 10:30 am service.

Use of the church and hall during the week has also increased substantially. The mums and toddlers group meets twice a week and both baby group and play praise also run most weeks supporting young families. Other regular groups that have returned include the brownies, guides, stitchers, the photographic club and the WI. Last but not least, we have appointed Elinor Everitt in a part time position to lead and coordinate junior church. Messy church events" have restarted which are once again proving popular.

We have had many challenges this year, with both our rector and Youth worker leaving, but thanks to the efforts of a large number of volunteers (though we could always do with more), we have, for the most part, kept the lights on.

After a lengthy consultation process involving members of the church and local community, both via a questionnaire (many thanks to Jenny Hastings for all her work on this) and a bring and share lunch, we are at last formally moving forward with the appointment process for a new “priest in charge”. All the information collected has been drawn together into a “parish profile”, which is our shop window for potential applicants. Thanks also to those who provided photographs and especially to Sally Milligan, who has done a wonderful job making it into an attractive and attention-grabbing booklet.

With the parish profile and the appointment of two Church representatives to conduct the formal interviews, approved by the PCC, we hope to advertise in April / May and conduct interviews on June the 26th.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who offer up their time and gifts in service to our community week in week out, be it on a Sunday (e.g. opening up, leading worship, welcome team, sound and screen, youth and children’s work, readings, intercession, refreshments, flowers etc.) in running other groups during the week, or in maintaining the building and churchyard. Thanks also to our paid staff members, Michelle, Sally and Elinor for all that they do.

We would like to extend our special thanks, to our LLMs, to Anne and Stewart, to our associate minister Simon and to our curate Jackie, who have led us and supported us through a very difficult period. Finally, we would like to give a special call out to Sarah Bates, who not only leads us in worship on a regular basis, but has also been our de facto youth leader for the last year.

Paul Wilkins and Linda Henderson, Churchwardens

Fabric Report

There have been no major structural works or repairs during the past year. The resealing of the flat roof area last year appears to have resolved the immediate problems with water ingress around the entrance to the small hall.

In regards to the heating system in the church and church hall, we have installed wireless thermostats that can be monitored remotely, to allow for better control of the heating. The underfloor heating was used as the main source of heating in the body of the church for much of the winter given that the fan assisted radiators were not functioning. This was inefficient as it takes a long time to adjust the temperature and we were forced to keep the thermostats set to quite a high value 24/7. However, we have now been able to source new fans for the fan assisted radiators and these are functioning well without any of the problems previously encountered. This has enabled us to turn down the underfloor heating as we can now deliver more immediate heat on demand. Many thanks to Richard Burrows for his work on this.

With regards to the churchyard wall at the front of the church, Linda has made further progress in the planning process but we are not yet in a position to move forward with rebuilding it.

Thanks as always to those who are regularly involved in the maintenance of the churchyard. We had a meeting in March with interested parties to discuss the management of the churchyard taking into account the needs of church members, others who regularly tend the graves of loved ones and also

members of the eco-church group. The main areas at the front of the church, to the left hand side and around the log circle will be kept tidy and mowed where necessary. A couple of areas were set aside to “wild” with a view to encouraging butterflies, wildflowers etc. These will be strimmed back a couple of times a year.

We have had problems with blockages in the main drains on a couple of occasions over the winter. Clearing these is not a pleasant job and could potentially lead to expensive call outs, so members are asked to follow the guidance as to what may be flushed down the toilets.

Paul Wilkins & Linda Henderson, Church Wardens

Safeguarding Report 2023

As Safeguarding Officer for All Saints, I take all aspects of work from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, who in turn, takes its formal guidance from House of Bishops’ policies and practice guidance, as directed by the National Safeguarding Team. Local strategies and practice guidance are based on these and endorsed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Group. Policies and procedures are continually being reviewed and updated. The safeguarding dashboard is a very useful tool to keep up to date with the ever-changing policies and guidelines. This is being further expanded to provide a hub to keep a wider range of information together and accessible to those authorised to access it. This will take a lot of work to establish but will be invaluable going forward.

Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at PCC meetings, and I complete a report for each meeting. Having had the frequency of DBS renewals reduced from 5 to 3-year intervals which is complete, this has been applied to training as well. Thank you to everyone for your efforts enabling us to bring this within the required timescales.

As always please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. That small piece of information might be the missing piece which helps to keep a child safe. We are all responsible for keeping children and vulnerable adults safe.

Linda Henderson, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Reports from Church Organisations

Café Church

No Café Church services have taken place this year

Michelle Peters on behalf of the Café Church Team

Children and Families

Baby Group

During the last year we had about an average of 9 mums and babies and sometimes dads. The group provides the opportunity for mums to meet together to share experiences, have someone to talk to and someone to listen.

It is an important outreach which is respected by the health professionals especially as we have no baby clinic in the village. Tea and cake are also served.

Thanks to Lesley Darroch and Beryl Hutchinson for their continued support and dedication to the group.

Sue Nunn

Baptism and Thanksgiving

We had five baptisms last year. Jackie Metcalfe baptised her grandson from Australia. An anniversary of baptism card is delivered to each child for four years.

Sue Nunn

Junior Church

Junior church continues to thrive each Sunday morning. We meet as one group for ages 0 – 11, with a minimum of 3 adults for each session. We enjoy using the hall and outdoor log circle depending on the activities we want to do.

Over the summer holidays the whole church thought about the 'Armour of God' from Ephesians. We started and ended the series with an All Together service. The other weeks the children and youth met together and used games, reflections and crafts to think about the different parts of the armour and how they can help us in our daily walk with God.

Following on from this we thought about Prayer and chatting with God. Each week focused on a different aspect of prayer and the children usually went home with an idea that they could use during the week to help them chat and spend time with God. Since then we have followed the Church Lectionary, and used materials written by the Blackburn Diocese supplemented by materials from Flame Creative Kids and Families on Faith Adventures amongst others.

During the Autumn term some of the children and young people were admitted to Communion following a short course to prepare them run by Rob and Sandra.

Families on Faith Adventures are changing their materials to have a theme each month with stories across the Bible, so we may consider returning to this material more regularly after Easter.

A huge thank you to all the leaders and helpers who take time to plan sessions and support all our children. Please prayerfully consider whether you would like to join this team to get to know the children better and support them in their journey of faith.

Elinor Everitt, Children's Work Leader

Messy Church

As a church we have not run Messy Church for a few years. We are aiming to run a Messy Praise roughly once each half term. These are advertised on social media and at school, through assemblies and poster campaigns.

In the Autumn term we had two Messy events on the theme of Harvest and then Advent with Christingle. We have had a number of families come from the wider community and it has been lovely to reconnect with families from Toddlers or Baby Group. In the Spring term we are running Messy Lent on Shrove Tuesday and then Messy Easter at The Dell in the Country Park on Good Friday morning. These are new ventures and we look forward to seeing what is possible.

Thank you to the large team of helpers without whom this would not be possible.

Jackie Metcalfe, Curate and Elinor Everitt, Children's Work Leader

Milton C of E Primary School

It is a delight to visit our primary school regularly for a weekly assembly, a playground duty, or an occasional religious education lesson. Anne Aldridge has joined me sometimes. Robert Henderson and I have also led a couple of sessions for children in church. Robert is no stranger to the children. He visits weekly and runs a chess club which is very popular.

It was also a joy to welcome KS2 children to church for Harvest Festival celebrations and a Christmas Carol service. Thanks to Robert for providing the music and Richard Adams and Paul Wilkins who manned the sound desk. The children certainly have beautiful voices which resounded through the building.

We are very fortunate to have our primary school in the village so let's remember the children and their staff in our prayers and support them in every way we can.

Jackie Metcalfe

Praise and Play

Praise and Play continues on a Wednesday morning. After some consideration as to the future of the group in July the families who come all went on a recruitment drive and from September we have welcomed several new children, parents and grandparents. The group has enjoyed returning to one central play mat where we can play and chat together, consolidating the feeling of our Praise and Play family.

During the summer of 2022 we thought about 'Living like Christ' using key verses from the Letter to the Ephesians, with Bible stories that illustrated the verse. In September we joined the wider church

family to think about prayer and how we can chat with God. Since then we have returned to using some more familiar stories from the Bible; Joseph, Christmas and now stories that Jesus told. We continue to use a mixture of songs, now with instruments each week, games, play and crafts to think about the Bible story. Thank you to Diddy Disciples, Flame Creative Kids and Families on Faith Adventures who often inspire me! Thank you to my team of helpers Nicola, Barbara, Sue and Jackie without whom I could not run the group.

Elinor Everitt, Children's Work Leader

Admission of children to Holy Communion 2022 course

This course has been in operation since 1999 for an average of about 4 children per year. But this was the first course since 2018.

There was a good response to a request for church members to pray for individual children, with all 5 children being individually prayed for, and others praying for the group.

The preparatory sessions took place in the large hall between 0940-1020 which was just about long enough. Sessions included:

Belonging to God looking at baptism & how we are part of God's family.

Why we belong to God discipleship how Jesus called the disciples

The Food of belonging in which we acted out Last Supper, language and symbols of communion service

All Age Communion Service looking for the signs and symbols

How we belong to God Coming to church, and caring, remembering Jesus, talking and listening to God.

Belonging together: Sandra got the children to put together a splendid banner. Included hand and footprints to represent the journey of faith.

The children did or finished at home the photocopy sheets very conscientiously. Thanks to parents for encouragement. The churchwardens helpfully provided cards, and a fine celebratory cake after the admission service. The party the day before at 28 the Rowans was only attended by 2 of the 5 children for various reasons.

The Service of Admission took place on Dec. 11th and went well. Many thanks to Simon Bradford, who managed it well and remembered a lot of things! and spoke to the children before the service and to Kathy English who allowed the children and leaders to do the readings and to Jackie Metcalfe who allowed the children to help as acolytes.

Rob Henderson and Sandra Prater

Toddler group

The toddler group continues to meet on Monday and Friday mornings in term time, between 10 and 11.30am in the church halls and the outside play are when weather permits. Numbers have continued to build after Covid. We had over 60 adults and children just before Easter although numbers are usually more manageable than this. We have noticed an increasing number of Dad's, and grandparent coming along which is lovely to see. The group continues to be very diverse, reflecting the many nationalities in our village.

We start with free play and a craft activity, followed by refreshments for the adults and children. The children and parents are then very good at helping us to put the toys away before the time of

singing. There are lots of sleeping bunnies on the floor waiting to start their first song and it's lovely to see the enthusiasm of the children wanting to choose their favorite song.

I would like to thank the team Jill, Jackie, Pearl, Jane, Richard, Helen and Beryl, without whose time and commitment we would not be able to provide such a group for our village. For various reasons we are very much in need of some new helpers. If you could help with serving refreshments on Fridays or being a backup for helping with the group or refreshments, please get in touch with me. This is a very valuable outreach to our community, but we do need help to keep providing this.

Linda Henderson (07801156157)

Church Flowers

The congregation gets enormous pleasure from the ongoing tradition of filling our church building with flowers. Once again, a big thank you is due to all those who help, as they continue to delight us with their beautiful flower arrangements. If you like to arrange flowers at home and would like to help in the church please come and speak to me or give me a ring at home. More volunteers are always welcome.

Lesley Darroch

Ecochurch

Ecochurch is A Rocha UK's award scheme for churches in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth.

At All Saints we started working towards an Ecochurch award in 2020 by registering the church and starting the survey which is in five parts: Worship and Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community and Local Engagement, and Lifestyle. In March 2022 we were able to present a report to PCC with a summary of our achievements in these areas and our ideas for the future. The report was favourably received and given formal approval by the PCC and the Rector so we were able to submit our survey. In May 2022 All Saints, Milton was awarded a Bronze Ecochurch Award in recognition of the progress made. News about the award was given in a service, posted on the church website and displayed in church.

Since the award, the team has continued to meet regularly to continue the work towards net zero and encouraging the congregation to be aware of environmental issues. We contributed to the weekly news sheet and now provide longer articles for the monthly newsletters including about the UN climate conference COP 27 and the Biodiversity conference COP 15 each with prayer points which were also used in services. In September we celebrated Creationtide with two services including Harvest with Bishop Dagmar, a meditative walk to the river, a bat walk and a self-guided prayer walk in the churchyard. Members of the congregation helped Waterbeach church with their display for Creationtide by knitting and crocheting leaves and water drops. We are intending to borrow the display for an event in Spring. Waterbeach church is ahead of us in the Ecochurch journey and we are talking to them about their progress including a new heating system and possible joint initiatives.

Ecochurch team

Ekisa

Ekisa UK is a local Milton charity that was founded in 2016 by parishioners of All Saints, and which supports the work of Ekisa in Uganda, which delivers special needs for disabled children in and around the town of Jinja. Emily Henderson, now living locally and a Trustee of the charity, co-founded Ekisa 11 years ago.

In the past year, Ekisa, having begun the recovery from the COVID pandemic, had its work disrupted again by a new threat, this time an outbreak of Ebola. That danger is now thankfully passed, and, undeterred, the Ekisa team is carrying on. Their focus is on creating a community that recognizes that every child with disability has VALUE and should be cared for within a family, rather than in an institution. Ekisa is working hard to make sure children can stay with their own family, or be adopted or fostered into a new family.

Ekisa has begun its planned development and expansion, with the ambitious title of “The Next Chapter”. The first target is new facilities for the Ekisa Academy, a key part of the community program: currently around 50 children attend the Academy each day, travelling from their family home. There are 5 classes and all the children receive a high-quality Christian-based education, together with therapy and medications they need, delivered by a team of around 45 dedicated professionals.

Another important development is Ekisa’s Training and Equipping Department: this is helping to expand the role of Ekisa beyond Jinja, passing on the experience gained at Ekisa by training individuals from other organisations tackling childhood disability in the developing world.

Our local charity Ekisa UK has continued to send its regular, quarterly financial support to the team in Jinja; in 2022 this amounted to over £27,080. Ekisa UK also helps to fund Kate Tolhurst, who directs the Ekisa Academy. Many of our regular donations, which are key to our ability to support the work in Uganda, come from All Saints Milton and our many supporters within its parish.

In addition to raising funds (thanks to everybody who supported our Christmas event back in December!), Ekisa UK is keen to spread the word about the wonderful work of Ekisa: we have given talks to Milton Good Companions, ASM Mothers’ Union and U3A Cambridge’s Africa Forum, as well as having a stall at the Milton Primary School summer event and at St Giles Fair.

We are encouraged by the way our work is developing and are planning to expand our efforts again in the coming year.

Roger Lemon, Chair Ekisa UK, Charity Number 1167405

Food Bank Collections

Our regular collection for the Cambridge City Foodbank continues. Food is left in the church porch and volunteers take it to the depot each fortnight. A special collection was held at Harvest festival which was combined with donations from our village primary school.

Collated figures show that in 2022 the Cambridge City Foodbank distributed 150 tonnes of food to 13,638 people. Shockingly, nearly 4 out of 10 of those supported were children. This level of demand is unprecedented, and the figures are a stark reminder of the effects that the cost-of-living crisis is having on local people.

Your continued generosity in supporting our collection is very much appreciated.

Jackie Metcalfe

Home Groups

Home group meetings generally include study, prayer for each other and wider concerns, and other social interaction. There's still plenty of scope for expanding the membership of home groups in the church. Current members appreciate the fellowship and support, as well as study opportunities.

There are currently 4 home groups meeting:

Tuesday: Average 7 attendees. Meets in person weekly on Tuesday evenings. Usually choose a topic or course to follow for a term.

Wednesday / Monday: Average 8 attendees. Meets weekly by Zoom in Winter, some physical meetings in better weather. Usually work through Bible books, but sometimes use topics instead. Zoom works better for some people, especially in Winter. There are various reasons for this, including physical health limitations and responsibilities for children. For others – especially those who spend a lot of work time on computer screens – physical meetings are preferred. We've been able to welcome N and J, who work abroad, to some Zoom meetings.

Women's group: Meets in person fortnightly on Wednesday evenings for bible study and prayer. Average 5 attendees.

Thursday: The informal "Open House" group meets in person fortnightly in the mornings, average 7 attendees. No formal bible study - the emphasis is on fellowship and prayer.

Peter Cottingham

Milton Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union is a small group of ladies who meet together the first Tuesday of every month at 2.30pm in the Church Hall. Our meeting starts with a short time of worship followed by a talk or some other activity and end with refreshments and a chance to fellowship together.

During the past year we have had talks on 'Childhood in India', 'Photography' and 'Ekisa'. We took part in a bible study in preparation for the World Day of Prayer and attended the service held in March. E had an Easter Meditation, a discussion on the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, a Nature walk in the Country Park, a Holy Communion Service and a Wave of Prayer for our linked dioceses in Africa and India.

We held a Quiet Day for the Ely Diocese and the Autumn Diocesan Meeting.

Money raised by our branch has enabled us to send a donation AFIA (Away from it All holidays) for families in the Diocese who can't afford a holiday. We also collected Tesco Vouchers at Christmas for the Women's Refugee.

We would love to welcome new members if you would like to join us.

Open Doors

Romans 5 v 2b-5a 'we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint'

It seems shameful sometimes to talk praying that others may 'glory in their sufferings' for I seem to suffer so little compared to those I hear and read about through Open Doors. I do know about hope however, biblical hope that is, the sure expectation of what is to come because God has promised it. It is not yet seen but it is as sure as God's promises to give Abram a son, to preserve David for the Kingship of Israel, to reserve a remnant of the faithful He promised to Elijah, to send a Saviour and to raise Jesus from the dead – to send a comforter. The odd thing about praying for the persecuted church and financially support Open Doors (and others) is that we will almost certainly never see the fruits of that support this side of heaven; perhaps that is true of most prayers in fact. Sometimes there is a story to tell that is unambiguously cheering but in most countries the news is of perseverance of the saints, our brothers and sisters, their words of hope that seem to rebuke my shallow faith and simultaneously call me to know God and his word more deeply.

Of course, Open Doors do more than pray (<https://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/>), practical help on the ground, advocacy, awareness, fund-raising and the knowledge of where to direct assistance where needed are key. Threats to the faithful have increased in Putin's Russia and from operatives of the Chinese government in the USA even in the past few months. This past year I have failed to be as diligent in updating the information on the board in church as I should but have reclaimed it as a resource. You all have my permission to remind me to keep it current.

Neil Caplan

Overseas Mission & Giving

Please see accounts.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral work is delivered at All Saints on many levels. The home groups provide a strong source of support as do other groups that operate in the church such as Mothers' Union, toddlers and baby group. The zones which were set up during lockdown still enable zone leaders to keep an eye on things!

Whilst the number of parishioners who are visited on a regular basis continues to lessen due to natural causes it has been encouraging to see the help that church members offer each other in daily life, particularly in times of difficulty. Furthermore, the staff team and others meet regularly to pray for the pastoral needs of the parish. Home Holy Communion is available for those who are unable to come to church.

A lot of good work is done and I'd like to thank everyone for their care and commitment. However, we must not become complacent and always be watchful to ensure that our response is inclusive.

Jackie Metcalfe

Sahara Project: taking the good news to group with no known witness amongst them

N and J were sent out by All Saints some eighteen years ago. They work in West Africa, aiming to build a group of national believers in a place where there have never been any. They run a small tourist business which gives them residence permission and good local connections. Whilst the business pays its own way it is not able to provide them with much income for living expenses. They therefore need and appreciate continuing support from individuals and from the church. They have two teenage children who attend the local fee-paying French medium school. N and J are in the process of changing the agency in the UK that provides them with oversight and logistical support. This is with the aim of being part of an organisation that better understands their area and needs.

Their work is in a spiritually difficult, and rather isolated area; and it is unusual to find a family that has managed to remain in such a place for as long as they have. N&J have enabled other expat Christians to work with them. They have good local contacts, some of whom seem to be on the verge of making decisions. Recently two other families, sent by different agencies have moved to the same town. This is providing new fellowship opportunities, and challenges as they seek to work effectively in partnership.

Peter Cottingham

Sound, Screen & Website

Sound & Screen/Livestream

As always, a huge thankyou to the team working tirelessly on the tech every Sunday – and we can always do with more team members, especially if you're available during the week for weddings / funerals, so let me know if you are interested in lending a hand, or just shadow someone for a few services to see if it's your thing.

I'm thinking of splitting the rota out to separate the Sound and Screen roles, so it's simpler for anyone to start and get experience on one of the roles before mastering them both, or just continue with one if that's your preference.

The livestream facility still sees lots of users, with a handful watching the 1030 services live, but a lot more watching 'catch-up' later during the week. It's also heavily used for weddings and funerals.

Church Website

The All Saint's website (www.allsaintsmilton.org.uk) has had a makeover update this year to the most recent content management system version, and is a shopfront for the church with links to the

church's YouTube channel livestreams and a 'what's on' calendar, along with general information on All Saints.

We can always make more use of it though, so if you have any content or info please email it to me at webmaster@allsaintsmilton.org.uk, or if you are interested in helping manage the site itself, chat to me also, as that would help keep the content fresh and current.

The website also links to the podcast, with all the service recordings automatically appearing, so do subscribe to keep up to date, instructions are on the website. Or just browse the list on the website under the 'resources' tab. You can also subscribe directly to the Youtube channel, and automatically get notified when new content added.

Useful links

Podcast - <http://allsaintsmilton.org.uk/catchup>

LiveStreams - <https://www.allsaintsmilton.org.uk/livestreams>

AllSaints Youtube Channel – <https://www.allsaintsmilton.org.uk/youtube>

Richard Burrows

Stitchers' Club

The group meets on the second Monday of each month. At present we have eleven members who enjoy knitting, cross stitching etc. while we chat have refreshments and care for each others' needs. Thanks again to the church for allowing us to meet. New members are very welcome.

Sue Nunn

Warm Hub

The Warm Hub was set up in response to concerns that the costing of heating would be prohibitive this winter. It is open from 10am to 4pm on Tuesdays in December, January and February. Entry is free as are the refreshments. We have funding from Cambridgeshire Acre, which is very welcome. We have had numerous volunteers, including a number who are not church members.

Despite widespread advertising, attendance has been low. We are not certain if this is because the facility is not needed, or not known about, or because people do not feel at ease coming to a church building. In 2023 there will be a number of events running at the same time as the warm hub (e.g. clothes' swap and vaccination clinic) which we hope will make more people aware of the hub's existence.

Kathy English

World Day of Prayer

On March 4th a congregation of 28 at All Saints joined Christians from around the world in the service written by Christian women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The theme was 'I know the plans I have for you' and the overarching theme of the service was HOPE, depicted through the lighting of candles, and the distribution of seeds and by offering us an opportunity to appreciate more clearly the enormity of God.

Thanks to all those who helped with the sound desk, readings and the refreshments. There was a Welcome Café before the service during which background information was shown in a slide show.

The teaching on the theme continued in Junior Church and the Youth on March 6th.

The 2023 service written by Christian women of Taiwan with the theme "I have heard about your faith" is at 6pm on Friday 3 March with a welcome cafe from 5.15pm.

Judith, Helen and Jackie

Youth

A tent; a sword; some cats in their cat carrier; magical delivery birds – what do these all have in common? Answers provided to our recent discussion about what to take to a desert island!

We are delighted and privileged to have an awesome group of young people who worship with us at All Saints and it is great to be able to spend time supporting them in their journey. Last May our wonderful student youth worker Scott left us and since then we have been able to continue with a range of youth activities. We meet during the service on Sunday mornings and also have been able to offer some Sunday evening events too – involving food, faith and fun.

We continue to pray for more. More young people; more team members but mostly for more depth of awareness of just how loved these wonderful young people are. We pray to the One who is able to do more than we can possibly ask or imagine and know He will be faithful to this promise!

Sarah Bates, Interim Youth Worker