

ST JOHN'S WOODBRIDGE

AGM – MARCH 2021

BIBLE READERS & INTERCESSORS

No one could have envisaged how 2020 would turn out. After a “normal” start to the year, life quickly changed from mid-April. The PCC together with the Ministry Leadership Team and the church office moved as quickly as circumstances allowed (which at times was changing weekly!) to enable us to have a service every week. From humble beginnings, the online services developed and improved with experience. Richard Bolt and I changed our modus operandi and we managed to gather a team of willing Bible Readers and Intercessors for all our services. . Therefore, we would like to offer a huge “thank you” to each and every member of this team for their perseverance and dedication in producing a video each week throughout 2020. We are likely to be offering online services for the foreseeable future, so their continued service is much appreciated.

Luc Ray-Mathur

LIFEGROUPS CO-ORDINATOR

I took up the reins in early April 2020 with Pat House having stepped down after many years of unstinting service in this role. Regrettably with the start of Covid there was not the opportunity at a morning service to formally say “thank you” to Pat. Liz Grant has joined me in this role and had life been “normal” we would have worked at developing our respective skills but during lockdown I have been looking after the admin side and Liz is handing all matters to do with pastoral care.

During 2020 there were (on paper) 17 groups but since taking over the role I asked each LifeGroup (LG) leader to ascertain who is an “active” member of their group, who is “inactive” (ie maybe dipping into the group occasionally) and who they had in their group as a “fringe” member (ie attending social functions in the main). The result of this exercise has reduced the total number of LGs to 14. It has been difficult to arrange any formal Bible Study material that all the groups could use. Every group has managed to identify good material, which has been shared with other LG leaders for future use. In spite of the strange times, it is pleasing to report that nine people were placed into a LifeGroup last year.

Luc Ray-Mathur

Liz Grant

FINNYMUSIC

The start of 2020 saw (for the first time) a FULL diary of prison visits and concerts planned for the year ahead. The year kicked off with a visit to HMP-Hoseley Bay in January to lead a Sunday service. February saw the band give an evening concert at Thetford Baptist Church on a Saturday evening. In March, it was a privilege to be invited to HMP Wormwood Scrubs to take a Sunday service. Everything came to a standstill after then. Prison chaplains tell us that there have been no Sunday services since April 2020! Please pray for the chaplains and the inmates who are struggling with no Sunday services or other group meetings since lockdown started. Once we are allowed, FinnyMusic are planning to record some 45-minute "services" on CDs and maybe DVDs so the inmates can play them in their cells at will. Watch this space.

Luc Ray-Mathur

PASTORAL WORK

The life groups have been excellent at keeping in touch with members, through zoom, E-mail, small groups meeting in gardens, picnics etc. The pastoral team have kept in touch with folk on a regular basis by phone. When allowed people have been visited usually outside.

The pastoral events group have kept in touch with attendees (many of whom are not regular church goers) by phone and letters and cards of encouragement.

The Hub managed to keep going until the latest lockdown and the organisers keep in touch with attendees which is much appreciated.

Sue Simpson

MY LOCKDOWN

In the first lockdown, I sewed for the NHS, having purchased a sewing machine 2 days before lockdown. We also enjoyed having coffee over the fence with neighbours and a socially distanced VE day celebration.

Once we could meet in the group of 6 (remember that?), I met up in Elmhurst park with the life group, the link up group and various friends. The garden was very useful for socially distanced barbecues and picnics. I even managed to have a Christmas coffee morning on a sunny day outside of course. I carried on helping my daughter with the children until the second lockdown and look forward to doing that again. When things have been very locked down, I have been restricted to telephone calls or delivering items to peoples' doors. Roll on the Spring.

Sue Simpson

SUPPORTING THE FOODBANK

Several members of St John's kept busy during the first lockdown by supporting the Foodbank at Woodbridge Salvation Army. Cathie and Julian Taylor organised a collection each week for many weeks by putting notes through their neighbours' doors and picking up

bags of donations from their doorsteps to take down in their car. This idea caught on in various parts of Woodbridge as the Magotte family around Bury Hill and St John's residents of Catherine Road and Seckford Street played their part. Other individuals regularly popped into the Foodbank with donations, including Waldringfield village, spurred on by Jane Burley. St Mary's and the Methodist dropped off weekly donations as did all the local Co-op stores so the ever growing list of clients were able to have a generous food parcel each week. This has continued during the second lockdown and as the need grows it would be good to keep supporting the Foodbank. Many thanks from Major Alan Hill and his helpers.

Lyn Spall