



allsaintsworcester

ANNUAL REVIEW 2018

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VICAR'S REPORT

If last year was a year of preparation, this year has been about transition.

We were formally designated a resourcing church on 25th November 2018 by Bishop John, following a successful diocesan bid to the Church Commissioners for funding for us to be one of two resourcing churches in the diocese. This marked the start officially of a new chapter in our long history. Initial progress has been slow and steady as we have evolved our systems, restructured and added to the staff team (Hils Auty, Stella Power and Phil Wade) and begun to work with other churches more intentionally. This is already gaining momentum and we can expect to see an increase in more tangible expressions of our new role being played out in the coming months.

Our new curate Andy Smith and his family joined the staff team too. It has been a joy to see them settle in and he has hit the ground running. His work rebooting Alpha has been remarkable and already fruitful (see his separate report on this).

We had a wonderful Church Weekend Away at the Poplars in Ledbury where we shared glorious sunshine, fun times together and special times of worship, teaching and encounters with the presence of God.

Throughout the year so many people have been doing so much - *in, through* and *as* the church - and it remains a total joy and privilege to lead this family of faith!

Thank you! I pray that as you read this review you will find your hearts filled with thankfulness and excitement, as did I when I read it all.

Rich Johnson, Vicar

PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) met nine times in 2018-2019. Some of the work is done in "Project Groups" that meet in between full PCC meetings to investigate options, grapple with challenges and develop proposals to be considered by the PCC. These are currently: Finance & Governance, Buildings Redevelopment, Foodbank Steering Group and Mission Partner Support. In addition, a representative Standing Committee meets prior to full PCC meetings to work on agendas and help prepare good reports.

In addition the PCC met for an Away Day in the autumn at Chapel House for a time of vision, prayer and time together over good food!

The PCC has worked hard to:

- grapple with our financial position
- introduce more robust systems for financial giving and monitoring
- continued to ensure we comply with all safeguarding, health and safety and environmental health regulations
- reviewed the three-year mission partner giving cycle and agreed a new funding cycle
- oversee the good running of Worcester Foodbank
- ensure excellent HR practices are in place

As ever, I am so profoundly grateful for all who serve on the PCC who give so much time to helping lead the church forward and bring such wisdom, grace and humour to the task!

Rich Johnson, Vicar

ELECTORAL ROLL UPDATE

At the APCM 2018 the electoral roll stood at 216. In March 2019 we prepared a new electoral roll, according to the Church Representation Rules. The new roll was published on 25th March 2019 and stands at 162.

Philippa Barton, Electoral Roll Officer

SAFEGUARDING

'Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.' (1 Corinthians 13: 6-7)

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone at All Saints and, with the move to a resourcing church, it becomes even more important that we all understand and participate in that role – whether in a specific ministry or as part of the church family. We need to be confident that teams are properly recruited, trained and demonstrate practical love throughout the Diocese by acting within church standards.

We are very grateful for the support of our Ministry Leaders and Office team, who are the primary means of ensuring that volunteers are recruited and trained. It is their adherence to the processes that help ensure that everyone is safe.

Even with dedication, a few things slipped through the net. There were no serious incidents however:

- There were two people in role for an extended period without a suitable DBS/Diocesan clearance. These are now resolved.
- We had two recent safeguarding incidents. Nobody was harmed and appropriate actions were taken by the Ministry Leaders.

We are humbled by the number of people who give their time to help ensure that All Saints remains the vibrant, passionate community that we see today – and who accept the little inconveniences of the processes so that we can have the confidence and freedom to be a fully inclusive church. Thank you.

More than 50 people will need to renew their safeguarding training in 2019. Please support us all by attending the training that Mark is arranging at St Helen's.

What is Safer Recruitment?

It's the mandatory Church of England policy for appointing people to roles. Mark Carrington coordinates the process: Application form → References → 'Interview' DBS (if appropriate) → Appointment by PCC (by letter) → Review after six months.

What is a DBS check?

A legal requirement to ensure that each person working with children, youth or vulnerable adults has nothing in their history that would prevent them from working with one or more of these groups. DBS stands for Disclosure and Barring Service. The check is done online, and people tell us it takes about ten minutes to complete (unlike the old paper forms!)

What's new this year?

There is a new Charity Commission mandatory reporting regime for serious incidents. The PCC has approved a simple version of this for recording all non-serious incidents at All Saints. Diane and Tim will be meeting with each Ministry Leader over the next few weeks to get this going.

Who does what?

Incumbent [Rich Johnson]:

- Log any concerns about children or adults in the parish and make sure that the proper advice is sought/proper referrals are made.
- Chair the Strategic Safeguarding Group and keep a log of decisions made.

Ministry Leaders:

- Ensure that appropriate safeguarding practices happen within their ministry area.
- Ensure that Safer Recruitment practice is followed – this includes making sure that volunteers in their teams have been safely recruited (and if needed, DBS checked).
- Receive any safeguarding concerns from their teams and handle them appropriately.
- Consult the wider team eg. Incumbent, Safer Recruitment Lead, Safeguarding Officers as needed.

Safer Recruitment Lead [Mark Carrington]:

- Ensure that all applicable posts are safely recruited, and records maintained.

Safeguarding Officers [Tim and Diane Marlow]:

- Work closely with the incumbent on all safeguarding issues
- Be the parish DBS administrators.
- Chair the Operational Safeguarding Group and keep a log of decisions made.

Foodbank [Grahame Lucas]:

- The PCC has delegated Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding to the Foodbank Manager.

We all have a responsibility to safeguard the young and the vulnerable. If you have concerns about possible abuse (including allegations):
In an emergency, call emergency services 999
Otherwise, consult your ministry leader
Decide together whether to seek advice or to make an immediate referral to police or care services
Always contact Rich Johnson and Tim & Diane Marlow – we will also contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor
Keep a record of what happened, your concerns and your actions
Only tell others who need to know

Tim and Diane Marlow, Safeguarding Officers

OPERATIONS & HR

2018 continued to bring us some big changes and challenges. We have travelled together as a community through of some of these changes, whereas other operational ones have taken place more behind the scenes.

Staff Team and Role Changes

We have experienced many team changes over the past year. We have seen friends finish, and welcomed new ones into our community.

- Rhi O'Rourke finished as our Children & Families Worker in April 2018
- Andy Smith joined us in June 2018 as our new Curate
- Barbara Penny finished her role as a voluntary office administrator in August 2018
- Jo Oates moved from a voluntary to a paid position in September as our Youth Worker
- Fraser Oates started in September 2018 as our new Ordinand
- Hils Auty started in November 2018 as our new Ministry Coordinator and Philippa Barton handed over her Ministry Coordinator duties allowing her to focus exclusively on her role as Rich's PA.
- Rachael Harwood joined us in March 2019 as our new Finance Assistant.

This summer we will see ordinand, Jonny Gordon, ordained and take up a curacy at Malvern Priory, welcome Phil Wade as Worship Director, and Tia Arnold as our Children's Worker.

With these team additions, it has meant changing how we use St Helen's Church House as our office, including adding more work desks, and clearing out a room previously used for storage, to make way for an additional meeting space.

Operational items, situations and updates

- Periodic electrical inspection of St Helen's Church House passed successfully.
- Repair to plumbing within the All Saints portacabin toilets carried out.
- The HLF repairs to St Helen's have all but completed, with the scaffolding now removed off site and full access granted again to the car park.
- We have more volunteers than ever, and last year put on C1 safeguarding training for approx.. 40 team members in 2018. This year we will need to hold the training again for new volunteers, and those that missed the last session.
- We were experiencing ongoing problems with our email service provider, resulting periodically in emails to and from @allsaintsworcester.org.uk accounts failing to be sent or received, and without knowing when and who.
- With the help of Chris Pettifer, the solution was to sign up to Google G Suite. Our emails are now handled through gmail servers, which has resolved the problems we were experiencing. We have also utilised their team drives and migrated our network folder storage over to them. With a growing team, this solution is a great asset and allows for better remote working. G Suite is free for non-profit organisations saving us approximately £500 a year in office running costs. Worcester Foodbank now use this system, and it has real potential to assist us during future church planting.
- We have made several updates to our website in the last few months. The main addition is a donations page that allows for one-off gifts as well as setting up regular giving to the church. Have a look to find out the other changes!
- I have recently installed Information Points at the back of All Saints and St Helen's. This addition to the welcome areas has a tablet with links allowing people to connect in with our community, sign up to e-news and e-prayers, and find out more of what's coming up in the life of the church.
- The Information points are also home to a card reader, allowing people to make card donations if they are without cash, but still wish to support us financially. It also gives us the ability to take payments for items and events such as weddings and private hires etc.

From an operational viewpoint, 2018 saw many changes take place. The items outlined in this report provide an insight into some of those happening. We are expecting an exciting 2019, so watch this space!

Mark Carrington, Operations Coordinator

BUILDINGS

St Helen's church Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Project

The project for the HLF funded stonework repairs and conservation at St Helen's is now all but complete with some lead work repairs to be carried out now the scaffolding is down.

The contract, carried out by Sally Strachey Historic Conservation, was for a revised schedule of works put together to meet the maximum grant award available to us under the HLF Places of Worship programme. The project has tackled urgently needed repairs and conservation to stonework in the worst state of repair and included the replacing of almost 200 stones and 350 meters of repointing. 30 rusted Victorian iron cramps were removed, rotten timber louvres were replaced and bird deterrent netting was installed to the Tower. On our east, and most visible location from the High Street, hood moulds were replaced and the stone cross and detailed carvings reinstated.

We received in total £300,375 in grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, National Churches Trust, Garfield Weston, All Churches Trust, Church Care, Lasletts, Worcestershire and Dudley Historic Churches, and Droitwich Preservation Trust.

Thanks to further funding from Droitwich Preservation Trust we were also able to have the tracery of the Rose Window in the west (Tower) elevation repaired and the beautiful stained glass cleaned and re-lead.

Alongside the building repair works, the project has provided us with many opportunities to connect with the community and St Helen's has welcomed in over hundreds of people since the project began during our Friday openings and other events – most of whom have never visited St Helen's before, or who knew the building as the county records office.

As part of the terms of the HLF grant, we are committed to St Helen's being open to the public for these additional hours and having sufficient volunteers is vital in ensuring this remains sustainable. We see this as an opportunity to bring people into church, and have seen several people attend Alpha as a result.

With the addition of creating the new 'Sanctuary' space on Thursday lunchtimes for worship, prayer and contemplation, St Helen's is now regularly in use five days a week. We have also seen the building used for a number of larger events this year such as the Community Fun Day and Women in War Film afternoon, not to mention the Victorian Fayre event which saw over 800 people welcomed into the building.

The main works that had to be omitted due to cost were the repairs to the south parapet and those to the base of the Tower. The work needed to the south elevation includes repairs to the parapet and buttresses, these high level repairs are estimated around £80-£100,000. The repairs to the base of the Tower present a more achievable target of around £30,000.

St Helen's church - Resourcing church reordering

With further work needing to be done on plans, we'll be aiming to have the faculty for St Helen's submitted for a preliminary hearing at the May DAC meeting. This will cover;

- opening up a door on to the High Street in the south aisle with a decorative front, along with a ramp to allow disabled access
- installation of under floor heating, removal of floor plinth (to make it all one level) and laying stone tiles throughout
- relocation of the servery kitchen
- relocating the toilets into a new extension on the side of the Tower where the boiler house currently stands, with access from the Nave via the currently bricked up doorway.

All Saints church – Resourcing church reordering

We have submitted a faculty for the following items at All Saints church;

- pew removal including the removal of radiators and electric heaters, making good the floor and wooden panelling
- reposition of the chained bible
- reposition of the font
- installation of servery kitchen in west end at the base of the tower and the removal of the wooden screen to be replaced with a serving counter.

Our proposals have been passed by the DAC and have been sent on to the chancellor. Both Historic England and the Victorian Society have raised objections to the faculty. We have been able to address some of the points raised by them in our revised plans, such as mobile screens around where the chairs are stacked, and better installation of emergency lighting. We will be looking to enlist the help of the congregation with other elements.... watch this space!

Of course, all of this effort and activity focused on the fabric of our buildings must remain part of (and facilitating of) our much broader vocation to bear witness to the goodness of God in this world. May it never become merely about heritage or aesthetics. Rather, may all the history point to the far-reaching significance of what we are about, and may the beauty of these spaces that we steward continue to evoke prayer, foster community, and reflect the hospitality of God.

Stella Power, Buildings Project Manager & Owen Gallacher, Associate Vicar

PRAYER (HUNGRY)

Over the last 12 months Hungry evenings have remained a key part of the spiritual rhythm of All Saints. We've been running Hungry on a Wednesday evening 6 times a year (half-termly). These are most often held in St Helen's but as the frequency of Alpha has increased on Wednesdays we've begun to move Hungry to All Saints.

We've made a conscious decision to prioritise worship and exploring the gifts of the spirit during these evenings and have seen intercession and prayer ministry flow out of that foundation.

Usual attendance at Hungry is about 25-40 with some small groups including it as part of their pattern of meeting.

The Hungry team has been led by Ivanna Giles and Steve O'Rourke with support from Rich. There is also a 'Host team' who help facilitate and lead the evenings. Recently Phil and Marg Bristow

have joined the leadership team. Their first priority has been to try to maintain and grow the prayer time before our Sunday morning gatherings.

Throughout Lent the Hungry team are working with the worship team to facilitate weekly prayer and worship evenings each Monday in St Helen's.

In 2018 several members of All Saints joined the New Wine Hungry venue team with Rich and Kath help to lead. This will be repeated in 2019.

Discussions have begun around how prayer ministry and creative prayer at All Saints can be developed, perhaps under the 'Hungry' banner.

Steve O'Rourke is part of an ecumenical group exploring the possibility of running a prayer space during Thy Kingdom Come (leading up to Pentecost). They are hoping to open up an unused city centre commercial property as a hub for gathering people from across the churches to pray for Worcester.

Ivanna Giles and Steve O'Rourke, Hungry Team

WORSHIP

We have had another great year, that has really been a season of waiting. We have moved from an 18 month journey of exploring the subject of worship, that has been allowed to soak into what we do as a team. I feel we have an enriched perspective of worship that has lifted it from merely a musical expression, and the hope now is that we can help inspire the church with the same vision. There is a plan to help push this into the wider life of the church through teaching, small group material, and experimental/creative expressions of worship that stretch our normal boundaries. I would love it if the church could be praying for this, that there would be an open-mindedness and willingness to learn.

Practically, we have led music at the St George's Day Parade in April, the Thy Kingdom Come ecumenical celebration on Pentecost Sunday, our Christmas Services at the end of the year, alongside the week-by-week leading of sung worship in our Gatherings. The team has had a few changes - people stepping down and people stepping up - all of whom have been and continue to be faithful and passionate about God. Personally, I transitioned from my previous career in architecture, beginning training for ordained ministry. My role therefore is shifting and we are now looking forward to Phil arriving in the summer of 2019 to take on the role of Worship Director in an All Saints and resourcing church capacity. I would love it if the church can be praying for this transition - for us as well as Phil and his wife Annabel.

The whole worship team are committed and enthusiastic and I feel so privileged to have led the team for the last 3.5 years. They serve in the way that they do because they love it, and I want to sing their praises because of how authentically and joyfully they sing His praises. Please continue to hold the worship team in your prayers and encourage them when you can.

Fraser Oates, Worship Director

WELCOME

Welcome should be a key aspect of any family, and any home, and the 10.30am gathering at All Saints is no exception. If you were to ask me 'who is on the Welcome Team?' I would say every regular member of the church family, because we all have a responsibility to make newcomers and visitors feel at ease.

We want everyone who comes through the doors to experience a warm welcome and our dedicated team of welcomers to take the lead in that. We try to be sensitive to individual preferences, so that people feel noticed and valued, without feeling overwhelmed.

We asked a few people what it is like to be on the team, and why they choose to serve our church family in this way. They said:

'It's like...being part of a family when you have a party and you are the host

'I remember my own experience of walking through the large wooden door... I was hit by music, a very warm greeting and a buzz that was electric. I felt I'd reached home. And I still feel that. So, being part of the Welcome Team and taking my turn to welcome is very important to me, whether it's a regular or a first-time visitor, I hope that each person feels the way I did and still do.

'We are grateful for the opportunity to greet folk on a Sunday morning and spend some time with newcomers. Having cheerful & chatty folk on the door is always the sign of a vibrant church.

'I like to think that I treat others as I would wish to be treated and for me, being made to feel that I matter as I walk in makes my whole church experience better.

'I feel that welcomers can make or break a person's experience of All Saints. In my opinion, this is one of the most crucial roles and getting the welcome right is of utmost importance!

'I was very apprehensive when I first came up those steps and saw the big, solid wooden doors - it looked quite forbidding! Thankfully there was someone opening the door, welcoming me with a smile and a word of encouragement and explaining how things worked. It certainly made a difference and made it easier to come back the next week.

'It's quite scary coming in to a church on your own for the first time and I just wanted to slip in quietly with no fuss. It was nice having some people on the doors who told me their names (which I promptly forgot) and showed me the ropes. When I became a regular it made me want to help others settle in, which is why I joined the team.'

In the year ahead we are keen to expand the team - please talk to John if you're interested - and hope to create a Welcome Desk so there is a more obvious point to connect. If there are things you think we could do to improve the welcome available we would love to hear from you.

John Taylor, Welcome Ministry Leader

SUNDAY GATHERINGS

The first word has to go to the many serving on the various teams that have enabled another year of Sundays to happen! Hosts, welcomers, band, sound engineers, screen-clickers, readers, communion assistants, Scramblers team, Adventurers team - thank you for so generously playing your part - we salute you!

(And if you have not yet found your place to serve, how about it? It's our way of life.)

In our Sunday teaching, each new calendar year has started with a fresh call to 'practice the way of Jesus' - to see all this Jesus stuff we read about and talk about actually land in our lives in distinctively beautiful ways. In that vein we've looked at some of the things that trip us up ('What's Killing Me?") and sought to foster a caring community with teaching on the biblical 'one-anothers' and our pastoral skills training.

The vision remains that all of our churchy activity, every rota, system and structure, may be a helpful climbing frame enabling our lives of love, with God, each other, and the world to grow stronger and truer.

Owen Gallacher, Associate Vicar

ADVENTURERS (CHILDREN'S GATHERINGS)

The last year has been something of a holding year, as we have watched and waited in the hope of recruiting a children's worker to head things up. In the meantime, Tash Walker led the charge and then I took the steering wheel from September 2018, wonderfully aided and nudged along by the ever-patient Adventurers team.

In the Autumn term we took a bit of an expedition up the mountain (a big pile of chairs) to discover and collect Jesus' secrets to the most beautiful life (the Sermon on the Mount - Matt 5-7), and following a Christmas performance of an adapted 'The Greatest Showman' (may it never be forgotten) we have been taking a tour of 'Children of the Bible'. With their whole-hearts and simplicity of faith and trust, the children continue to be our teachers.

We are excited that Tia Arnold will be coming in the summer to be our new Children's Worker!

Owen Gallacher, Associate Vicar

MAINLY MUSIC

Mainly Music has grown. A lot. Kind of by mistake, but as with most 'mistakes' I think God is at the heart of it. Thanks to my (not so) brilliant administration skills we currently have 15 more families on the books than last year and around 80 children.

For those new to this – Mainly Music is a toddler group franchise that was established by a Church in New Zealand. We have singing, dancing, a story and toys for the kids, and hot drinks and cakes for the parents. It has been running at All Saints for around 11 years and is staffed by around 15 incredible volunteers.

I think about half of our mums have no connection with a church and it is a real honour to be a part of their week – a part they really enjoy coming to – where we can try and introduce God into their lives.

I really feel that God is calling us as a group to push out of our comfort zone and talk to these families more about God and his love for them.

There are a number of ways we plan to do this over the coming year, but essentially it's about building real relationships with them and to try and meet them where they are, to learn about their lives and worries and to walk through it all with them.

We are already making efforts with this and trying to gently be a part of parents lives, to support them in many different ways and I sense God is already on the move.

Please would you pray with us and for us, both for our families and for us as a team. Pray for God to be at the heart of this ministry and to bless what we do and for us to be brave in our conversations and relationships. I think Mainly Music is more than a toddler group – it is a very real way of speaking God's love to people and a privilege to be able to.

Oh and p.s. – do let us know if you'd like to come and take a look at Mainly Music one week so you can witness the fun and pray with knowledge – you'd be so welcome.

Sarah Worth, Mainly Music team leader

YOUTH

Spring 2018 saw the official opening of Lightbox, in partnership with St Paul's and Worcester Baptist. The drop-in youth cafe has been a great opportunity to connect with young people from around Worcester as well as providing them with a safe youth community in the centre of the City on a Friday night. We have seen numbers increase to have 40 across the two age groups and slowly young people are connecting in to local churches off the back of Lightbox.

Our All Saints Youth programme hasn't altered much - Small Groups every other Thursday, a Social on the first Friday of each month and our continued Sunday morning youth session. We have seen a real boost in numbers at our Thursday Small Groups now we have returned to holding them in youth team homes with up to 12 attending the younger group and 10 attending the older. There is generally a real buzz of excitement around all that we are doing together as a youth community. On a Sunday morning we get up to 24 young people meeting in the church office, at our socials we have between 18-26 coming along to St Helen's. But, of course, it's not all about numbers! It's been a real joy to see the young people come alive in their faith through being part of a church community, developing relationships, gaining confidence and building faith.

We have run a number of extra things to the programme since September including; a music and worship plug-in monthly, the all new Youth Gathering (which we hope to replicate twice a term), Reason: Youth Apologetics Day in February, Prayer and pudding evening in March, as well as a one-off creative plug-in where we got messy for the Christmas artwork (still to be seen at the front of All Saints.)

It's been a wonderful year, one where we have seen young people laugh, play plenty of Dodgeball, share their testimonies, pray for one another, speak openly about their struggles and honestly about their need for God. Please continue to pray for the youth team as we lead humbly, inline with the Spirit and from a place of true authenticity.

Jo Oates, Youth Worker

STUDENTS

September 2018 we invited the All Saint's student community to join in with Alpha; to bring their uni friends, and journey through the course themselves- even if they'd been following Jesus for years. They were often the loudest Alpha table (!) but it seemed like a good way to get the year going- the students shared honestly, asked questions, and some brought friends who were engaging with the Gospel for the very first time.

And, that's our big prayer...the undergraduate community at All Saints isn't large, we would love God to grow it. The student years are a formative time and we're keenly aware of the opportunity this afford us as a church for mission and discipleship. We need support, team members and vision. Even over the past few weeks (maybe as the student team needed a little encouragement boost) we've seen new students connecting with us on Sundays or one-off events- those who are looking for a church family away from home, or those just beginning to ask whether there's something in this whole Jesus thing. It's exciting.

Highlights from the year include a retreat day at Chapel House, where we gathered with students from Trinity Cheltenham, an epic winter BBQ at Mark Carrington's and Sunday lunches at the Gallachers'. Owen remains connected to the university as Associate Chaplain and has a mixture of opportunities to bless and serve the undergrads and staff through that role.

Laura Gallacher, Student Ministry leader



REVIVE

Revive began the year as a group of around fifteen women, meeting weekly to grow together in faith and friendship. We begin with coffee and cake and time to share and enjoy each other's company. Although laughter is a given in this group, we meet with the serious intention of growing our faith through Bible Study, visiting speakers, times of prayer, and teaching DVDs, adding to these craft mornings and social events.

However, we had a desire to grow and share our faith. An Alpha Course, based in our group, was suggested and so last Autumn, with some fear and trepidation, plus encouragement and technical help from our new Curate, Andy, we began our lunchtime Alpha. Friends were invited, help (in the form of Bryan Mason, and Kevin and Heather Fooks) was recruited and Revive ladies came early to prepare.

After much prayer, and to much joy, twenty two people attended Alpha at Revive. Our mailing list has doubled and we are very conscious of God's blessing. We look forward to seeing God work in the coming year.

Judith Mason, Revive leader

ALPHA

Autumn 2018 saw the launch of Alpha at All Saints with a renewed vision to run courses every term. There were 28 guests that attended the evening course with a mixture of All Saints members wanting to revisit some of the fundamentals of the faith and guests who were exploring faith for the first time. In addition, the daytime 'Revive' group ran a course and 9 guests came along.

The Spring term course had 19 people attend, again from a variety of places, and on every course, we've seen several people commit to following Jesus and others begin to take small steps of faith. It has been truly humbling to see God at work, not only among our guests but also building faith and character among the Alpha team. God is good all the time! Please continue to pray for God's ongoing presence and favour and that we would see God doing far more than we could ask or imagine!

Andy Smith, Curate

PASTORAL CARE

Here are some of the encouraging things the Bible says about us:

<i>You are a saint</i>	<i>1 Corinthians 1:2.</i>
<i>You are Gods work of art</i>	<i>Ephesians 2:10 "we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus"</i>
<i>You are righteous and holy</i>	<i>Romans 5:17</i>
<i>You are full accepted by God</i>	<i>Ephesians 1:6</i>

However, many of us don't always live life believing these truths. Sometimes other people have spoken into our lives and we believe them instead. Or life throws stuff at us and we consequently struggle with many negative thoughts about ourselves.

The Pastoral Care Team have journeyed with many folk over the last year helping them to see themselves more as God sees them. We do this by listening, having helpful conversations and praying as well as helping in practical ways to show God's love.

So our invitation is: Don't bottle it up. Talk to us.

During the Autumn we held a Pastoral Care fortnight when during the Sunday gatherings we heard about 'Boundaries', 'Difficult Conversations' and 'Anxiety'. We were pleased to host a training day on Active Listening and hope to have another training day this Autumn. Many thanks to the Listeners and also to Joy Pollock for co-ordinating practical care and organising many meal trains, together with those who volunteer to help. You all make such a difference.

We are pleased to welcome Sue Stone onto the Pastoral Care Leaders Team which meets regularly to oversee and develop our pastoral care at All Saints.

Heather Christmas, Pastoral Care Team

SMALL GROUPS

Small groups remain the primary place for anyone seeking to be in intentional community, with others committed to practising the way of Jesus. They are also the primary place of belonging and care. These groups are all different in many ways but all are made up of people who share a commitment to gather together to do life with others, work through pastoral issues we all face, engage in robust bible study, pray and minister and have fun together.

There are currently 16 groups led by a team of amazing people!

Rich Johnson, Vicar

WORCESTER CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY (CAP) DEBT CENTRE

2018 saw the Worcester CAP debt centre meeting with 32 different clients; 22 new clients, and ten of which were clients who are working their way out of debt or who have recently become debt free.

The tireless work of the team of volunteers and supporters has been so appreciated by the clients that have received their help, so thank you for all your support.

In December 2018 we made the decision to close the Worcester CAP debt centre after 10 years service to the city of Worcester. In September, Debt Centre Manager, Fiona Jones announced that she would stand down at the end of the year and without a another suitable manager coming forward there was a growing sense that its season was coming to an end as the debt centre struggled to secure sustainable funding.

At the same time we heard of the growing opportunity for a Malvern debt centre, and we were able to send curate, Andy Smith, with his experience as a CAP debt centre manager in Leamington Spa, in a consultative capacity to help pave the way for the Malvern debt centre, which is due to open in 2019.

Many people have been touched by the Worcester CAP debt centre project, not least the volunteers who have given freely of their time to accompany the debt coaches, to pray, offer on-going support to clients, to deliver Christmas hampers and cards.

The Worcester CAP team can look back and be proud of their epic effort and the real difference that their service and friendship has made to the clients they supported over the years. And it speaks volumes that some of these people have become part of the community of All Saints.

The celebration event in January 2019 was an opportunity to thank everyone who has been involved with CAP over the years, including Ted and Ginny Duckett who set up the debt centre 10 years ago, and to hear some of the stories of CAP clients whose lives have been turned around by the support, care, and advice of the CAP team and service.

Rich Johnson, Vicar

WORCESTER FOODBANK

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

The words of Jesus in Matthew 25 are at the core of what Worcester Foodbank is about, and we take them very literally! In the past year we have been able to feed the least in our city an incredible 76,000 meals. We have seen over 6,600 clients come through our door, and we have offered them drinks when they are thirsty and a comforting, listening ear where they need a friend. We have clothed children and given 800 of them new toys where they may well have had nothing. We meet their physical needs, but in doing so we pray that as they leave with food, they also leave with hope and a glimpse of something better. A glimpse of the love of Jesus.

Worcester Foodbank operates under the Charitable status and Trustee governance of All Saints Church, and under a franchise from the national foodbank charity, the Trussell Trust.

Our vision and core values reflect both organisations. We are committed to:

- acting to radically transform lives and our city by God’s love, grace and power.
- helping serve all those in need throughout our city and working in partnership with others to achieve this.
- working with others to bring change to unjust systems, structures and realities on the ground in order to see Kingdom justice prevail.
- working for church unity through collaboration and partnership with other churches.

Taking action – head above the parapet!

We work with the Trussell Trust to ensure that the local experiences of people in crisis in our City are reflected in the messages given to politicians and central government. This is how we influence people in power and authority to ensure that future decisions, on subjects like the benefit system and our local economy, provide a system which supports people with a living household income; a way in which people can sustain themselves and their families.

The Miracle on Lowesmoor

We are consistently astounded by the generosity of the people of Worcester who donated over 76 tonnes of food last year, and enabled Worcester Foodbank to show love and compassion with over 76,000 meals. It takes over 70 volunteers within Foodbank and many, many more outside of Foodbank, to make the project happen. It also costs £45,000 a year to run the warehouse. In total the value of this giving and generosity is about £¼m a year.

We are blessed by the amazing generosity of so many people and organisations. God has provided in abundance, including grants from ASDA totalling £42K for a Van and warehouse shelving and storage crates. Tesco top up grants amounting to about £8K and most recently the recognition of local government through an annual grant of £15K for three years.

Restoring hope

Foodbank is not just about generosity and figures. It is about people, their stories, and how Foodbank has made a difference to their lives. It is not just about feeding clients and sending them on their way. It's about restoring their hope of a happier and more sustainable future where they can stand on their own two feet again. It is about putting them in a better place to enable them to address the root cause of their crisis and food poverty.

The future

We continue to work hard to ensure we can look after those in crisis, those who suffer through lack of food and funds, and strive to show Gods love and compassion. The task is getting more difficult as we forecast a 50% rise in demand during 2019.

The Foodbank Steering Group (PCC members and clergy), alongside the dedicated volunteer managers group, are undertaking a strategic review of how we run Foodbank. We are giving thanks for the work that has already been done, while striving to understand the role we can have in providing an even better service to all those in crisis in our city and bestowing dignity, love and grace.

We pray that in a years' time we will be able to tell even more stories of how lives in our city, and our city itself, are being renewed by the love of Jesus.

Tim Clack, Chair of Steering Group & Grahame Lucas, Worcester Foodbank Manager

WORCESTER ABOLITIONISTS GROUP

The Worcester Abolitionist Group aim is to make Worcestershire a hostile place to modern slavery. Primarily we support the anti-modern slavery organisation Hope for Justice, but seek to work across the community to equip communities to tackle the issue of slavery.

Our focus this year has been to pray for our city, wider communities and internationally. We join with St Georges' Church, among others across Worcester, to meet and pray together. We meet monthly praying for our community, Hope for Justice and Love Justice.

Our annual fundraiser, the Hope for Justice Coffee Morning, was held in September 2018. Our volunteers were able to invite shoppers into St Helen's church from the High Street to join us for coffee and cake. This event was a great fundraising opportunity for Hope for Justice and Love Justice and gave opportunity to connect people among the city who are concerned for this issue.

As we look to the year ahead we would like to continue to invest in prayer for our city and others around the world. Please join us in prayer as we consider how best the church can support stretched services to provide long term recovery for survivors of modern slavery.

Steph Joiner

HOME FOR GOOD

Home for Good exists to serve the most vulnerable in our communities - children.

James 1:27 says '*Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress.*

This year we have continued to serve families who are loving vulnerable children either as foster parents or adoptive parents in various ways. Our quarterly support group is well attended with over 100 guests last time. We meet on Saturdays in order that whole families can attend together. We provide lunch - share food and model 'table time' before our children go off to another part of the building for craft, games and much more. They always have a lovely time, but more than that - the sense of identity and security they get from knowing they are no longer in the minority - that everyone has a story of trauma and loss - is empowering.

The adults have time to chat and deepen friendship. Sometimes we have guests speakers to help navigate topics like funding, Foetal Alcohol syndrome Disorder (FASD), school communication, attachment theory, therapeutic parenting, understanding behaviour, Special Educational Needs (SEN) and so much more.

These support groups run successfully thanks to our volunteers and champions who belong to various churches across the County. We currently have over 10 Home for Good churches networked to our Local Movement. This growing number makes possible the work we do - particularly with the increasing number of referrals we receive from Adoption Central England (ACE) and Worcestershire County Council (WCC). From offering practical help with DIY, gardening, babysitting to simply listening over a coffee, we are successfully matching families asking for help to Home for Good churches in their area. But we'd love to engage more churches!

We have also been able to provide WCC with a venue for them to host a training course on non-violent restraint for parents dealing with child on parent violence.

Hospitality begets hospitality. As we model radical hospitality in our churches, I believe we can expect to see more families open their hearts and homes to vulnerable children. I also believe more families who are parenting vulnerable children will join our churches. We want to provide welcoming, safe environments where looked after and adopted children are understood, valued and loved. We have provided a pilot training course for children and youth workers, hosted parties to honour birth children, been involved in radio work and speaking engagements. It's been great to honour families in our annual Adoption Sunday service and also make use of Mothers' and Fathers' Day resources too.

Joy Pollock, Head of Home for Good: Worcestershire

Vicar: Rev Dr Rich Johnson
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