

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH REPORTS

Churchyard Maintenance Volunteers

We are a team of volunteers who meet regularly to keep the churchyard tidy. Our aim is to make the churchyard a pleasant place for everyone who walks through or comes to visit the church. Being there also provides opportunities to talk with visitors and to represent the church community.

Members of the team during 2020 were: Philip and Pam Cheshire, Richard Hartley, Hester Hawkes, Robert Hornby, Liz Johnson, Lindsay MacDonald, Marion Mitchell, Bridget Sorel-Cameron, Valerie Thompson, and Frances Walker. We had a two-hour session on Monday afternoon every two or three weeks, with a total of 16 sessions throughout the year. Our operations were curtailed from mid-March to mid-May during the first covid lockdown, and again in November at the start of the second lockdown.

The average attendance was 6.2 volunteers per session, and the total time contributed over the year was 198 person-hours. The team was notable for a great spirit of cooperation and camaraderie, and for its "can do" approach. Bridget received the award for best attendance, being present for a remarkable 15 sessions, closely followed by Valerie (14 sessions) and Marion and Richard (12 sessions each).

Tasks accomplished during the year included:

- Kept the main avenue and pathways free of litter;
- Picked up fallen twigs and sticks under trees throughout churchyard;
- Removed grass along the edges of all paths and around perimeter of building;
- Removed weeds from base of wall on Mill Lane (outside on road);
- Cut suckers from lime trees up to a height of 5 metres;
- Removed ivy from the river wall and various trees and gravestones;
- Maintained the bed alongside the southern path and planted some shrubs;
- Removed a gnarled old elder tree from near the Bier House;
- Conducted a Risk Assessment of our activities while working in the churchyard.

The experience of volunteering has been very positive and we have worked well together as a team. The appearance of the churchyard has been maintained at a high standard, and we have received many compliments from both visitors and members of the congregation.

We welcome anyone who would like to join us, even occasionally, to assist with this satisfying activity in such a glorious situation.

Lindsay MacDonald (team leader)

Contemplative Prayer Group

During our fifth year we have not been able to have any physical meetings, due to the Coronavirus, neither have we met electronically. However, at 7.30 pm on each first Tuesday of the month, we have prayed together, each in our own homes, on the same Scripture passage. Every month, we are in contact with all the members, by phone or email, to keep in touch, inform them of the prayer passage and sometimes to share our insights after prayer. Some members have passed the material on to others that they know, so, in a way the group has grown during this difficult year. We have a real sense of being together with God as we pray, and offer this quiet time for each other and for all God's people and our church, and to bask in God's love.

As in previous years, we would like to stress that this is an open group, with anyone welcome to join us for one or more meetings. There is no need to book when we can meet again in the parish centre, but anyone who would like to join us at our home prayer times before that, please contact Jenny or John and Tricia (phone numbers in Trinity Times), to be informed of the prayer material each month.

Jenny Rowland 01789 415548

John Hall-Matthews)

Tricia Hall-Matthews) 01789 414182

Bereavement Support Team

Sadly during the past 12 months we have not been able to visit anyone in their own homes but we have continued to contact all the bereaved families and offer them support over the phone. This of course is not ideal but the families I personally have contacted have understood and been extremely appreciative. They are always grateful that someone from the Church has taken the trouble to contact them a few weeks after the funeral.

In November we were able to have the All Souls service, the day before the 2nd lockdown. Photos of the deceased were shown on a screen and the families were able to light a candle in memory of their loved ones. The people I spoke to after the service really appreciated it. Members of the support team attended the service but sadly we were unable to offer refreshments and an opportunity to talk.

We will continue to contact people by phone at present.

Gina Lodge (Bereavement Support Team Co-ordinator)

Bereavement Support Group

This group had only been going for a few months when we had to close just as the group was gelling together. Those that came were beginning to open up and tell their stories to the other members. I have been in touch with those who were attending and at present they hope to come back when we can start up again.

Gina Lodge (Co-ordinator)

Trinity Ladies

Our last meeting was in February 2020. We had meetings arranged for the rest of the year that had to be cancelled. We have been in touch by phone with all the members and all were sent a Christmas card. Our Almoner has continued to send cards to those who are sick and Christmas and Easter cards to members who cannot now attend because of illness or old age. We will continue to contact members until we can meet again.

Gina Lodge (Chair)

Trinity Players

The Players have had a surprisingly busy year despite not being permitted to stage a Play. At the start of the year, we recorded the Passion Gospel for Palm Sunday and almost immediately Shakespeare's Birthday was upon us with no prospect of Coffee, Cake and Shakespeare in church; instead, we recorded Readings on our phones for James Willetts to work his magic producing a video for YouTube.

Sadly, a June staging of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" was out of the question but we read the script on Zoom and know that it will work on a future date. We were more hopeful of performing Murder in the Cathedral during the Becket Anniversary year and were within three weeks of First Night when Second Lockdown overtook us. We rehearsed on Zoom till New Year but our next two attempts at performance also proved impossible so our sights are now fixed on July this year.

Our latest YouTube video, "Words of Comfort: Christian Verse and Song for Dark Times" is now available and this year's Coffee, Cake and Shakespeare is in hand for 23 April. Throughout the Year we have met monthly on Zoom, occasionally reading a Play but usually bringing readings and songs on a given theme. We now have some inspiring anthologies some of which we hope to share with live audiences as soon as we are able to meet again.

Above all, these Zoom Readings have provided regular Fun and Fellowship, shining a light in dark times.

Ursula Russell (Co-Ordinator)

Social Team Events

The Social Team, established in October 2017, aims to provide non-profit making events which will enable the various groups within our church family to come together, deepening relationships and enabling outreach. Owing to pressure of work, Clare Bentall, a founder member, is no longer able to serve on the team. We are grateful for her input of ideas and thank her for the practical approach she brought to our planning.

Our activities were brought to an abrupt halt in March 2020 but not before two successful social events. Following the Epiphany party on Sat Jan 4th, an evening of board games and shared supper enjoyed by church members of all ages, Curry Night on February 8th saw over 100 of our congregation, drawn from all three churches, enjoy an array of authentic Indian cuisine prepared by one of our Trinity Centre@ 10 families. Entertainment was provided by a local Bhangra Dance Group and some of the church members!

We were pleased to welcome Marie McDougal onto the team in March. She will provide a valuable link with the families of our younger choristers.

Social activities will resume once it is safe to do so!

Christine Cottrell (Co-Ordinator)

Parish Prayer Diary

The Parish Prayer Diary continues to provide a real foundation for the parish, and an encouragement, as almost 100 individuals pray each day for the same road, person on the Electoral Roll, and some other item of church or parish life.

Owing to the cessation of church services during the pandemic, it was no longer possible to distribute the prayer diaries in the normal way. However, thanks to Andy's efforts, the prayer diary features as a link in the twice weekly e-pew leaflet and can be accessed by those receiving Church desk emails.

Since March 2020, printed copies have been delivered or posted to prayer diary recipients without internet access.

Christine Cottrell (Co-Ordinator)

Lent Lunches

Owing to the pandemic, only two Lent Lunches were able to be held in the Parish Centre this year, on Fridays March 6th and 13th, organised by volunteers and home group members. Each week about 30 of us enjoyed sharing a simple meal of homemade soup, bread and cheese together and listening to David Ellis and John Hall-Matthews giving a "Thought for the Day" on each occasion. A total of £223.17 was sent to Christian Aid from the generous donations received.

Christine Cottrell (Co-Ordinator)