

**HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
CROCKHAM HILL**

SUNDRY REPORTS

APCM

20th October 2020

Communication Report

1) Objective

The objective is to let everyone in the village and beyond know rapidly and clearly both what is happening in the church and village, and the messages of Christianity. We usually do this through the monthly Newsletter, the Holy Trinity Website, the church notice boards, weekly posters, church and village Facebook pages, pew Sheets, and the pulpit. In March 2020 at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Church was closed, then access was restricted. Social distancing rules have constrained most church meetings and services, and led to Zoom meetings and services, and most communication via computers.

2) Zoom Services

We have been lucky that the Covid pandemic coincided with the current development of the internet. Zoom connection to everyone's home computer or i-pad have enabled church services to continue. We are so grateful to Sue Diggory for her leadership and homilies, to Vivienne and Graham Dinnage for technical expertise, for brilliant singing, and playing on historic organs, and for researching and showing accompanying illustrations.

3) Newsletter

The monthly newsletter, formally delivered free to every house in the parish, has been published on the Church Website since lockdown. We are very grateful to Dharmi Damodaran and Kev Reynolds for all their hard work editing, and getting it published; to all those who write articles and news items; to Sue for her church leaders; and to all those who (pre Covid) delivered newsletters to every house.

4) Website

Our website - www.crockhamhillchurch.org now contains full details of the next church service, services during the coming month, and the latest sermon, as well as previous sermons.

There are sections on Safeguarding, and for Families and Children, on the history of the Church, the latest news and future events, activities within the village and church, our music, finances, and help provided in and outside the parish. There is advice on weddings, baptisms, confirmations and funerals. There are links to Village organisations, to the Primary and Nursery schools, and to the Diocese of Rochester and Church of England websites.

Warmest thanks to Chris May for sorting out the innumerate editor from time to time.

Many of Kev's brilliant obituaries from past Newsletters are reproduced and expanded under Great Lives.

5) Facebook

We have church and village Face book pages, which can be seen at www.facebook.com/CrockhamHillChurch and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Crockhamhillvillage/>

6) Posters

Before Covid-19 we used A3 size posters describing, by word and picture the theme and times of the services each Sunday. They were displayed on notice boards: beside the Royal Oak, in the Church porch, in Church Road, and in the Village Hall. Posters have been abandoned during the pandemic. Two A4 size notice boards at the bottom of the Church steps continue to announce the services.

7) Emails

The new Electoral Roll contains almost everyone's email address and phone number. Most of our communication is now via email.

*Michael Court
28 September 2020*

Churchyard Report

The churchyard remains in good order, particularly so given the nature of the year and the access problems regarding the pandemic. At the time of writing this report, which unusually this year is towards the end of the growing season, there have been a number of positive comments received and our thanks extend to Peter Harden for all the work he has put in throughout the year. Our thanks are also owing to the occasional volunteers who have given their time to help maintain 'God's Acre' and keep it tidy.

Following the second break-in a year or two ago, the churchyard shed remains unsecured and valuable machines and equipment are kept off-site. However, some simple equipment remains available for use although sanitising procedures need to be adopted when this happens. It has been the practice this year that most people have brought their own equipment for their personal use. This practice will extend to the annual Autumn Working Party which will be held later in the year. The exact timing of this depends on how the season pans out and the extent of leaf-fall.

The yews planted to fill gaps in the hedges have generally taken well, and the yews that were severely cut back on the approach to the church are regenerating well and looking in good health. It remains an ongoing task to remove unwelcome intruders from the yew hedging in places as these can establish themselves at the expense of the yew hedging. Hopefully, this is a task we can apply ourselves to within The Autumn Working Party.

A few years ago, Tony Lancaster very kindly offered his help and support in reducing/thinning the tree canopies on the North Bank to the north-west of the church. This is a work in progress and it is intended that this will continue eastwards along the northern boundary, increasing light to the northern side of the church and to the churchyard further eastwards.

The hedging around the churchyard extension is now in the main well-established – any gaps will be filled at the time of the planting of an indigenous hedge on the east boundary of Andrewsfield on Saturday 21st November. Many thanks are owing to Michael Court for his work on this. The access and site for the memorial seat to Gervaise Burbidge has been cleared and it has been agreed that the avoidance of the proliferation of brambles, and the maintenance of the grass area here, now needs to be a priority as it will not be too long before the area will come into use and be required for burials. It is also our aim to improve and enhance the bonfire area adjacent to this.

Recently some work has been done to repair some of the fallen crosses. It is now an intention to fill up or raise some of the sunken areas, and to level some of the anthills that have built up and developed over the years. Some limited work has been done on this and appears to have been successful.

It remains an objective to ensure a tidy and orderly churchyard for all seasons. However, we hope to do our bit for conservation in ‘God’s Acre’ and we plan to review our churchyard policy in the light of this and to integrate that with the development of the ‘flower meadow’ in Andrewsfield. Once agreed, some limited and discrete signage might be considered to allay any concerns and to help explain our churchyard policy.

Ian Maple
October 2020

ECC REPORT

Covid-19 restrictions have affected the parish in similar ways to practically every other parish in the country. The last ‘face-to-face’ meeting of the PCC was held in January, all subsequent ‘meetings’ having been conducted via email, with Sue and the Standing Committee dealing with urgent matters.

Since Lockdown meant a locked church building – as well as ‘Stay Home’ instructions for the wider community – we have relied upon Sue even more than ever, to conduct Parish affairs and keep the Church (ie: its people) accessible, connected and

valued. She is doing a magnificent job too. The good news is that vicars are now able to enter the church to pray, and Sue is able to take advantage of this.

Sunday services are held via Zoom with numbers of those in the virtual congregation growing, while the written text of services (including Sue's homily) are available for those without access to internet technology. (I have to say that I find both methods to be of great comfort, despite missing the fellowship of a 'live' congregation, and my faith has been strengthened by them.)

There are many acts of kindness being carried out in the community, as well as the work done by a local group of volunteers who make sure that day-to-day needs are met for those unable to leave their homes.

It has also been noted that the crisis has led to a greater appreciation of the natural world, and a desire to learn from where we are and to go forward to a new normal – and not back to the old.

The parish continues to support God's Hands, and the Westerham Food Bank, as well as our friends in New Cross and Kongwa, Tanzania, who face their own crises.

Crockham Hill Primary School remains open for three pupils – and we pray that it will not be long before it's safe for the church doors to be thrown open and the pews full once more to give thanks together for the blessings we continue to receive.

These may be trying times, but the history of the Church is one of trial and tribulation, with Christ remaining at its centre to provide hope and a steadying hand. Though we may be unable to put our arms round those we love who are away from home, we can put out our hand and know he is there to hold it.

Kev Reynolds

20.05.20

ECT REPORT

The Trust was originally formed in 1990. There are Trustees representing the Edenbridge Churches in Covenant

ECT's Objectives:

- **Work in partnership with local churches and support them in all areas of youth work**
- **Encourage an understanding of the Christian faith among young people**
- **Provide activities and opportunities that will bring young people and encourage “ community “**
- **Work with un-churched young people on the streets and in the community generally.**

ECT is committed to providing a practical Christian response to the needs of those it serves. The Trust is a multi-agency faith based organisation that works and co-operates with those services that engage locally with youth activities.

It is funded by individuals, charitable institutions and a number of a number of churches in the Edenbridge area.

ECT Friday Club:

From April 2019 the club ticked over very smoothly with no issues to report on. Attendance numbers where between 30 – 40 most sessions with a new intake of year 6 young people in September 19.

Activities have included Mini pizza making, Movie nights, various craft sessions, Tournaments, Games nights, BBQ and some great discussions.

We have also held a Praise party as an alternative to Halloween which was well attended and a great evening.

We finished off 2019 with a Christmas party again well attended and a great evening.

The New Year started back just fine and continued to run well up until the Coronavirus made itself known to the world.

Since the beginning of lockdown in March 2020 all face to face club activity closed down and we started to operate the club session via zoom online.

The online sessions did not prove to popular amongst the young people seeing an average 10 – 15 young per session, online sessions included Quizzes, cooking and various interactive games.

The Youth club restarted its face to face session on the 11th September in a restricted capacity in line with guidance from the national youth agency.

ECT also has a brand new website and I invite you to take a look:

<http://www.ectyouth.com>

ONE to ONE:

Our ONE to ONE mentoring group continued to run well with the young people enjoying many different activities some great cooking sessions and various crafts. The group also took part in a photographic project resulting in an exhibition at the local gallery. We have also done some outdoor sessions as well. Behaviour has been very positive with lots of good news stories from the kids.

We currently have nine young people attending this programme.

After lockdown in March we had to provide sessions online via Zoom, again this did not prove popular with the young people and attendance and participation did suffer.

We are at the time of writing this report struggling with ways to safely set up this group face to face as there are many factors going against us restarting.

We are constantly reviewing this situation and hope to restart ASAP.

CHURCH VISITS:

Some great sessions supporting young people in the different junior churches on a rotation have been taking place.

ECT has also continued to support Crockham hill and its messy church which has had lots of success and great attendances levels.

After lockdown visits where not possible so I have been trying to engage via various zoom services, I have also supported the Grace church with a holiday club over the summer.

YOUTH HOUSE GROUP:

This group has now finished due to most of the young people heading off to university.

However after lockdown I was able to bring this group back together via online Zoom sessions.

Camps:

Summer 2019 we took a group of 14 young people to the last ever Soul Survivor festival.

This was a great week with a hint of sadness as the end of an era for this camp. We shall be looking for a replacement camp for the future.

THE BRIDGE Youth Church:

This Youth service has been run throughout the year and stopped as a result of the Coronavirus lockdown. It has been designed with secondary school aged young people in mind but all are welcome.

The planning team have been able to make space for young people to really be involved and to sometimes lead the service.

It has run for one hour on the last Thursday of every month, and has seen good numbers attending.

After restrictions have been relaxed we are looking to restart this service every two weeks on a Sunday evening. This a joint run service between ECT, St Peter & St Paul, the Eden church and Grace Community church.

SCHOOLS WORK:

The school movie clubs continued to run well with great attendance up until lockdown, at present clubs are not permitted to run in the schools due to Covid19 restrictions. All the films shown are animated stories from the bible each are half an hour long we then do crafts to compliment the stories. (Crafts sessions only with after school clubs). Many of these stories have prompted the young people to engage in asking questions and I have been having some great discussions around them.

Attendance:

Crockham hill: after school club 9 attending (4 girls & 5 Boys).

Hever: after school club 9 attending (3 girls & 6 boys).

Four Elms: Lunch time club 15- 20 attending every week a mix of boys and girls.

Edenbridge Primary = lunch time club, this has changed to a games club as the film club was not working very well due to the schools staggered lunch rota. Approx 20-30 attending each of the two sessions.

*Anthony Shipwright
ECT Youth Worker*



ECT Youth Club 2019



*The BRIDGE Youth Service
Youth Church 2019*



*Soul Survivor 2019
Last ever festival*

THE HOLY TRINITY FLOWER ROTA TEAM

Well, it has certainly been a strange introduction to my first year running the Flower Rota!

Due to the pandemic, we have had no floral displays in Church since the end of March. Understandably it has been a disappointing time for all concerned, as I know the team of arrangers love decorating the Church and creating such lovely displays – much admired by the congregation and visitors alike.

Apart from our usual weekly arrangements, we had also been invited to contribute a window display towards the Edenbridge Parish Church's 900th Anniversary celebrations at the beginning of July, again sadly cancelled.

Let us hope that 'normal service will be resumed' as soon as possible! In the meantime, many thanks to all of the Team for their continuing support.

Annie Blissett

(Nicknamed "Captain Annie" by Rev. Sue!)

LOCAL MISSION REPORT

We have many new people in the village who have been welcomed by neighbours. At the moment they are not visited officially by Church members but received the newsletter while it was delivered. We keep in touch by phone with people we know who are unwell, bereaved or lonely and the Covid group led by Deborah Coen have been a life line to many in the village. We would like to record our thanks to Deborah and all her team. During the last few months we have been unable to do Messy Church for our children which is a concern, but Rev Sue keeps in touch by email and with the work sheets on Sunday.

THE PRAYER GROUP

Our faithful group starting meeting in Church in September following a break because of Covid, it was good to be back praying as a group. There are so many issues that need our prayer and also many people. The Church has remained open for times of private prayer but it is always good to have the support of others. Everyone is welcome to join us for this time of peace, readings and prayer.

Trish Proctor

Sept 2020

Children and Families

Messy Church, Sunday Club and Toddler Time

From Easter 2019 until lockdown this March we were running regular session of Messy Church in the school hall, providing a weekly Sunday Club if needed and a monthly Toddler Group for little ones along with their mum's or carers.

Messy Church was the strongest of these activities and we had a regular core group of families, along with a strong team of helpers, as we explored a Bible theme through craft, song and prayer. Along with of course tea at the end of the session.

Sunday Club has always been dependent on families with children attending the 10.00am service and it has been good to offer the possibility on a regular basis for the few who came. Whilst the numbers were never big we were beginning to see one or two more regular families attending services as well as the monthly Family Service.

Toddler time was again very small, but provided the opportunity of engaging with families who did not necessarily come on a Sunday.

Following lockdown and the subsequent restrictions relating to the Covid 19 pandemic all these activities have had to be put on hold as we are not able to use the school or provide suitable socially distanced accommodation within the church.

Contact with our 'families' has been by phone or email during this period which is far from ideal and I pray we will be able to re-start some form of family friendly worship again in the not too distant future.

Meantime my thanks to ALL who have been involved in any way with the younger members of our church and village community, along with their parents and carers.

Rev Sue

Links between Holy Trinity, Crockham Hill and All Saints, New Cross

1. Background

Our much-valued friendship with the parish of All Saints in New Cross remains stronger than ever. Reverend Sue Diggory and Church Wardens maintain links at a ministerial level whilst June Davies and David Hodges coordinate outreach work to support New Cross, with a particular focus on those in need.

Following the retirement of Father Owen, we have been grateful to Father John, Yvonne McFarlane and team for their invaluable support in ensuring that our donated items meet New Cross needs.

We were delighted to learn of the arrival of Father Grant at All Saints. Whilst the pandemic has prevented us from meeting him yet, we look forward to this in the near future.

2. Link activities

Our key outreach activity has been to collect and pass on to New Cross large amounts of clothing, bedding, towels, other household items and toys etc, generously donated by Crockham Hill parishioners and other members of the local community. Also, in some instances, financial donations have been made. When a specific need has been identified (for example a piano for the Hall or equipment for disabled people), we have always been able to meet these needs, thanks to local generosity.

In New Cross, donated items have been either passed directly to those in need, including the homeless, or sold in the shop at All Saints to support their Drop-in Centre which provides food and other essential support to the vulnerable.

Additional support activities for New Cross have included donating holiday clothes and funding to support Summer Holiday trips for disadvantaged children. Similarly, at Christmas we have provided gifts for children and adults. At Harvest Time we have been pleased to donate perishable and non- perishable food.

A number of our friends from New Cross, including Father John and Yvonne McFarlane, have been our welcome guests at our seasonal celebrations, such as our Hot Pot Supper and we have been pleased to welcome them in the village for informal visits. We have also much enjoyed our visits to their Church and Drop-in Centre.

3. Current update

We are thankful that, despite the current pandemic, our support for New Cross has continued unabated, including offering our usual harvest food donation. We are strongly committed to maintaining this support whatever challenges face us.

June Davies and David Hodges

Kongwa in Tanzania

1. Background

15 years ago a partnership began between the Dioceses of Rochester and of Mpwapwa in Tanzania. Since then parishes, schools and individuals in Rochester have explored how they can become involved with parishes and schools and other institutions in Mpwapwa, to help, share and learn from one another. They formed The Mpwapwa Partnership Group.

Following the 2015 Lent discussions on Poverty, the PCC decided to support St. Michael's Church in Kongwa, and then Mkwala School in Kongwa.

2. Committee

Our steering group, consisting of David Hodges (chairman), Sue Diggory, Jo Banks, Ali Cooper, June Davies, Sue and Jules Green, and Michael Court. They met on 10th June 2019, 30th September 2019, and 20th January 2020.

3. The Mpwapwa Partnership Group (MPG)

MPG is run by Stephen Barbor, with Silvie Barbor as secretary. They both attended a service at Holy Trinity on 14th July 2019, when they described their visit to Kongwa. Ali Cooper attends committee meetings of the Group, which met on 19th June 2019, 16th October 2019, 12th February 2020, and 8th June 2020 by Zoom. The next meeting will be on 7th October 2020.

The MPG regularly updates the handbook of advice for all those travelling and dealing with parishes and schools and other institutions in Mpwapwa. All payments of donations are made through the MPG for security reasons. Bishop Simon presented a certificate signed by Bishop James and Bishop Jacob linking Holy Trinity with St Michael's at the service on 16th June 2019.

£421 was raised by our congregation to alleviate the effects of a drought in Kongwa. Bishop Jacob decided to use the total funds – £6,517 - to give 2 bags of maize seed to each of the 150 Pastors and 600 Catechists across the Diocese. Two bags is sufficient seed to plant an acre of maize, with each seed potentially producing 2 or even 3 heads. As last year's harvest was so poor, many had to eat the maize that should have been set aside to plant for this year's harvest.

4. St Michael's Church in Kongwa.

St Michael's Church has a thriving, enthusiastic congregation of all ages. It is led by the Pastor – Rev. Canon Luzineth and his wife Dorcas, Chairperson Joyce, Treasurer Agnes, and Secretary Hope Ayoub. The Church is in the last stages of being rebuilt.

5. Mkwala School in Kongwa

Crockham Hill School is linked to Mkwala School in Kongwa, and Jo Banks is the School's link with Mkwala .

On 21st May 2019 Silvie Barbor visited the School, which is a 10 minute car ride from Kongwa. The new headteacher, Sifراسي, had been in post for a short time. There are 1095 pupils, 14 staff, and 7 classes; one class of 200 has 1 teacher! There are 98 four to five year olds in the nursery class. They also have just 230 desks (with at least 3 students per desk), so most sit on the floor. Children walk up to 6.5km to school. If they do not pass their last year's exams, they are unable to go on to secondary school. The children arrive at 7am. No lunch is provided, nor water. The school cannot afford water tanks. We have made several enquiries to find out the cost of both water repairs and improvements. £775 had been reserved for water repairs for the School.

6. Women's enterprise in Kongwa

Holy Trinity's Women's Christian Fellowship donated £100 to help women in Kongwa purchase chickens for eggs, and to breed more chickens. It is led by Hope Ayoub. On 25th September she said they had 12 adult chickens and 10 young chickens; In July they sold 20 chickens. 10 chickens unfortunately had died of disease.

7. Fundraising

Our Fundraising subcommittee, comprising Ali Cooper and Jo Banks, is led by June Davies. The proceeds are currently used to fund trainee priests. They are sent through the MPG. A Fashion show and shopping evening raised £1,029 on 7th May 2019. An Auction of Promises in April 2020 had to be abandoned because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

8. Sponsorship for priest's training

We sponsor Jeremia Isaka, from St Michael's, while he trains as a priest at St. Philips Theological College. He started in August 2018. Jules and Sue Green funded the leadership training of Neema Zakayo at St.Philips. She started in October 2017, and graduated on 7th June with a Certificate in Theology. She has returned to her Deanery in Mpwapwa Diocese to minister as a catechist (teacher/lay leader). Agripa Ndatila expects that she will train for ordination when the time is right.

9. Visiting Kongwa

Sue and Richard Diggory again had to postpone their visit Tanzania last May. They hope to visit Kongwa when Covid-19 is no longer a danger. £3,000 remains in the PCC bank a/c for their trip.

10. Communications

Sadly, email communications from Kongwa dried up during 2018. The catechist Mamimi, who we emailed had been sick.

We continue to send greetings at the major festivals with no response. We have tried to find English speaking contacts in both the School and at St Michaels. We have used Whatsapp spasmodically as a simpler way of communicating with both school and church. Recently Zoom meetings of the MPG have been able to include Agripa and Bishop Jacob.

11. Advertising our link

Photographs of our Kongwa link are on News in Pictures on our Website - www.crockhamhillchurch.org.

*David Hodges & Michael Court
26 September 2020*

Women's Christian Fellowship

Our group has obviously not met very often since our last report

Our usual summer service and lunch at Trish's was on the theme 'Friendship' and Rev'd Sue kindly came to talk to us.

Our Advent service was at Marnie's. With the theme 'New Beginnings' we looked at how to be positive and make a fresh start when life seems tough. Little did we know!!

This year the Women's World Day of Prayer service was written by the women of Zimbabwe. Hosted by St John's Marsh Green, as always it provided an opportunity for people from all the churches in Edenbridge Churches in Covenant to meet and worship together. We all came away with a sisal plait to use as a bookmark.

As always, we are greatly indebted to members who offer hospitality for our meetings and to those who willingly prepare a talk, for example on St Valentine.

We had a very good meeting with two of the Tunbridge Wells Street Pastors who inspired us with an explanation of their work. We were able to make a donation to them and use the collection of 'coffee money' at each meeting to also donate a place to Crisis at Christmas and to Bridges and The Parish Nurse.

Watch out for when our meetings start again. You don't have to belong to Holy Trinity church, there is nothing to 'join' and occasional visitors are always most welcome.

Susan Cash
October 2020

Deanery Synod

The next Synod meeting is on 6.10.20 at 8pm by ZOOM! (St.Stephen's Tonbridge)

There has been limited activity for obvious reasons.

Items to be discussed on 6.10.20.

- Presentation Bishop of Tonbridge.
- Minutes of meeting 25.1.20.
- Finance.
- General Synod Matters.
- Area Deans Report.
- Standing Committee.

The next meeting is on Saturday 30.1.21. 9.30am St.Phillip's Church Tonbridge.
Details to be published

David Hodges
September 2020

Parish Safeguarding

At Holy Trinity, Crockham Hill, we recognise that the few who are determined to harm children or adults, deliberately seek out groups or organisations where they can meet children or other vulnerable people. The Church is particularly vulnerable to these people. Creating and maintaining a safeguarding culture will discourage them from becoming involved for the wrong reasons and make it difficult for them to harm or abuse children or adults if they do.

As designated Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) I work with the incumbent and PCC. I am also the DBS administrator for ensuring that all church officers who work with children and/or vulnerable adults as well as all members of the PCC have the correct recruitment documentation including references and safeguarding training, in line with House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment practice.

Action: Further work will be needed to continue to review practice in line with changing diocesan guidance.

The following are displayed in the porch at Church

- A formal statement of adoption of the House of Bishops 'Promoting a Safer Church; safeguarding policy statement' is signed on behalf of the PCC and presented at the APCMContact details of the Churchwarden and any other local leaders,
- Contact details of the PSOs the Diocesan Safeguarding Team – including phone, email and website details and Information about where to get help with child and adult safeguarding issues, domestic abuse and key helplines e.g. ChildLine
- A hard copy of the Diocese Safeguarding Manual 'A Safer Church' which acts as our Parish Safeguarding Handbook. Copies of our Safeguarding policies for children, vulnerable adults and domestic violence as well as whistle blowing.

It is important to:

- deal promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse in accordance with the relevant policy and practice guidance and in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser;
- Promote an environment, which is welcoming and respectful and enables safeguarding
- Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser;
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- Ensure that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser;
- Comply with all data protection legislation especially in regard to storing information about the 'church workforce'. Including volunteers and any safeguarding records;
- Provide an "activity risk assessment" tool for each those involved in activities associated with either children or vulnerable adults, and run in the name of the Church.

Review and Report Progress by:

- Inviting the PSO to regularly report on safeguarding in the parish. Safeguarding has been added as a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting.
- Reporting to the APCM in an annual report in relation to safeguarding.

Jo Naismith

1st October 2020

Holy Trinity Church, Crockham Hill - Music Report 2020

For much of the year since my last report in late March 2019, the Music at Holy Trinity, both congregational and choral, continued to be one of the important features of the main Sunday morning service.

The enthusiastic and talented group of singers who come together to make up the choir for the Festivals and special occasions during the year, once again gave their time and energy to enhance the services at Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and of course the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols and on Christmas Day. I was particularly grateful to the choir for their moving performance of my short anthem *The Cross of Wood*, written especially for the Remembrance service, in memory of my father. The Carol Service was, as always, a very special occasion, with an augmented adult choir plus senior members of the Apollo Youth Choir.

None of us could have foreseen what 2020 was to unleash on us all, but plans were all made, music chosen and rehearsals arranged for the choir for Easter Day, when everything came to an abrupt halt after the service on 15 March. The following service should have been Mothering Sunday, but instead this had to be cancelled and the lockdown began on 23 March.

After a couple of weeks without a formal 10 a.m. service we began our first online Zoom service – appropriately enough – on Easter Day. My role as organist became to record the hymns and organ music for the various parts of the online service and to act as a sort of studio manager on Sunday mornings for the 10 a.m. service, cueing the music and then later, visual material as well, as necessary.

After more than six months away from the church, the first 10 a.m. service was held there on 4 October for Harvest Festival. Although the congregation was not permitted to sing, the ever-loyal choir - with suitable distancing with regard to seating arrangements - was able to bring singing back into the church once again. The division of the singers into two groups of six at the front and six at the rear

inevitably limited what we could do, but the excitement of being able to sing and have music in church again was palpable.

I would like to thank the Revd Sue Diggory, the Church Wardens and Hon. Treasurer, as well as several members of the congregation for all their support for music, both when we were in church and more recently during the Zoom era. Your support is very much appreciated.

*Graham Dinnage,
October 2020*