

## Parish Priest's Report for the APCM 2022

Dear Friends,

I would like to begin my report, as always, by thanking you all for the love, kindness and friendship you have shown me and my family. Your love is so encouraging, helping us to enjoy God's ministry in this lovely corner of Kent. The enthusiasm I feel throughout our church fellowship is due to your loving and prayerful commitment to God's Church here at St Andrew's.

As we reflect on this past year, I would like to stress that although 2021 was not as difficult as 2020, the pandemic still brought anxiety and life with many frustrations. But we have learned to adapt, to Zoom, sing through a mask, and much more. As we continued with the Lord's work. We have remained focused, under God's direction, in mission, ministry and worship. One of the most valuable things we have seen over the past year is the real strength across the church of our personal friendships, real friendships. These are the foundations on which we built our mission and ministry in the absence of the 'normal' things we do and from them we built new relationships. For example, working with our local schools, our local community in Reading Street and Churches Together in Broadstairs. Phone calls, emails, texts, the weekly Keeping Connected news letter, physically distanced walks, a lot of laughter amidst the frustration and sometimes tears.

Our deepest desire even when we couldn't physically sit around the same table and share bread and wine together was to be strengthened by God and one another for the journey ahead. It still remains our purpose to live out the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, in every area of our lives.

As I reflect I recognise the joy of mission, ministry and worship here, besides our prayer for and with people. We share our God-given life of faith wherever we are, strengthened by the presence of Christ in our lives.

The message that has kept us strong and focused is found in the words in the Book of Joshua which says:

**"Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)**

Therefore as we reflect on this past year a significant event that took place was the review of our Mission Action Plan called "*Continuing The Way Ahead*". This was done following The PCC Away Day which was held in September and led by Neville Emslie. It gave the PCC the opportunity to pray and reflect together on the way forward for the mission and ministry at St Andrew's Church.

Here's a snapshot to remind you of the focal points for mission and ministry :

- Placing schools at the heart of our mission with creative connections between churches and schools.

Investing in our engagement with baptism families to spark an amazing adventure with Jesus Christ.

Supporting members of the Junior Church, Grapevine and Messy Church in their weekly teaching.

To help our Congregation to develop their understanding of Scripture and prayer.

To use our Community Hall for the benefit of the Community  
To Promote friendship evangelism

To continue to support local and missions abroad.

To foster a spirit of generosity in our church which will result in higher levels of giving to support God's ministry at St Andrew's

We pray that as we move into the future that God will help us to fulfill his vision for St Andrew's.

Thank you to everyone who work so hard (both in more visible roles, and behind the scenes) to witness to God's love at St Andrew's and to further the mission of His Church.

This year the efforts of the Parochial Church Council has been blessed and they have blessed us in the role they hold. The dedication and efforts of its members have been exceptional. On behalf of our church, Thank you.

We recognise the unfailing service of the Church Officers: Churchwardens Richard & Jenny, PCC Secretary Janet, PCC Treasurer Richard and thank them for their loyal contribution through mutual cooperation, sterling work and passionate concern for God's church here at St Andrew's. We include our thanks to the Parish office volunteers led by Lee & Sam for their time and effort in that role. They are workers in God's vineyard.

A Reader has a role within the life of any church which depends on their personal faith and walk with God. In Michael Hawthorne I am blessed to have such a man to assist and lift my own ministry. Michael is Christ's gift to St Andrew's church. On behalf of everyone we thank God for your ministry Michael.

And so we also thank God for you, Sharon, Fiona & Maxine, and all the helpers who will lead and teach the Junior Church and those who help with Messy Church. You have a ministry which brings Jesus into the lives of the future of our church.

I believe I am speaking for us all in saying we recognise the great debt of thanks that is owed to all who contribute to our being able to worship at St Andrew's. I pay tribute to our organist, the choir director and the choir who aid and uplift our services every Sunday. Also our

sacristans, our intercessors, the pastoral team led by Di Springett, as well as those who administer home communion. There are also the ladies who arrange the flowers, and our Verger . We thank and value the team of helpers who clean the church and community hall; Pauline who was our fundraising coordinator. Their unsung generous work is their offering to God.

I record too my thanks to the Voyagers, the Women's Group for their contribution to the life of the Church. My thanks to all the various committees we have in our church.

The on-going governance of St Andrew's has largely been undertaken by the Leadership Team who have met fortnightly, taking account of the various directives and guidance of both Ecclesiastical and Governmental agencies. Our thanks are to each member of that team for your faithfulness to Christ as the mission and ministry of the church has continued throughout these challenging and extraordinary times.

Annual reports will always find some unintentional failing to comment or commend someone's help and service. As God so freely forgives any inadequacies I ask you to forgive me if I have failed to publicly acknowledge someone. But we know that God himself has seen what has been done.

Sadly for some of our church family we have seen the loss of loved ones. As we mourn the loss of Brenda Collins, Malcolm Bruce & Graham Marshall our hearts go out to all who daily carry the heavy burden of grief.

Although we have been through a tough time, we have to remember that we are a people of hope who are called to continue to worship, to pray and witness to our faith in the risen Lord Jesus, whatever the circumstances of our lives. Above all we remember the joy of meeting together again. Let us encourage one another to gather again as one family of faith to offer our worship to our Lord and our God who loved us first.

In closing I profoundly wish to express our gratefulness as a family for the love and friendship we share with you. Your faith, your love in Christ, is always with me, as you stand beside me in the faith of the Gospel of Christ.

With much love

Philip