

OCTOBER

2020



All Saints' Church
Preston on Tees

Parish Vacancy Update

The process of securing a new vicar is, first and foremost, a spiritual exercise. It does, of course, feature many very practical matters and these include the preparation of our parish profile, advertising the vacancy, shortlisting candidates, and interview after which the Bishop of Durham makes his appointment.

As we are a united Benefice with St Mary's, Long Newton the process naturally involves some collaboration. One of our church wardens, Martin Howard, has liaised throughout with the wardens at St Mary's to help co-ordinate our joint efforts in this exercise. He has also been in consistent contact with our Archdeacon who offers assistance during the vacancy period, and we are tremendously grateful to Martin for all that he does for our church family.

Preparation of our parish profile – the document that prospective candidates will read – is now well advanced. One of its strengths is the fact that many people with different insights into All Saints' have been involved in its drafting, and even more have contributed to its character and content. Thank you to each of you who responded prayerfully and thoughtfully to our request for input, as well as to Shiromi Davison who collated and anonymised all responses before sharing them with members of PCC.

Matt Falcus has brilliantly formatted the current text of our parish profile so the document now appears thoroughly engaging, and will encourage prospective candidates to read it carefully and consider us prayerfully. We really appreciate Matt's expertise and work on this PCC meeting.

update the latest version of our parish profile will have been shared at the September PCC meeting.

At the time of writing it remains the case that, due to ongoing Covid-19 related uncertainties, Bishop Paul is not agreeing any dates for the interview of potential vicars. During this time of waiting, let us continue to pray about the appointment process, that we would correctly identify who God is calling to be our next vicar.



Scott Linnett
Parish Representative

How We Shifted Church Online

The lockdown which started in March left All Saints' and its scattered congregation in search of some way to continue meeting and worshipping. By the end of the month a video appeared on the church's YouTube channel featuring a block of worship from the Daniels family and a message from John Lambert.

Thereafter, each Sunday a new video was produced, and by 24th May we also started publishing a weekly 9am Service video, too.

Over the course of this pandemic our Sunday video output (plus Midweek Worship, Youth Updates and live Morning Prayer videos) has developed and, we hope, become more enjoyable, professional and better at connecting us.

The work is spearheaded by Adam Burns, who produces the 10.30am videos, and myself producing the 9am

videos. But it is, in fact, a huge team effort involving many people working to very strict deadlines.

The 9am videos feature some of the structure and liturgy that is familiar to this congregation. Each week members are filmed leading the service, worship, prayers and reading the Bible passages.

Meanwhile the 10.30am videos have featured worship by everything from solo musicians to socially distanced bands.

Then there are the updates from our Youth, Time with Gus (our popular Childrens' puppet), and the sermon, by our excellent preaching team, which is shared across both services.

Producing each video can take anything up to ten hours per week, and we often grapple with slow upload speeds, computer issues and that ever pressing deadline. Yet this is essential and rewarding work which we know makes a big difference in uniting us in fellowship

and worship during these difficult times. It is especially important when we hear stories of how many people across the country have watched an online church service, and we think of those in our community who may be finding out more about Jesus.

Churches must all adapt to provide online content going forward. As we start to hold services again in the building, the team are now looking into the technology to transition our pre-recorded output into live-streamed services.



Matt Falcus

Services in Church and Online in September & October

“It is more difficult to organise peace than to win a war” said Aristotle, but then he never dealt with bringing church services together during lockdown.

We have all had a steep learning curve during this past month as we tried to run services in the building and online. We haven't always got it right, and we are sorry for any confusion and extra work caused.

We are so grateful to God for the amazingly gifted people who have helped us to produce services online over the lockdown months – leaders, preachers, musicians, technical folk, and administrators – your skills and patience have kept us aware of God's presence with us as we sing a new song in the strange lands of our living rooms. A heartfelt Thank You to you all!

So it is unsurprising that after the challenges of the current situation people are tired and we need grace and rest.

We have now had a chance to discuss together honestly how we want to *be* as God's family together and what is sustainable and are grateful to Paul for helping us focus.

PCC reviewed services this month and has voted to spend substantially on equipment for live streaming and training a small team to do this. The installation and training will be done by Adam Burns who does this professionally.

To give us a chance to enter this new phase well, we need to pare back the services online and live to one structured service. This service will be at 9 am but will have sung worship leaders from the whole team, and the fourth Sunday of the month will involve our older children and young people.

There will inevitably be questions about this, but we hope that this will actually simplify things for the time-being.

We are one Body in Christ so we hope that this is something that you can bear with as we learn this new way of *being* together.

This October, we ask you, church family, to act with grace and love towards each other. Jesus repeatedly reminded his close disciples to love one another, repeatedly because it's hard to do, and we can be negative so easily, especially when we are tired.

Thank you

Martin Howard and Karen Killick
Churchwardens



In God's Good Time...

As I write this, I have just watched a friend's consecration as Bishop. This was planned for just after lockdown disrupted everything.

1. Without the delay, it would not be streamed;
2. Without lockdown, I would not have been available to see it;
3. The Queen's letter appointing her was already out of date but it was ok.

This relates to St Paul's... 'How?'

Delay or God's timing?

The pandemic has delayed most things. We can choose to be upset and wait for a return to 'normality' or we can choose to ask ourselves 'What grace will God present us in this uncharted territory?' As plans are affected, I am uplifted to hear our team-members ask this question.

Sometimes we need to be told that our trust in God is far better than our plans ever were.

Disruption or God's 'New Thing'?

Without lockdown, I wouldn't have the opportunity to watch. Do we see opportunity? Are we available for intervention? It is such a privilege that we *get* to grasp God's opportunities! I have a picture from my mum of a sailboat written on it is: 'We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.'

We catch the wind of the Spirit. We can see where the Spirit leads and adjust our sails when we are available and adaptable. If not, we exhaust ourselves fighting for what we want. What is important in all of this, is that we don't lose sight of the initial vision to be the beating heart of God's love in that place.

Frustration or Grace?

The Queen's letter was sent to John Sentamu. It didn't lose its validity, but it did jar. It reminded us that this was planned to happen differently. We need to communicate even more effectively and with grace at times of disruption.

In six month's time from now I will be on placement at St Paul's. Initially the plans looked straightforward. Now it is more hazy. But God's got it. We know that wherever the Spirit blows, we can adjust sails and catch the wind!



Paul Arnold
Planting Curate

Back in the Church Building

6th September 2020 and we were back! We had been counting the days. Although we had enjoyed our online services during the Covid 19 lockdown, it was returning to All Saints Church that was our hope of some normality in this serious time that we are all going through.

The welcome was as warm as ever, and although we were masked and socially distanced, there was a great sense of family coming to worship together. We were blessed with John and Kathie's presence too. Gently guided to our seats, as eyes smiled and we absorbed the outstanding beauty of the new altar area. The light from the magnificent window shone out towards us and seemed to draw us to the Lord.

Our communion was well organised and, although we were only able to take the wafers at the moment, it still was very meaningful. The most difficult part of the service, for us personally, was not being able to "belt out" our songs of praise but we were able to hum along to our musicians and absorb the words displayed on our newly installed screens.

We shared the peace, as one, from where we stood. It didn't seem to matter that we were unable to touch. The Spirit of the Lord was there surrounding us, giving us hope and strengthening us to face the future with Jesus in our hearts.

A huge thank you to all who have worked so hard behind the scenes, during this crisis, to make our church so safe and so welcoming to all. Come and join us in our worship but remember to book first.

Every blessing.



Sue and Peter Ireland

SUNDAYS OCTOBER 2020

SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER 9am

"We Are...Reconciled"

Ephesians 2:11-22

John 4:19-30

Preacher: Scott Linnett

SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 9am

"We Are...Loved"

Ephesians 3:14-19

Mark 12:28-34

Preacher: Amy Burns

SUNDAY 18 OCTOBER 9am

"We Are...Called"

Ephesians 4:1-7

Mark 1:14-20

Preacher: David Munby

SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER 9am

"We Are...Unified"

Ephesians 4:11-16

John 17:20-26

Preacher: Paul Arnold

SERMON SERIES OCTOBER ALL SAINTS'



" We are...."

MORNING PRAYER



**EVERY WEEKDAY VIA ZOOM please
contact the office if you would like
to join in by Zoom or phone**

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

Our Annual Church Meeting APCM will take place on Saturday 10 October at 2pm. This will be a meeting in the church building and also on Zoom. If you wish to attend either in person or on Zoom please contact the office.