

## **Minister's Report to APCM March 2022**

A great deal has happened since last year's APCM. Just like the nation, we have gradually come out of lockdown and there has been a bewildering amount of paperwork coming down from the government, the Church of England and the diocese as each step has been taken. I am deeply indebted to Heather Lovell who has reviewed all this and presented good and clear reports to the PCC. Our policy is gradually to remove the restrictions as people feel safe to do so, reviewing each step as we go carefully.

We acknowledge that there are people who will not return to church until it is exactly like it was before lockdown and there are those who continue to be nervous about mixing with other people, through to people who see the restrictions as little more than tiresome. It has been our desire to make sure everybody can worship as freely as possible and that everybody feels safe and is safe. I count it as a blessing from the Lord that thus far nobody who has been directly involved in Christ Church Moreton Hall has died during the pandemic.

We have deliberately set out a programme to teach about restoration and rebuilding. In the autumn months we looked at the book of Nehemiah. In this book Nehemiah brought the pilgrim people of God back to Israel and then set about restoring the walls of Jerusalem so that the people could be free. This has clearly inspired many of our church members and leaders as people have returned and new ministries have started.

I am very grateful to those who have started coffee after church – Mervyn and Margarita Baxter and their team; those who have restarted our coffee club – Ros Lilley and her team; those who are organising the ladies' meetings; and of course, those who have pioneered Stay and Play – Laura Goodfellow, Mervyn and Margarita, Maureen Burman, Ken Robins and Pam (Laura's Mum in law). This has been a terrific success and we are very grateful for it.

We are also very appreciative that almost all our hire groups have returned and, in fact, in some areas we have new hire groups as well. Once again, a huge tribute should be paid to Heather Lovell who has managed the hires very well and made sure everybody is safe and properly regulated.

We have followed all the improvements in Safeguarding and, once again, Heather and the PCC have been key in this as we have made sure that everybody involved in all aspects are properly looked after.

We have also restarted our Sunday School and a big tribute goes to Simon Burdon, Carol and Jocelyn Holland and everyone who helps with that.

Alex and Vatha have transitioned from our on-line only Sunday morning work to the Kid's Church which meets on the third Sunday of each month and which has been very well supported. Vatha also plays a key role in supporting and providing information for the Sunday School.

On top of all this, I was deeply touched by the gift day which we had in October. The whole church gave as generously as they could and our financial situation has improved a great

deal. We owe a great debt to Colleen Hart for her work as Treasurer and Charlotte as she kindly took on this role for a number of months during 2021. We are very grateful to Jonathan Corwin who has now taken over this vital task and has adapted to a new role very well indeed.

We are seeing a change in our churchwardens. Jonathan Corwin is going to be our Treasurer and Heather is standing down although she continues her ministry in music, and with safeguarding and also the administration of hall hiring. Heather and Jonathan have been wonderful examples to us all of tremendous leadership as well as being a brilliant support to me during these difficult times. We look forward to them still being very active in church life as we welcome a new churchwarden in Graham Unsworth and a continuing assistant churchwarden in Roger Farnell. Graham will focus on the administrative role of the churchwarden and Roger will focus on the building aspects of the church with support from Jonathan Corwin.

The PCC has played a full part in steering the church through these dark days. So I must mention Tisha Mortlock, Claire Johnston, Sam Reid, Adrian Lomas & Julian Kearsley who has done sterling work as our secretary. We hope to welcome Cheryl Unsworth as our new Secretary later this evening.

Lesley our Parish nurse deserves a paragraph all to herself. No words can really do justice to all the work she has done for so many for so long.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to everyone who has led and / or preached in our morning services - David, Lizzie, Liz, Helen, Trish, Heather. We are especially grateful to Liz for all the time and care she has given supporting us at Christ Church over the past few years, and we wish her and the whole family every blessing as they move on to new endeavours. I am also tremendously grateful to all those people who have faithfully fulfilled their roles as stewards; readers; prayers; music group team; p.a. and power-point operators. Special thanks must go to Jonathan and Tim for their hard work making services available online week by week.

It has been a very difficult time to provide good worship with limited numbers, the confines of Covid and people wearing facemasks, but as the weeks have passed our worship has got better and better and truly honouring to God and we are in a much better position in every way than we were twelve months ago. God has blessed us abundantly and we are truly grateful to Him

*Jonathan Ford*  
*March 2022*