

**St Timothy's Church**  
Passion for God - Compassion for people



**St Timothy's Church  
Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
Sunday 25 April 2021**

**Annual report**

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# Annual Report from the Priest in Charge

## COVID-19

This is inevitably a Report dominated by the Covid pandemic. Just over a year ago, on March 23rd last year, the Prime Minister announced a national lockdown, which included the closure of all places of worship. The following Sunday we made our first hesitant steps into providing worship online. As our Archbishops said: "Being a part of the Church of England is going to look very different in the days ahead. Our life is going to be less characterised by attendance at church on Sunday, and more characterised by the prayer and service we offer each day. We may not be able to pray with people in the ways that we are used to, but we can certainly pray for people. And we can certainly offer practical care and support."

Since then all of our Sunday morning services have been broadcast live on Facebook, with other events and activities on Zoom. It's been a very steep learning curve for all of us, and I'm incredibly grateful to everyone who has made it possible.

Eventually, after two months of lockdown, May 2020 saw the first easing of restrictions. Then on 4th July, 15 weeks after all worship in Church was suspended, limited numbers of people were once more allowed to attend Church services, with restrictions including no singing and social distancing. From August, those attending were also required to provide contact details and wear a facemask.

From September it started to look as though things were improving. We continued to offer a mixture of online and in-person activities and services. The numbers of people attending Sunday worship in person was still quite small. About 25 adults typically, sitting in household groups and socially distanced. Most people continued to stay at home and join in online. But even though it was strange not being able to sing, and wearing masks, I was glad we could offer at least the option of worship in person through Advent and at Christmas. The first Covid vaccinations were also administered in December, to the over 80s and health / social care staff. So 2020 ended with some sense of hope.

But December also saw a rapid rise in infections, hospital admissions and case rates across the country. This was attributed to a new variant of COVID-19, believed to be up to 50 per cent more transmissible. On 4th January the Government announced a new national lockdown. This time we were given the choice of whether or not to close the Church. When the church leadership team discussed it, we decided to go for safety. The rise in infections linked to a new variant of the virus was a real cause of concern. And hospital admissions were as high as last spring, when we were told to close. So we decided to continue with live streaming, and to suspend 'on site' worship and all midweek face-to-face activities until the situation improved.

As you know, the Government has published a 4 Step “Roadmap” out of Lockdown. The first easing of restrictions was on March 29<sup>th</sup>, the day after Palm Sunday. We decided we were ready to open again, and it was a great joy to see people in person again on Good Friday and Easter morning.

The Government plan will see restrictions lifted gradually at 5 week intervals, if preconditions are met. By the time of our Annual Meeting, all retail should be open, and hospitality venues should be offering table service outdoors. From May 17<sup>th</sup> we will finally be allowed to meet in small groups indoors. All remaining restrictions are scheduled to end on June 21<sup>st</sup> - and I’m sure like me you are looking forward to being allowed to sing again!

I know I’m not alone in having found this last year really difficult. My experience of Church has always had two elements – meeting with other Christians face to face and in small groups, and coming together in a Church building for worship and celebrations. But for so much of the last year, neither of these has been possible. Instead we’ve had to adapt as best we can. Only leaving the house when strictly necessary. Phone calls and online conversations rather than meeting in person. Live streaming services on Facebook and Zoom instead of shared worship in our church building. Even when we have been able to hold services in person, legal restrictions have limited what we can do, and the numbers who can attend. Most of our church family have relied on broadcast services throughout the pandemic.

Our church leadership has spent many evenings in front of screens, as we’ve held online meetings to work out how best to respond. The PCC Standing Committee (Clergy, Lay Reader, Churchwardens, Deputy Churchwardens and PCC Secretary) have been joined by our ministry team (our 3 paid youth and childrens ministers, and Ellen Makin our senior worship leader). Recently Aidan Melville (communications) has also joined this group. In the first lockdown we met weekly, then every three weeks since then. Thank you to all of you for your time, commitment and wisdom.

I want to particularly thank our youth and childrens leaders. Alex, Becki, Kate and the many volunteers have done astonishingly well in providing streamed services, socially distant activities and resources for our young people and church families. Thank you to everyone who has been involved and helped with this. It really has made a huge difference.

And equally I want to thank Aidan Melville, Chris Porter, Andy Milner and everyone who has helped sort out the technology. Aidan and Chris have given hours of time so that we can broadcast our services on Facebook and make them accessible for people to “catch up” afterwards. Then, as it became clear that our existing tech wasn’t up to the demands we were placing on it, they built a new PC, installed video presentation software and matched it up to cameras and microphones. Andy has

organised our “church by phone” service, allowing people who don’t use computers to listen to sermons by calling a local telephone number. Thank you, thank you for all you have done, and continue to do.

Even if all the Lockdown restrictions are lifted as planned, we expect to continue to stream services online as well. That will only be possible if more people offer to learn how to use the system in Church, and to join a rota for Sunday mornings. Please think and pray about whether this is something you can help with. We do need more people involved in this important ministry.

### **A new beginning: “The United Benefice of St Timothy and The Vine”**

We have known for a long time that St Timothy’s would need to partner with another local Church. Well before I came to Sheffield, Phil Townsend had discussions with Diocesan staff and Deanery colleagues about possible options. One of my first tasks was to convene a meeting of our local “mission partnership” Churches (St John’s Ranmoor, St Mark’s Broomhill, St Mary’s Walkley, St Timothy’s, and The Vine) to explore how to take this forward.

It’s been quite a slow process. But gradually we started to sense that a partnership between us and The Vine might work well for both Parishes. We suggested it to our congregations, continued to explore and pray, and eventually reached agreement. Last October there was a joint meeting of our PCC with The Vine PCC, attended by the Archdeacon.

There we agreed

1. That the two Parishes should come together as a new Benefice (i.e. share a Vicar)
2. That Rev. Will Briggs should be appointed as Vicar of the two Parishes
3. That the vicarage of St Timothy's should be the official parsonage house

We also asked for the current Vine vicarage (formerly the St Stephen's vicarage) to be retained for use for the work of God in the community. This might be, for example as a mission house or accommodation for a curate.

These proposals were formally approved at separate meetings of the two PCCs. The Diocese then began the process of creating a “Pastoral Scheme” to bring them into effect.

Since then we have had joint meetings between representatives of the two Parishes to look at some of the details of how the new structure will work. Will Briggs has preached at our Sunday service, and led a joint Lent Course on the Letter to the Romans for both Parishes. I have regular conversations with him online, and he has started to meet some of our ministry team. After the Annual Meeting, we hope he will

attend our PCC and leadership team meetings, so that the “handover” is as smooth as possible when I step down.

The other good news is that the Diocese has agreed to appoint a Curate to work alongside Will from July. Curates usually spend three years working alongside an experienced priest, gaining skills and experience. Amy Hole shared a video introducing herself to us just before Christmas. She is married to Toby, who is Vicar of St Chad’s Woodseats, and they have three children. We look forward to welcoming her to St Timothy’s soon.

## **Moving On**

This is my last annual report to St Timothy’s. I was appointed in June 2018 as “Interim” Priest in Charge for a fixed term of three years, so the “end date” has always been in my diary. As that date draws nearer, I’m sad to be leaving. Our time here has been very different from anything any of us might have expected, but it has been a real joy to be part of St Timothy’s, and we will miss you. Thank you all for your support and encouragement and prayers – especially since the start of the Covid pandemic last March.

Ruth retired from her role as Head of Chaplaincy for the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals at the end of March. I will also retire from full time paid ministry when we leave St Timothy’s. We plan to move to our house in Sapcote – a village in South West Leicestershire, and take the rest of the year to settle in. After that, I expect to look for a part time role as a self supporting minister.

Meanwhile:

May the Lord bless you and keep you;  
the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace;  
now and always, Amen. (Numbers 6:24–26).

Rev Malcolm Lambert

## **Churchwardens’ report: Fabric, goods and ornaments**

The inventory of church requisites was checked in September.

The routine overview and upgrading of the fabric of the church continues to be overseen by Kate Rodgers-Kay as the Estates and Hall Manager and Graham Cavill.

These two also carry out much of the work that needs doing. We are indebted to their commitment to this work.

At the Operations/Leadership Team meetings we check the progress on the quinquennial report. Due to Covid-19 and the retirement of our quinquennial inspector we were unable to have our quinquennial inspection that was due last year. In February 2021 we appointed a new quinquennial inspector, Anya Sutton of Thread Architects. A date is yet to be booked for this but provisionally we are looking to this autumn. Our PCC also agreed to use Thread Architects as our church architects going forward.

LED bulbs have been used when bulbs have been replaced.

We have secured an assisted grant with South Yorkshire Ambulance service, 999 scheme for a public access defibrillator. An electrician's quote is required for its fitting before a faculty application can be submitted.

We are awaiting faculty approval to replace the lighting in the chancel and transepts.

We are awaiting faculty approval for the provision of a bicycle shelter on the hall exterior.

Work carried out this year:

Fixing of the fence along the side of church which adjoins our neighbours after three fence post rotted through and the fence collapsed

Continuation of the treatment of Japanese Knot Weed

Guttering replaced on side of chancel and pointing.

The Community Hall has not had work undertaken in 2020 other than routine maintenance.

Jack Hiscock and James Saunders

## **Churchwardens Health and Safety Report - Covid-19 Special**

The Annual Report doesn't usually have a section in it for Health and Safety, thankfully because we don't tend to have many issues! This year however has been different for us all and hopefully this report should give some assurance around the steps we have taken and the work put in place during the pandemic.

With the first national lockdown beginning on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, church meetings were all suspended immediately and the leadership team moved all their meetings online. At the same time planning started to allow for online worship with initial services being streamed from laptops and smartphones. Risk Assessments were drawn up for these services in line with suggestions made by the Church of England, and national guidelines on social distancing and mask wearing were followed (thankfully those leading a service aren't required to mask up!).

As restrictions increased from 29<sup>th</sup> March and church buildings were completely closed, all services were streamed from homes or by lone individuals in the building. Staff at this point were expected to work at home with the office closed (where not furloughed). Inspections of the church were undertaken during this period by church staff to ensure the ongoing safety and upkeep of the building.

Churches were able to return to live streaming from inside the building on 12<sup>th</sup> July with a return to the initial risk assessment planned during March. When we were eventually able to have a congregation return to the building numbers were capped and pre-booking was required. All attending were expected to abide by social distancing rules and mask wearing and were required to sign Test and Trace form or use the NHS Covid app to register their presence in the building.

Youth and Children's work was able to resume alongside our support groups of Tiddlers and Tuesday Social Club. All church groups provided a Covid based risk assessment and followed national guidance. We had a single Covid outbreak (an outbreak being classed nationally as more than one case in a workplace) with the two individuals being a married couple. This was acted on swiftly and reported to NHS England and individuals were notified for self-isolation purposes; no further infections were reported to the church. Around this time, staff were allowed to return to use the Church Office and national guidance on Covid secure office working was followed.

Churches had a further closure due to our local Tier level with services resuming over Christmas. These services had booking run via Eventbrite with a maximum church attendance of 40 (allowing for a few extra 'float' tickets and those involved in running the services). We entered the New Year in a third lockdown with services (at time of writing) currently closed, but we are looking forward to having a congregation back in church over Holy Week.

I am aware that as the Health and Safety Officer I will have irritated many church staff over the last 12 months but I wish to thank them all for their resilience and willingness to abide by national guidance and regulation and being so speedy(!) in writing up Risk Assessments for their groups. Thanks must also go to all of you who have attended services in person for sticking to rules and making life so much easier



for the church leadership by doing this. I look forward to seeing you all return to our Covid-safe Church!

May the 2 meter church measuring stick live long in its infamy only.

Jack Hiscock  
Church Warden – Health and Safety

## Deanery Synod report

There have been two meetings since the PCC elections in September 2020. The November meeting focussed on discussing the impact of the global pandemic with reports from Christian churches around the world.

There was also discussion about how to build a network of eco churches in our deanery and a reminder that Sheffield is now registered as an Eco Diocese. There's lots of information about this on the diocese website.

And there was a reminder about **Living in Love and Faith** which is a new publication from the Church of England, on the topic of gender, identity and sexuality which available either as a conventional book or entirely online. The book will form the basis of discussions at Diocese, Deanery and Parish levels during 2021 so we'll all be hearing a lot more about it.

The first Deanery Synod meeting in 2021 was in March and was a joint meeting with Ecclesfield deanery.

The topic was Lay Ministry in Hallam and Ecclesfield. Canon Dr Christine Gore and Revd Canon Ian Parkinson joined us. It explored the role of clergy and laity, paid and unpaid, in both Deaneries and laid out plans for a new approach, which stresses the key role of lay ministry and allows busy clergy with many churches to look after to exercise 'oversight ministry' but not try and retain all the roles they would have with just one church.

Ellen Makin and Allie Kinneavy  
Deanery Synod Representatives

## Safeguarding

### Policies and practice

- The PCC has complied with its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

- St Timothy's Safeguarding Children's Policy was reviewed and updated by Alex Townsend and approved by PCC on 15 November 2020. It can be viewed on the Church's website.
- Safe Church Policy/Vulnerable Adults Policy was updated and reviewed by James Saunders and Siobhan Melville and was adopted at PCC meeting on 21 March 2021. It can be viewed on the website.
- A copy has been sent to the Diocese for their records
- Church Ministries reviewed their own Safeguarding practice during the year
- Safeguarding has been on every PCC, Standing Committee and Operations Team agenda during the year, with the exception of meetings between March and June 2020, which were dominated by our Covid response.

### **Training and DBS checks**

- During 2020, 6 people, from various ministries across the church, attended the Diocesan C1 Foundation Safeguarding Training, 13 people attended C2 Safeguarding Training. Anna Fisher and Siobhan Melville attended training on Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse.
- In 2020, 6 applications were made to thirtyone:eight (formerly CCPAS) for a DBS check.

In addition, I have started assisting Gill Weir, Parish Safeguarding Officer at The Vine with the admin of their safeguarding, by keeping track of training and applying for DBS checks.

Siobhan Melville, Parish Safeguarding Officer

## **TOWARDS THE UNITED BENEFICE OF ST. TIMOTHY'S AND THE VINE SHEFFIELD INTERIM COUNCIL**

During 2020, and despite the pandemic, the parishes of St. Timothy's Crookes and The Vine Sheffield continued the discussion regarding the formation of a united benefice. Our PCCs gave in-principle approval and the formal process was initiated by the Mission and Pastoral Committee of the Hallam Deanery in June which was acted upon by the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee in July.

A joint PCC meeting in October raised the question of the name of the Benefice, the naming of the new incumbent, and the location of the Vicarage. Both PCCs later individually agreed that

- 1) The name of the new Benefice to be "The Benefice of St. Timothy's and The Vine Sheffield."

- 2) The Rev. Will Briggs to be named as first incumbent of the new benefice.
- 3) The St. Timothy's vicarage to be deemed the parsonage house of the new benefice.

With regard to the vicarage, some additional assurances were sought from the diocese that The Vine's vicarage would be used for mission purposes and managed only with consultation with The Vine. These assurances were given by the Archdeacon.

The formal process of drafting a pastoral scheme is continuing. There have been some covid-related delays but there appear to be no foreseeable obstacles otherwise. A prospective date for the formal commencement of the joint benefice is not yet known. It is likely that there will be some interim arrangements with the new incumbent and an Assistant Curate being licensed to both parishes ahead of the legal union of the benefice.

In November 2020 both PCCs appointed members to an "Interim Council.". The members of this body are Will Briggs, Malcolm Lambert, Siobhan Melville, Ellen Makin, Andy Bryce, Paul Sheridan, Ben Widdows, Jack Hiscock, Jon Smith, and Kate Rogers-Kay.

The Interim Council has met three times via zoom, beginning in December 2020. The main task of the council has been to consider transitional arrangements, and also to consider some of the ways in which we might make decisions in the new benefice. **There will be decisions that each Parish will make on their own, and some decisions which will need to make together.** What are those decisions, and how will we make them?

The Interim Council has therefore made a consideration of some of our existing structures and decision-making processes, guided by three principles:

- 1) **BEING LEAN.** We wish to avoid unnecessary layers of management and having an overload of meetings. It is likely we will need to have new structures, but we should look for as much overlap and complementarity with existing structures as possible.
- 2) **BEING DYNAMIC.** We do not simply wish to bring two "status quos" together such that all we do is maintain the existing. A benefice structure needs to allow new things to emerge well.
- 3) **BEING ORGANIC.** We don't want to begin by creating a huge new system. Rather, our aim is to start with a "light touch", bringing together beforehand only that which is absolutely necessary to do so, in a way that will allow the structures to adapt as new synergies and collaborations become apparent over time.

The Interim Council has therefore made some decisions, e.g. recommending that we will try to allocate shared expenses evenly, not on some arbitrary proportion. It has also facilitated some transitional arrangements, e.g. recommending the location of the new Curate's office, ensuring initial rotas are filled, offering feedback on how the new incumbent might initially draw two ministry teams together.

The Interim Council will also be recommending to the PCCs that, when the benefice is formed, that a **Joint Council** be formed. Under canon law a Joint Council in a united benefice can act with certain powers delegated by the PCCs. It can be formed as part of the forming of the benefice itself, or be formed later after parish meetings. In any case, the initial responsibilities for a Joint Council would be to

- 1) Respond to areas of overlap and coordination between the parishes – e.g. discuss the principles of how clergy will be allocated across services; collaborations and potential areas of shared ministry.
- 2) Manage shared expenses – e.g. vicar's and curate's expenses, including those relating to housing.

As life as a united benefice unfolds there will be further opportunities to align the ministry efforts and administrative tasks of the two parishes. The Joint Council will also be able to respond to these opportunities.

The Interim Council will meet at least once more, following the APCMs, before reporting back to PCCs with recommendations for how to proceed in this direction.

In conclusion, there is a lot that is changing, but also much that is not. The ministry of both churches continue into the new season ahead. If you have any questions, concerns, or other thoughts, Malcolm or Will would be very happy to have a conversation with you.

## Children and Families

This last year has, as with all other ministries, looked a little different. After the halting of all regular children's and families provision due to the first lockdown in March 2020, children's provision went online.

**Sunbeams (Toddlers)**, **Creche**, **GLOW** and **Explorers** all stopped entirely, as well as **Crookes Holiday Club** and **Community Cinema** events not going ahead. However, Kids' Church Online was born.

**Kids Church Online** initially ran weekly until we (Becki and Kate) were furloughed for a month. In this time, our wonderful volunteers provided stories and prayer videos for the children on our St Tim's Kids Facebook page.

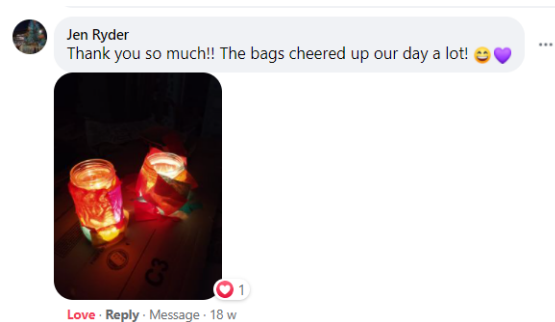
In July, we came back for the month, on limited hours, which we used to just do Kids' Church weekly. We were furloughed over the August and, once again, our volunteers stepped up and kept the videos coming.

Throughout, **Godly Play** has continued as a monthly online video. Jenny Griffiths and Jane Anderson have shared some wonderful Godly Play stories and offered opportunities for children to wonder in their own time about how amazing God is.

In September, when restrictions allowed us, we also offered an in-person option for Kids' Church. Because of limited spaces, we asked people to book in advance. This also gave us the opportunity to clearly outline social-distancing and COVID safe measures that would be in place. It was limited to 9 families in socially-distanced zones and packs of resources. We changed the format of Kids' Church slightly to add in activity time for the children to do practical activities and also ensuring that no part of the service was more than 5 minutes long to retain children's attention and make it easier for them to stay in their zone. We also created some clear break out spaces in the side chapel and the welcome area so that if children needed to move around more they could do so in a COVID safe way.

We have had to swap between just online and combined online and face-to-face a few times, depending on restrictions. We have had fun trying to think of interesting ways to engage children with online services as this is a new area to us but we've found lovely ways of praying and learning that we are sure we will be able to use in the future too.

We have found creating resource bags for occasions, such as Light Party (Halloween alternative), Christingle/Christmas, Lent and Holy Week, a really nice way of engaging children at home, so they're not just having to stare at a screen. These packs include a range of activities some of which we will use as part of an online service others for them to do individually or as a family.



**Tiddlers** was initially closed from March 17th through to August. In September, we were able to relaunch a much more structured baby group, as it functions as a support group for new parents.

We had to move to a system of booking in advance, rather than our traditional drop in sessions, with each parent and child having their own baby mat and toys. We could also only offer the group to non-mobile babies, to manage the social distancing.



As the groups have been smaller to allow for this, it has actually meant that parents could build relationships easily and conversation has always flowed. The parents have been very happy to meet up and form friendships and have people to chat through parenting ups and downs. We had to increase to two sessions as demand was so high as very few groups have been able to function.

With the Lockdown announced at the beginning of January and with the schools closing, we took the decision to close again, with remote support offered for the parents. As the schools reopened in March we have started up again, with lots of new members joining as many of our previous babies are too mobile to attend.

We've been able to welcome 48 families since September and have been very happy to be able to still offer face to face support to new parents. We are also really looking forward to being able to relax back into a much less formal structure in the next year.



We have been in regular contact with all of St Timothy's families whether that is through email, online services, messages or incidental meetings. Children also created stars for the Church window display for Streets of Light which they loved seeing on their daily exercise walks.

Despite lockdown, during 2020 we have welcomed 5 more children to the St Timothy's family and are very excited to get to know them more.

Over the next few months we are planning to work towards reopening our groups and activities as restrictions ease. We hope to be able to offer an in church option at Kids'

Church from Good Friday, with mid-week and Sunday morning activities following in the following months as restrictions allow and it feels safe to do so. We have really missed seeing all the children and families face to face and are excited for where 2021 will take our ministry

Becki Porter and Kate Rogers-Kay

# Youth Ministry

The vision of St Tim's youth ministry is to help young people to be:

- **Engaged** in Community
- **Excited** about Jesus
- **Equipped** for Life

Our aims and values are as follows:

- We are a **family** with **Jesus at the centre**.
- We aim to be a **welcoming community** rooted in **God's Word**.
- We value having **authentic and genuine friendships** with each other.
- We love having **lots of fun** and **doing life together**.
- We want to encourage our youth to **thrive as individuals** and develop a **personal relationship with Jesus**.
- We aim to be **inclusive** and to **accept people for who they are**.
- We actively **seek to grow together** in faith and number, and **invite new youth** into our family.
- We hope to **share God's love** with each other, our Church, our local community and our world.
- We aim to make space to **encounter the Holy Spirit**.
- We want our young people to become **disciples who make disciples**.

As our youth ministry has grown and developed over the past 8 years, being clear what our vision, aims and values are has become increasingly important. 5 years ago, our two flagship youth clubs were The Hub and Venue, both of which successful drop in youth clubs for our older and younger youth. They were the front door of our youth ministry and at their peak, they brought in 50 youth between them – numbers that previously we couldn't even have dreamed of. And yet, despite their success, they did not provide the stepping stone that we had hoped they would to bring young people to events where they could hear the Gospel and have an opportunity to respond. If our goal was simply to provide a safe space for young people to hang out, then we would have been very happy with Hub and Venue. But since our goal is for all our young people to have an opportunity to grow in their faith, it was clear that major changes were needed. Whilst a great front door is important, it is the rest of the house that really matters.

Therefore, as the Hub started to decline, we took the opportunity to relaunch it as Fusion in April 2017, a brand new outreach youth club with a strong Christian focus. It quickly became clear that we had made the right decision as our new youth club went from strength to strength, and crucially our youth were now hearing a regular Gospel message. Despite many of youth not being Christians, we were pleasantly surprised by how willing they were to engage in faith based discussions. Whilst the new Christian content might have put a few youth off, the majority were interested, and we realised it was far better to have a smaller group who were prepared to engage with Christianity than a larger group who weren't. The success of Fusion led



to our older youth provision following suit, and in July 2019, we took the decision to close Venue in order to focus on Blueprint. This meant that our two flagship youth clubs now had a strong Christian focus, and between them were still attracting 30-35 youth each week.

This past year has been very challenging to say the least (!), but our two flagship youth clubs have kept going, largely on Zoom. Although attendance has dipped slightly online, we still have around the same number of youth and as we return to the building after Easter, we are confident that numbers will increase. We have welcomed 3 new youth to our community during Lockdown, and we have also launched new youth small groups in addition to our main youth clubs. Whilst we haven't been able to run our usual trips, events and residentials, we have tried to be as innovative as possible with our online programme. Our last APCM report covers our activities during the first Lockdown, which included the Daily Challenge and Instagram Live. We decided not to bring these back after the summer, but have continued to provide a packed and varied provision each week, allowing each young person to find their niche and to have the opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel.

### **Fusion & Blueprint**

Fusion and Blueprint have both operated as separate bubbles of 15 youth since September. However, the various lockdowns and periods of self-isolation have meant that the majority of our sessions have been on Zoom. After a successful Youth Alpha course, we spent the autumn term looking at issues surrounding mental health and discussed how God can help with issues like anxiety and depression. Since Christmas, we have looked at different people from the Bible, such as Peter, Paul, Joshua and Esther. We have used the Superbook series as a resource to help explore these characters in an engaging and interactive way. The youth have engaged surprisingly well through this and have learnt quite a lot, as well as considering the impact that these stories have on their own understanding of faith. After Easter we will be looking at themes surrounding the Ten Commandments.

As well as the Christian content, we have run a range of socials such as games and quizzes. In the first lockdown, cooking with Catherine was a great hit, but since she has been on maternity leave, Kate and Steph have kindly continued the Zoom cooking and baking sessions. It has certainly been very useful for me to learn some cooking skills, and the youth have really enjoyed it too!

When we have been able to meet in the building, we have had to get quite creative because keeping youth 2 metres apart is not really conducive to good quality discussion! We have invested in coffee tables so that each young person can have their own resources for a session, and have bought various craft materials to help them respond to the teaching. We have also run film nights and games nights. We are very much looking forward to reopening once again after Easter, and we

sincerely hope it will be for good this time! We are blessed with a wonderful group of young people who have stuck with us over the past year; the silver lining of the pandemic is that it has definitely brought us closer as a youth family, and we are very excited to see where God is going to take us next.

### **Impact**

Impact is our Sunday morning discipleship group for age 10-18s, which for the past year has taken place on Zoom after the 11am service. This group is primarily aimed at Christians, and has a focus on Bible Study as well as serving the Church and wider community. Lockdown has actually been a blessing for Impact, as we have had the consistency of 4 of our Church youth coming every week. This has given us the opportunity to invest heavily in these youth and see them grow spiritually. Impact will probably remain on Zoom until the summer, but we will have an intake of 4 new younger youth after Easter. Rather than merge them into the existing Impact group, we will probably keep them as two separate groups using the breakout rooms due to the difference in ages. Nevertheless, this presents an exciting opportunity for Impact to grow as we look to cater for our new youth, whilst still discipling our older youth. After the summer, we would like to encourage some of our Christian youth who attend Fusion and Blueprint but don't yet attend Impact to consider giving it a try. We are also going to do more fundraising and social action events, which will provide an opportunity to enable some of our Fusion and Blueprint youth to get involved in our Church community.

### **Life Group**

Life Group has been our main discipleship group for our oldest youth, who were previously in Blueprint before the summer. We have looked at a variety of Christian issues since the summer and have more recently completed a Bible overview course using a series of online videos. After Easter, Life Group will move to in-person meetings, which will give us the opportunity to do more in depth Bible Study with the 4 boys who come. It is exciting to see their faith grow, and we want to maximise the time they have left in our youth ministry, so that they can leave our group as adults who are committed followers of Jesus, keen to share God's love with others.

### **Connect Groups**

Our Connect groups were launched a year ago to provide a space to catch up with small groups of our youth online. Zoom is not the easiest medium to catch up in when you have a large group like Fusion or Blueprint, so we felt that adding these smaller groups would help us to better support our young people. Essentially they have functioned as group mentoring sessions, and after Easter they are going to morph into new youth small groups. We started with 5 groups, and 3 of them will be making the transition to in-person small groups, meeting weekly on a Thursday in our Church building. The new Connect sessions will last an hour, and will contain a short Bible study, with potentially opportunities for prayer if appropriate. They will be aimed at non-Christian youth, so we will be unpacking the Bible in a bite-size and

accessible way. We are thrilled that the youth want to engage with this, and are very excited to see how God is going to use these Connect sessions to help the youth to get to know him better.

### **Leaders Update**

We have been extremely blessed to have a fantastic team of volunteer youth leaders who have put a lot of time and effort into ensuring the youth have had an excellent provision throughout the past year. I am very grateful for the contributions that each and every one of them has made, and it has been great to see how we have grown as a team over the past year.

There have been a few changes in personnel however, as is the case every year. Jackie Thiselton and Jo Chapman have both decided to step down, after completing long stints as youth leaders spanning many years. They have both been absolutely brilliant and have been hugely popular with our youth, as well as being very committed to helping them to grow in their faith. They will be sorely missed as youth leaders but we are very grateful to have had them on the team and wish them all the best for the future. I am also grateful that Jackie has agreed to continue to support the youth with developing their gifts in worship, which is something we want to focus more on over the next couple of years. Richard Turner has also stepped back for a while to support his young family and Anna Chapman has left the team following her internship to go to university in Newcastle. On behalf of the team, I would like to thank all four leaders for the time, effort and energy that they have given to St Tim's Youth – it has been much appreciated!

This year we have welcomed Colin Taylor to our Connect groups team, along with Helen Wigglesworth (in addition to her Impact role). Both leaders have been an instant hit with the youth, and I am looking forward to seeing the Connect groups grow under their leadership in the coming year. We are also very pleased that Lizzie Makin has joined our Fusion team, following the completion of her internship with us last year.

We have continued to meet regularly on Zoom as a whole team, and James and David have continued to support me as senior leaders in heading up the youth ministry. It is a real privilege to be part of such a great team, and I look forward to being able to have in-person youth leaders meetings in the near future, where we can have more fellowship together and spend more time in prayer, seeking the Spirit's guidance on how he wants us to grow the youth ministry.

### **Plans for the future**

After a difficult year where we have seen many events cancelled, we are incredibly excited by the end of Lockdown and the return to normal youth ministry. After the summer, our residentials to Thornbridge and Center Parcs will return, along with a trip to Alton Towers, our famous youth play and our youth disco. These events are

such a big part of our youth ministry, and not having them for a year has definitely helped us appreciate them more. We are also launching a brand new youth club after Easter called Quest, which we are running in partnership with The Vine for 9-12 year olds. We felt that this was a gap in the provision that needed addressing in both of our Churches, and it is exciting to be able to work with Vicki Neath from The Vine on this new venture.

The pandemic has provided us with an opportunity to rethink how we do things, and it has been great to have the freedom to be innovative and think critically about how best to help our youth meet with Jesus. We return after Lockdown a stronger and more focussed group, and more determined to see the Spirit of God move powerfully amongst our young people. What we've seen so far is just the tip of the iceberg; I'm certain the best is yet to come. Many thanks to everyone who upholds us and our young people in their prayers – it is only by God's grace that our youth ministry is able to flourish, and prayer is absolutely essential to seeing our young people meet with Jesus. We continue to be amazed by all that God is doing in our youth ministry, and look forward to the next year with more hope and expectancy than ever before.

Alex Townsend  
(Youth & Children's Minister)

## **Youth Leadership Teams**

**Youth & Children's Staff Team:** Alex Townsend, Kate Rogers-Kay & Becki Porter

**Youth Senior Leadership Team:** Alex Townsend, David Townsend & James Chapman

**Fusion Team:** Alex Townsend, James Chapman, Chris Porter & Lizzie Makin

**Impact Team:** David Townsend, James Chapman, James Saunders, Helen Wigglesworth & Lizzie Makin

**Life Group Team:** Alex Townsend & David Townsend

**Blueprint Team:** Alex Townsend, David Townsend & James Chapman

**Connect Groups Team:** Alex Townsend, Helen Wigglesworth & Colin Taylor

## **Elderly Ministry/Lunch Club**

The Lunch club is open to anyone aged 60 or over who lives in the local area on Wednesdays. It is a place where people can meet to chat, forge friendships with a nutritious 2 course hot meal and get some support when they need.

Unfortunately we have not been able to open the lunch club in a normal way since the national lockdown in March 2020.

We have made regular phone calls once a week to the members to check if they are ok and also to chat with them and we have sent cards, a leaflet with useful information i.e, community support work service, community hub etc and crocheted rainbows for each of the members and also birthday cards and presents on their birthdays.

Our lunch club is run by a city council grant which has been frozen due to Covid-19 over the last year as we were not able to resume our normal activities. However there was funding available for alternative ways to maintain social connections with the members/volunteers for the short-term which was available at the end of July.

Our alternate way to run the lunch club began at end of October when the funding was approved. This was to deliver/post activity packs and home baked cake/biscuits weekly. Home baked cake/biscuits were delivered by volunteers with the activity pack fortnightly and on the alternate weeks the activity packs were posted to the members. The activity packs consisted of word search, crosswords, colouring sheet, pub quiz, topic related paper activities delivered. Also a letter was included to communicate with the members when required to keep members updated of any events/changes etc.

It was a great success to deliver Christmas presents and cards to the members and the volunteers.

Sadly the 3rd national lockdown which started in early January this year meant we have not been able to deliver the cake/biscuits to the members. Since then we have posted the activity packs along with a goodie bag consisting of Kipling's sliced cakes, sweets, chocolate bar and cappuccino/late sachets (alternate week) every week.

It has been a hard year as we have lost 6 members, one of whom because of Covid. We have been able to send cards and flowers to the families. There have also been blessings this year, as we have shown glimpse of God's love to the members and their family and we feel we have made closer relationship with the members.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have been calling, visiting and delivering activity packs to the members.

Below are some quotations from our lunch club members:

*"Thank you for all our puzzles and surprises. A good idea for the tea, coffee and cake- very enjoyable, a lovely thought. God bless you."*

*"Thank you all for the lovely packages. Such thought has been put into them, the Christmas one, beautiful plant, I have never tasted such a delicious mince pie. The white Christmas cactus will flower every Christmas."*

*"So pleased to get a parcel delivered. Coffee was delicious"*

*"Crosswords keep me going especially when I'm waiting in hospital"*

*"I love the colouring sheets. Look what I have been done!"*

Brian Grayson and Hannah Saunders (Team leaders)

## **The Tuesday Social Club**

The Tuesday Social Club is an inclusive 'drop in' style club that normally meets for a few hours on a Tuesday. We have not been able to open since the March lockdown in 2020 but we have still been trying to stay connected with our members.

Before the lockdown came we were able to get signed consent from the majority of our members to keep in regular contact via phone and our team of volunteers have regularly rung members to check how they are and to have a chat.

For those members with internet access we started a weekly 40 minute zoom meeting in the daytime on a Tuesday and this has been regularly attended by several TSC members with a faithful core of 6 regulars. It has also allowed us to record 'hello' and 'birthday' messages for members without internet access and to play these to them on their doorsteps which have helped with maintaining connections between the members themselves.

When restrictions relaxed in the summer last year we were able to meet some members in the park for a socially distanced chat and we had one park visit with a group of 6. However with a rise in Covid-19 cases at the time we decided to put this on hold... until now. The current guidance allows support groups to meet in larger numbers and we have decided to start outdoor socially distanced meetings in front of the church hall for 1 hour every Tuesday by personal invitation and using a rolling rotation of attendance to be as inclusive and fair as possible.

We were able to host a Christmas tree festival this year (with a difference) with groups and businesses making short recordings of their decorated and themed trees which were edited together into a short film. We had a post box for Santa outside church this year and children were able to post their letters to Santa Claus and Santa zoomed in on the Saturday from Lapland which was as popular as ever. We held a teddy bear hunt across Crookes that allowed some local shops to participate in and install a teddy in their shop window for the day. The event raised £150 for the TSC.

Thank you for all your prayers and support over this last year and please do keep praying for our members.

James Saunders  
TSC co-ordinator

## The Sunday teams

The Sunday teams met just before the first lockdown to look at their roles and effectiveness and to plan for the future. The Sunday teams are the groups of people who make the service work, allowing people to worship comfortably. It includes the music team, the sidespeople, the bible readers, the intercessors, the sound and projection team and those who make coffee.

We made a list of strengths and weaknesses, of opportunities and threats and a plan for addressing all of this. And then Covid -19 and lockdown happened!!

Our Sunday teams were in turmoil as we went to Live streaming services. We tried to use our teams to continue to do readings and prayers but this depended on technology and confidence and we were learning what was the best way on the job! We have now been live streaming for a year and we feel this will be continuing even when we are allowed back into church services.

One of the other things we discussed as a threat was the uncertainty about the Diocese and funding.

There were 9 aims on our plan:

The first was to improve the technology input on a Sunday morning – This has changed in so many ways over the last year we have rebuilt the computer, changed the word projection programme, and have included the video technology needed for live streaming. This has mainly been undertaken by Aidan Melville and Chris Porter. We are now in the process of educating others to take this on.

Secondly, we wanted to provide a welcome to those coming into church alone. Obviously this has not been possible this last year. Speaking to anyone has been kept to a minimum and use of masks and social distancing has not been conducive or appropriate when we have been able to meet together. We did try to appoint a welcomer to each Facebook live stream to look out for people who had joined us for the first time but this did not prove fruitful.

Thirdly, was to improve the experience of music team. This was reliant on making changes to amplification and making the choir feel more comfortable in church. Also



to provide fold back monitors and better microphones which would make everyone's experience much better. Obviously, this has not happened. Singing has not been allowed during Lockdowns. Congregational singing is still not allowed indoors. The musicians could sing but they felt that it was not their mandate to sing to people. It was to help people to worship. We have managed, however, to record music in our own homes and with the use of various computer programmes, and some very clever people, we have produced some lovely recordings to enhance the on-line experience.

Fourth, To improve the experience of the worshipper to include youth in the music team and to make large print words for the songs sung on Sunday morning. Obviously, this also hasn't happened as we would like but we have had Andrew T mix some of the songs and Ellen has made a folder with all the worship book songs in large print.

Fifth, To improve worship of worship leaders. (Ellen, Jackie, Martin, Matthew, (Roger) Chris and Lizzie allowing them time to meet together monthly for a time of worship, prayer and planning and discerning God's will. This has not happened although we have been praying for each other. Chris is now on the worship leaders course and he is trying to organize something for us all after Easter as part of his course.

Sixth, Improve Prayer on a Sunday by making sure the intercessor has an idea on the theme of the service and can plan the prayer accordingly.

Seventh, To prevent Spiritual attack by encouraging more to attend prayer meetings and by providing bi-monthly opportunities for Sunday teams to pray together

Eighth, To prepare for future by encouraging people to volunteer for roles

And Finally, To improve attendance at 9.30 and 6.30 services. During lockdown we have not been running a 9.30 service but we have been continuing with the Harbour on Zoom. Our Sunday mornings service on Facebook have been successful and are available for people to view throughout the day/ week following. We are intending to continue to stream services alongside normal services when we are allowed to meet again.

As we began to open church for services as we follow the road map we are looking at how we can manage this and gradually introduce the Sunday roles again.

Ellen Makin



# Knitting Group

Thank you for inviting our knitting group to APCM report. We formed to bring together knitters/crocheters as a hobby group in church about 7 years ago.

We have been involved in church community events like the Christmas Tree Festival to dress a tree and to have a stall in the hall, knitted small teddies for the 59th Scout group which meets in the children's hospital and distributes the teddies to the patients, knitted nativity scene for the children's ministry, helping to fundraise for the public access defibrillator and Phil and Ranee's blanket for leaving present alongside our own personal projects.

It has been different for us too this past year as all other groups/ministries have faced the same difficulties.

Since the first national lockdown we have used Whatsapp group chat for sharing each other's personal projects, connecting with each other and working on group projects together.

We have made rainbows for our lunch club members and for the older church congregation members. We also have participated in this year's Christmas Tree Festival dressing a tree with knitted/crocheted white stars which we gave away after the festival to the lunch club members.

We have been normally meeting on Zoom every first Thursday of the month. It is open to anyone who is a knitter/crocheter or who is wanting to learn.

We are working on a new group project so please do contact me and join our group if you are interested.

Hannah Saunders

# Prayer Ministry

The prayer ministry team comprises Ranee Townsend, Zoe Chapman, Radha Bridger, David Cope, Pauline Cope, Sally Sharrard, Di Rogers, Stacey Renshaw, Janet Daye and Bethan Lacey.

As a prayer ministry team we, like everyone, have had to adapt to the challenges of this past year.

### **Sunday Prayer Ministry**

From May we resumed prayer ministry on zoom after every Sunday morning service. This was well utilised until August. Since then there has been less uptake, but nevertheless the team have made themselves available after every morning service, and if no one comes, the team on duty use that time to pray for all the members of the church family who have requested regular prayer. Our grateful thanks go to Alex Townsend who has faithfully managed the prayer ministry zoom for us.

### **Prayer Chain**

The prayer chain which is used for crisis prayer continues to be used on a very regular basis and requests frequently come from non-Christian friends and family of church members. It is clear that many people from outside the church really appreciate being prayed for in this way and it is a real witness to the love of Jesus.

### **Phone Link**

A contact number for the prayer ministry team appears on the Church weekly notices for anyone to ring with a prayer request or to be prayed with on the telephone, zoom or doorstep. Prayer has been accessed this way from time to time over the last year.

### **Saturday Morning Open Church**

The Church has been open on Saturday mornings for an hour, and members of the Prayer Ministry Team have been involved 2 Saturdays per month providing cover for this.

### **Ongoing Development**

During the pandemic Zoe and Ranee, as co-leaders of the Prayer Ministry Team, have had the privilege of attending a 9 month online Healing and Miracles course organised by the *International Association of Healing and Miracles* based in Switzerland. Speakers from all over the world teach on this course and we have found it really inspiring, challenging us in a good way, and raising our faith and expectations.

Our hope and prayer is to see St Tim's as a place of healing in every sense of the word, as a sign of God's kingdom to draw people to Jesus.

Our team look forward to praying with you in person, in church again, as soon as this is allowed.

Zoe Chapman and Ranee Townsend

## **Communications team**

The communications team at St Timothy's is a new one, but already we have become quite busy. The idea that inspired the comms team is that there is so much

good stuff happening within our church family, and it's important that people both inside and outside the church know about it!

We are still in the early stages of putting an overall communications plan together, but you may have already noticed some of the things that we have been involved with - promoting our Christmas and Easter programmes, supporting last year's Gift Day and the weekly (sometimes fortnightly) notices email.

Of course the biggest area that we have covered over the last year is the live streaming of our services - more by necessity than design! We've invested in some new software and equipment and repurposed some existing kit for the job, and have begun training a team of volunteers on how to use it. When covid restrictions ease and we can resume in-person worship in full, we now have the additional benefit of being able to live-stream to people who, for whatever reason, cannot make it to the church building, and allow us to reach and minister to people who we may not otherwise reach.



If joining the comms team is something you'd be interested in, you'd be more than welcome to join us. It's not all about live-streaming - we need people who can write, draw, design, plan, edit video, and most importantly, pray. Please contact Aidan Melville on [aidan.melville@gmail.com](mailto:aidan.melville@gmail.com) or 07515 945536

## Women's group

The women's group primarily thrives on face to face contact and live speakers and has therefore not been active during pandemic. We did however have one zoom breakfast session which was very well attended by our regular attendees, plus our away Uni students and much loved past members of the congregation.

We do hope to resume our quarterly breakfast meet ups very soon on the 15th May on Zoom

Details to follow.

Zoë and Radha

## Community Hub

In March 2020 we were approached by Councillor Anne Murphy, saying Voluntary Action Sheffield were trying to respond to the need caused by Lockdown by asking known Community Groups to become Community Hubs. We agreed without really knowing what it would entail but giving out a phone number that people could ring to ask for help.

We started off by contacting the other Churches in Crookes, to work together and combine volunteers.

It took a while to settle into what we could offer but weekly meetings on zoom with VAS and all the other Community Hubs around Sheffield meant that it soon became obvious that each Hub was unique and was responding to their own communities. These meetings also meant we could keep up to date with what support was on offer and also not to feel we were alone with any problems.

We had a number that people could ring to ask for any kind of help, if we couldn't provide it we could signpost to who could. We had calls from individuals, friends and family concerned for loved ones in our area, Gp surgeries and social services.

The needs were mainly shopping and collection of prescriptions but we had quite few people ring from outside the city asking if we could do some safe and well checks on loved ones.

We took over the coordination of Crookes Mutual Aid, which had had an amazing response in the first few weeks of being set up, with nearly 600 people volunteering their services. This was logistically hard work, to coordinate and settle initially but then has been pretty self sufficient as each road was set up to support its own residents. Many of the volunteers realised over time that the need in Crookes wasn't so much and subsequently volunteered with the NHS responders and other groups.

It was quite important to support the street coordinators with advice and a listening ear for stressful situations, as these were people who had often taken on the roles with minimal experience and were coming across some hard situations.

After a few weeks VAS asked if we could cover, Broomhill, Walkley and Stannington as well as Crookes, which initially seemed daunting but all of these areas had

Mutual Aid Groups of varying styles and so we checked in with them, offered support to them and the Gp Surgeries.

As the Hub we had much less volunteers but established a handful of people who offered some vital befriending calls to people who really needed support in their isolation.

As time has gone on things have been much quieter, as people have settled into new routines and established support.

The VAS meetings are still weekly and provide good connections and keep us up to date with local information and groups.

Crookes showed itself as being incredibly, loving and supportive Community with their response to the pandemic. We have built up lots of new relationships across the city, with individuals and groups as a result of being a Hub and I'm incredibly grateful for all the volunteers' time and energy.

Kate Rogers-Kay

## **Bread For Sheffield**

At the end of May we were contacted by Bread for Sheffield, who were from St Mary's, Bramall Lane. They had responded to needing to raise vital funds for the work they do in the city for food poverty by buying bulk amounts of flour and selling. They needed another distribution centre in another area. So from the 10th June, through to the end of August we had a weekly slot where people could collect flour from the church that they had bought and donated to Bread for Sheffield.

This money was used to provide food boxes and ready made fresh meals for people across the city.

Kate Rogers-Kay