

St Andrew's Church, Naunton

Report on the Church and its Parochial Church Council since May 2022

Since the last Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, things have largely reverted to the position pre-pandemic but were somewhat affected by a three month sabbatical taken by our Rector, Revd Canon Katrina Scott, during last August, September and October and the extended absence of curate, Revd Catherine Cowie, who gave birth to a daughter last November since when she has been on maternity leave.

During the absences of Katrina and Catherine the impact of this upon Assistant Priest, Revd Sue Pestell, who is not a fulltime member of the clergy team because of her work as prison chaplain, meant that some of the measures introduced during the pandemic had to be retained. Services on Zoom continued to be held, usually on first and third Sundays, but St Andrew's has usually had two services each month, 11.00am Morning Prayer on second Sundays and 9.30am Holy Communion with Hymns on fourth Sundays. However, except for occasionally unavoidable last minute cancellations, the weekly short Morning Prayers service has been held at 9.15am on each Wednesday.

The Remembrance Sunday service, the candle-lit Carol Service, the crib service, the Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve and Holy Communion on Easter Sunday, were well attended by villagers and visitors but regrettably the Good Friday event for children, which comprised arts and crafts and a short service in the church followed by an Easter egg hunt in the churchyard, had fewer children present than in some previous years. More satisfactorily, a special service held in February in recognition of the anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine, which was attended by some of the refugees who were in temporary accommodation locally, was well supported. Consideration is being given to holding more specially themed services in the hope that this will attract more people into church other than for the usual festivals and for weddings, baptisms and funerals.

Back entirely to normal despite some folk occasionally still getting bouts of covid, are the Thursday morning coffee shop, the rural cinema and Naunton Music concerts, all of which are held in the church. There was also another interesting talk by Paul Roberts, a Burns Night supper and a Lent Lunch, all held in the Village Hall and much enjoyed by those able to attend and, happily, the Spirit of Naunton service was again held at The Black Horse..

As always, thanks have to be given to all those who have helped to keep our church operating as a place of worship and to keep our village such a happy place. Not only are thanks due to Katrina, Sue, Catherine and all PCC members but special thanks are due to three people who have retired from the PCC with effect from the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 25th April. Julia Law has retired because of moving away from the village but Bob Steiner and Graham Hunter, who have both devoted so much time and effort to St Andrew's for so many years, have also decided to retire although both have agreed to retain links with the church. Their help and guidance will be greatly missed.

Diana Woolley
Honorary Secretary
8th May 2023