

APCMs

Team Rector Report

A year ago we met on zoom, but we thought that the blight of Covid might be over reasonably soon. This past year has seen the omicron variant prove even more contagious, though thankfully, less lethal.

We have tried to balance a more open and free way of worshipping and gathering with necessary precautions – it has not been easy, nor was there an obvious answer; we had to judge as best we could. We may not have got everything right.

As a Team we have welcomed Hannah Lane as an Assistant Curate, and what a blessing this has been in so many ways. We have not had a replacement at Bradshaw and now we prepare to say thank you and farewell to Carol Hayden. It is a reminder that church is about people, community, it is about growth and change and development, it is about walking forwards with each other into God's future.

I want to offer a big Thank You to all who have done so much in each of our parishes to keep things going through covid, and to help get things going, either new things like our midweek services, or things we have missed, like a Team Service or Sunday School, or Turton Youth Church or Choirs etc. A particular thank you to the Wardens across the Team who carry that extra responsibility.

Our Team exists to support and enable our local churches; We want to face up towards God in worship – how lovely to share Holy Week across the Team; we must look within at ourselves, both how we manage and govern and do things, and the spirit with which we do things, in grace, with mercy and truth; we must face outwards – as yeast or salt in and for our community and world: how good to raise so much for Christian Aid through the shared Walk last September.

This coming year will see more change as we form a larger Mission Community, and this may affect the Team as a structure, and we will need to look at this in the coming year. We will hopefully see new appointments made, and more people discerning a sense of ministerial vocation in their parishes, whatever that will look like.

I have been here now for just over 2 ½ years, and I feel both anxious and hopeful for the future – anxious because we do not live in easy times, and the world is very dark in many places; hopeful because I know that when we live as people of grace, mercy and truth, then the gospel is attractive, and God's blessing will draw others to find him. We will make mistakes, though I hope others will not be hurt by them; we will get some things wrong. As we seek to be God's people in the places where God has called us, may we discover his blessing poured out, on us and through us, and onto others. May the Spirit of God guide us in the coming year.

Thank you for our partnership in the Gospel,

Peter