

Encouragements from Christ Church Willaston

We give thanks to God our heavenly father for all he has done.

Services and Prayer

- Moving from 3 services to 2 with a shared time of fellowship. Bringing the church family together and allowing us to continue to develop both our traditional and informal services.
- A rejuvenated Wednesday Communion service with the support of the Mothers' Union and fellowship at a cafe afterwards.
- Holding a diversity of prayer meetings over the years, Compline most recently.
- Introducing prayer and scripture to PCC meetings.
- Promoting and providing resources for Thy Kingdom Come.
- Developing a unique form of Cafe church for all ages.
- Helping Leahurst Veterinary College start a Prayer Meeting on campus for staff and students.
- Opening the church for private prayer, a result of our vision process.
- Moving services online during the pandemic, using Zoom for worship and fellowship.
- Making the church Covid secure and continuing to hold services in person.

Communications

- Creating a Church website - finalist in the UK Premier Digital Awards 2015 for 'Most Engaging Small Church Website'.
- Creating an online presence for the church on Facebook, Twitter, Google and a church near you.
- Creating a culture of invitation, inviting the whole parish to events and writing a message of hope during the pandemic.
- Creating publicity and developing the Sunday news sheet into a valuable prayer resource.
- Creating a weekly email in 2020 with a message of hope sent to a growing audience (currently 100).

Discipleship & Faith

- Launching new small groups.
- Running a variety of courses to help people investigating the faith and grow in faith. Including Six steps to loving your Church, The Grace Course, Life Explored, Christianity Explored and Six steps to reading your Bible courses.
- Sharing joint Lent courses with the Methodist Chapel.
- Confirmation Service with Bishop Keith.

Leadership and Vision

- Undertaking 2 Vision processes to develop a mission and vision for the parish.
- Holding two PCC away days and vision sessions.
- Encouraging mission and ministry by creating sub-committees to support the PCC, including Discipleship, Hospitality and Pastoral teams.
- Creche leaders leading our Nativity service.
- Supporting and supervising Elaine White our Ordinand in Training.

Children and young people

- Started a Creche (launched by Joanna Bazely) initially with 1 child growing to 18 children and their parents.
- Launched a children group for children over 4.
- Built links with the Uniformed groups, particularly the Scouts. Running badge sessions for Beavers, District peace light service and virtual Christingle service.
- Leading and supporting CPAS ventures for 14-18's.

Willaston CofE Primary School

- Invested heavily in serving the primary school, supporting senior leadership and staff.
- Encouraged and guided the school in adopting Christian values and embedding them throughout the life of the school.
- Helping to develop RE and Collective worship.
- Helping to appoint staff including the Deputy Head.
- Devising an Easter Experience - hosted by both churches, where the children themselves shared the easter story for the school and their families.
- Meet the Characters - ecumenical event retelling the Christmas story.
- Outreach at the School - A singing club run by the church, reading volunteers and foundation governors.

Supporting those in need

- Forming a Pastoral care team.
- Home communions, home and hospital visits.
- A ministry of supporting new parents, inviting them to 'Care for the Family' events and creating WhatsApp groups.
- Supporting staff and students at Leahurst Veterinary College.
- Food parcels during lockdown.

Community

- Hosting the whole church for Sunday lunches at the Vicarage.
- Opening the Vicarage at various times of year to the whole church and our neighbours for open house.
- In 2015 Fr Lyndon relaunched the Men's group. In 2016 Helen and Claire launched upLIFT a women's group.
- Investing our Residential home service, growing to include staff and family as well.
- Supporting a growing Mother's Union.
- Outreach event at the Village Festival.
- A Christmas Tree Festival in church with a Christmas Market, films and concerts
- Organising a Nativity Trail for the village, with the Chapel, businesses and village groups.

Church Fabric and Churchyard

- Major repairs to the roof on the North side.
- Repurposing the North aisle by removing the pews and purchasing chairs for fellowship.
- Maintaining and making safe the trees in the churchyard.
- Major repairs to the heating system.

Re-ordering

- 2017 Gathering a team who carried out a Community Survey.
- 2018 Producing a Community Audit.
- 2019 Appointing a Programme manager and sent out invitations to Architects.
- 2020 Appointed an Architect, Quantity Surveyor, Heating and Electrical Advisor.
 - Selected an initial design
 - Received support from the DAC
- 2021 We are currently working on a final detailed design and hope to begin work this year if funds and permission can be secured.