

09.30 Service Report AGM October 2020

Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise *Psalm 96*

Until March this year the 09.30 congregation was able to sing to the Lord and praise his name as the Psalmist wrote. Pre-Covid the 09.30 service was frequently a communion service with the occasional service of Morning Prayer. Our vicar Nigel presided at communion and preached on three Sundays out of four. Whilst Nigel still presided on the fourth Sunday he would take a break and ask one of the LLMs, Mike or Jacki, to preach. Knowing that Nigel was moving on Mike and Jacki met with the Area Dean, Ainsley Swift, to explore arrangements for the interregnum. We learnt that there were several other vicar-less churches in the area and therefore a distinct lack of clergy to help All Saints. Ainsley referred us to Alan Dibden at Burnham. Mike asked Roy Burgess, from Easthampstead, whether he could help us. Both are retired but indicated that they might be able to help once a month. Thus it became necessary to modify the 09.30am service pattern so that Communion is celebrated on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. Worship on the other Sundays is Morning Prayer led by Jacki and Mike, or the Church Wardens. The content of the actual services continued as before, using the new service sheets prepared by Nigel.

Those service sheets did not see a great deal of use as lockdown brought restrictions, initially prohibiting the use of service sheets and hymn books and then prohibiting live worship. At this point, April, we turned to live-streamed worship. Some members of the 09.30 congregation watched the services put out by the Diocese, some watched services from other churches and some watched the All Saints service, details of which are in John's report on the 10.45 service. Eventually, in July, we were allowed back in church for live worship! Thanks to our Church Wardens, Sue and Andrew, we were one of the first churches to start up again on August 2nd. We are still one of only a handful of churches in the wider area having a service in Church every Sunday.

However, the service had to be conducted by only one person, or more if they came from the same household. Participation in the provision of Readings and Prayers was not allowed. Movement was to be kept to a minimum and masks to be worn. To begin with singing was not allowed – but thanks to the IT system we have been glad to use the All Saints Hymn and Song videos and hummed behind our masks. It is interesting how much musical sound there is when we play the videos! Once the rules were relaxed we have also had live singing – a small group singing to the congregation. We have also used the screen to project the liturgy from the service sheets.

The Church layout has to be socially distanced and therefore numbers are limited to forty. Pre-registration is the order of the day and we have been 'full' most Sundays.

Going forward we have booked Alan Dibden for Communion at 8.00pm on Christmas Eve and there will be a Christmas Day Family service at 10.00am

We have provisionally booked ordained ministers until Easter 2021 and Bishop Olivia has agreed to preside at Communion on Easter Sunday 2021.

Jacki Thomas