

Vicar's Report to the PCC 14Sep21

I am very grateful to you all for being here in person this evening. This reflects a big sea change in our journey together over the last few months as there have been fewer restrictions on meeting together. While this is a significant change, what hasn't changed is our priority that when we meet together we care for one another. Chiefly, that means keeping in mind that everyone's experience of the past 18 months will be slightly different. The prospect of worship with fewer restrictions will be of great excitement to some, a source of fear to others, and everything in between. That is why we have made relatively few changes so far and part of the purpose of our meeting this evening is to review how we think that is going.

While we have been on this journey of change, we have been travelling alongside Samuel, David and Solomon. We have reflected on the fact that these stories from the Old Testament describe the depth of human experience, the ups and downs of family, in great depth. The Bible shows us who we are and who God is.

Over the last few months the summer has brought the end of term and hopefully some opportunities for different rhythms and recreation for many people. The end of term at St James was sadly marked by the leavers going into isolation and not being able to celebrate in the way they had hoped for. They were able to have a celebration at the end of last week.

We have also had the joy of more weddings and baptisms being held in Church recently. I am very grateful to Sybil, May and others for the way in which they make things happen behind the scenes and work together to welcome people and show hospitality during these celebrations. A number of folk from the PCC also had a very positive meeting with a number of the Bellringers and work is ongoing on having professional investigations to the tower.

Looking ahead, the next few months take us into the heart of God's love. At Harvest time we will give thanks for God's generosity, alongside hosting a coffee morning for the first time in a long time. We are reminded during All Saints that no Christian is alone and we will be giving thanks particularly for those who have died over the previous year and inviting their families to Church. Plans are afoot for Remembrance, the Christmas light switch-on, Advent and Christmas. Please pray for those and let us know if there is anything that you'd particularly like to see. Thank you, as ever, for all you bring to the life of the family called St James.