

St Edward, King and Martyr, Cambridge Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 8th May 2022 at 12.30pm at St Edward, King and Martyr

1. Welcome
2. Opening Prayer
3. Apologies
4. Review of Minutes of the APCM held on Sunday 6th June, 2021
5. Matters arising
6. Report on Electoral Roll
7. Reports on Church ministries (see written reports)
8. Report from Vicar-chaplain (see written report)
9. Financial Report
10. Election of Chapter
11. Election of Deanery Synod Representative
12. AOB
13. Closing Prayer

Review from the vicar-chaplain 2021-22

I feel like this has been a year of transitions. We have made it out of lockdown and now we are looking ahead to celebrating together as a community here at St Edward's. With the uptake in vaccinations life seems to have returned to some normalcy. This was the year that we stopped wearing masks in church. This was the year that we were able to sing once again as a congregation. This was the year that we could gather together, eat around a common table and share the joy of what it means to be human. Looking back, I'm so thankful for advances in medicine and the government's willingness to lift all lockdown measures especially concerning the worship of the church.

With all the joy around meeting together, it has also been a particularly difficult year for us as a family. I enjoyed a wonderful time of research during the summer term as I was on sabbatical from the college. I was able to finish one book on the theology of Leviticus and sent off the manuscript for another lay-oriented book on a similar subject. We were just getting ready to take a 6 week sabbatical from the church when we suffered an unfortunate cycling accident in June. Bettina and I both ended up in hospital for several days with broken bones among other injuries. When we were able to come home we were greeted by the loving hospitality of those in the church who went out of their way to help us, bring by meals and pray for us. Though it was a terribly difficult and painful time we are thankful to be part of a loving community of faith who came to our aid.

The physical healing process has been ongoing, but I was thankful to be back in worship towards the end of August. Since then we have welcomed several new families and new worshippers at the church. Some of these have been a part of our scriptorium which continues to meet, pray, and study twice weekly. This small reading and worshipping community has grown in strength and depth this past year and has become a rich place of study and growth for many of our graduate students. I'm grateful that I have been able to participate more this year with slightly less travel to London for college.

Our congregation has grown since we lost some due to the pandemic. Some have happily returned to public worship but we still pray for those who have not been able to or who have moved on. As a result we have seen a significant reduction in our annual giving which is a concern considering the significant rise in utilities that many of us have already been hit by. We will be negotiating new contracts, but we are also in need of everyone's generous gifts to continue the ministry of the church.

Services throughout the year have been a delight with being able to sing and Peter Elliott's musical additions of the lute and baroque guitar. We continue to have a committed congregation at the Friday service who have enjoyed the ongoing presence of Jeremy Morris celebrating the eucharist fortnightly. I'm also grateful to Matthias for taking Christmas services this year since I was away in the US visiting family that I had not seen in over two years. It has been transition year for the church and I feel we are now well and truly back on our feet after the pandemic. I look forward to the continued outreach and ministry of 2022!

Report from the associate vicar

This has been my fifth year as associate vicar at St. Edward, King and Martyr, and it has been one of mixed emotions. On the one hand we saw the easing of lockdown, and the joy that the relaxation of restrictions continues to bring. For us as a family, this new year has been one of particular joy as we welcomed our daughter, Clementina. On the other hand, however, as a church we cannot ignore the first war to break out in Europe after so many decades of peace.

As the lockdown has lifted, my own ministry over the last year has been really varied, and Mark and I have continued to be flexible and adjust to government and diocesan regulations as we received them. So I have particularly appreciated the regularity of preaching and presiding at the 10:30am on Fridays and the 9am and 11am services on Sundays, taking responsibility (now with Cherrie) for the pastoral welfare of the congregation, as more and more people have come back to in-person services. It is with great delight that we continue to welcome both old and new members and visitors, following many of these up with coffee and lunch meetings, house visits (Covid-permitting) and emails, and I have enjoyed the many more pastoral and theological discussions that I've been able to have. I covered for Mark's sabbatical in the summer and during the second half of Advent and Christmas, so that Mark could see family in America, and it continues to be a great privilege to serve in this way.

Apart from all this we have a number of upcoming baptisms at the church, and it was wonderful to welcome formally to the church family my Goddaughter Otilie Leckie, whose baptism I conducted last June. We also said good-bye to Pippa, our ordinand from Westcott House who having finished her attachment with us will be ordained in June and start her curacy in the united Benefice of Kinnerley with Molverley, Knockin with Maesbrook, and Maesbury, near Oswestry on the Welsh border.

The St Edward's Institute (SEI), where I am supporting Mark as Assistant Director, continues to provide a forum for academic scholarship to take place in, and arise from, the heart of the church as it engages with contemporary culture and the Christian faith. I contributed an article for the SEI online journal entitled 'The Cross as an Icon of the Father's Love and Compassion', which gives a comprehensive overview of some of the key features of my 'theology of the cross'. I also gave a talk at Graham Kings' 'Beer and Theology' group on 'Revisiting the Problem of Evil', which was hosted for a few months at the church.

Besides my work at St. Edward's, I continue to work in theological education and it's my joy also to have Mark as a colleague at St Mellitus College, where I started last September as Lecturer and Tutor in theology. My lecturing, interactions with students and faculty, and my research on 'Suffering and the Problem of Evil' – on which subject I have a forthcoming Handbook – absolutely informs my preaching at St Ed's, and keeps me theologically grounded. I was also invited by the Church of England's 'Faith and Order Commission' to give a keynote address at their conference on 'Deliverance', looking at the Lord's Prayer and the petition: 'Deliver us from Evil'.

The very encouraging growth and development we see at St Edward's would not be possible without the Chapter's continued support and enthusiasm. Our congregation, though small, is I believe unique within the Cambridge church 'scene' in its combination of maturity and

curiosity. It really is a joy and privilege to serve and grow beside you, serve our community and open the Bible with you, and ultimately discover more about and worship the Lord together.

Music Report

This time last year, I reported that we were beginning to add more sung elements into the services as Covid restrictions were slowly being lifted. Now we are back to singing together as a whole congregation. What a difference a year makes! We are blessed to have a fantastic group of musicians and singers who have made such a difference at our carol service, Good Friday meditations and during communion. Thank you to all of you – you know who you are!

Sunday School

Sunday school usually takes place on the first and third Sundays of the month. We usually follow the Gospel theme. Each session has a story and talk or game followed a craft activity, which the children love sharing with you all! A huge thank you to Vicki for all her support and encouragement.

Bell Choir

Ringling has been able to continue at St Edward's and now that the lockdown is over the bell captain is able to resume teaching. If anyone wants to learn, just come and say hello on a Sunday morning.

Scriptorium Report

The Scriptorium at St Edward's has gone from strength to strength over the course of Michaelmas Term 2021 and Lent Term 2022. Around 30-35 separate individuals have availed of Scriptorium at least once during these terms and our core group of regular attendees now stands at around 10-12. The framework of praying, studying, and eating together has continued to facilitate the formation of a tight-knit scholarly Christian community, within which ideas can be freely shared and discussed. The launch of the SEI Online Journal, in Lent 2022, provided an opportunity to turn some of our lunchtime conversations into an informal peer-review process for the Journal's draft submissions, and occasioned some of the most enthusiastic, fruitful, and thought-provoking discussions of the academic year thus far. We have been especially blessed by an increased number of members sharing the responsibilities and tasks that make Scriptorium both possible and run smoothly. Furthermore, the generous financial support of Trinity Forum this year has allowed us to provide a free lunch to attendees on both Tuesdays and Wednesdays (typically, soup and Pret sandwiches on the Tuesday and soup only on the Wednesday) in addition to covering heating costs for those days. Following the recent arrival of a substantial donation of books, it is hoped that an augmented St Edward's library will offer additional resources, in the very near future, to those members of Scriptorium seeking to bring their own academic disciplines into more direct conversation with Christian faith and contemporary culture.

Deanery Synod (Cambridge South) Report

St Edward King and Martyr, and thirteen other churches (all of them in Cambridge, apart from two in Grantchester and Trumpington) together form the Deanery Synod for South Cambridge. The Synod representatives usually meet three times a year, to discuss a range of concerns which affect us all (a different church plays host each time).

This year meetings have been a mixture of Zoom, in response to the Co-vid pandemic, and our first face to face meetings since the lifting of restrictions, which were held in October 2021, in St Mark's church, Newnham, and February 2022, in St James's Church, Wulfstan Way. During the course of the year our chief discussions have concerned the following.

1. Response to Covid and working out how best to manage the return to congregations meeting in person in their churches.

Many churches in the Deanery have been resourceful in keeping their congregations together virtually, although not all of them possess facilities or resources for live streaming. Although congregations are gradually returning for physical worship in the churches there is still clearly some reluctance to do so. It was generally felt churches would need to give considerable thought to how, or whether, to manage a return to 'normal' services, or whether the face of the future will necessarily be rather different from traditional practice. This is clearly work in progress. It was generally felt that nothing can replace actual face to face contact, however helpful it has been to be able to fall back on streamed services, and that streaming should not become the norm. Nevertheless, it was also recognised that some sections of our congregations still feel far too vulnerable to Covid to be prepared to risk returning to their churches. How their needs are best to be served demands continuing thought and resourcefulness, and that includes how to enable them still to feel connected to the people and activities of their church.

2. Diocesan finances and the South Cambridge Deanery Synod's contribution.

Although the pandemic understandably caused revenues from collections to be severely reduced, and a number of churches were unable to pay their full contribution to the Diocese in 2020 and 2021, things are now improving, and the Diocese has said it has no major concerns about revenue from the Deanery. The South Cambridge Deanery is the largest contributor to the Diocesan share, and although individual churches within it were struggling earlier, it is expected that the Deanery will be able to pay its full share in 2023.

3. The Church's Homelessness Project.

Churches in the South Cambridge deanery are continuing to play their part by providing accommodation where possible or by providing meals. Churches which cannot provide overnight accommodation, such as our own, nevertheless participate through members of the congregation who offer their time and services to other churches which are able to be open for homeless people during the night. Churches also work with other projects and groups within the city not connected formally with places of worship.

4. Church of England responses to the need to make itself more ecologically aware and active. and the part individual churches can play in that.

A number of churches in the Deanery have been working with 'Just Love', a Christian student organisation which is very active in this area. Individual churches are exploring ways to make their buildings and their practices more ecologically friendly, difficult though this can be with ancient buildings.

5. "Living in Love and Faith": the South Cambridge Deanery Synod's response.

'Living in Love and Faith' is the name given to the Church of England's commitment to full scale discussion in all its congregations about the meanings and purpose of sex, the nature of sexuality and sexual identity, and how the Church should best respond to the issues raised. This process was to be carried out through 'conversations', either within or across churches. Discussions of same sex unions and transgender issues have often been deeply contentious within the Church, and the annual General Synod has frequently been marred by the emotional and verbal violence of its debates. The English, when viewed by the rest of the world, are notoriously inept in the discussions about sex anyway, so the likelihood of the Church's being able to tackle sexuality and gender issues comfortably or usefully is extremely remote. Your Deanery Synod representative at this point ventures to speak personally when I say I have very little faith in the success of this enterprise. It was, however, very heartening to hear that two churches within the deanery, knowing that their two congregations hold violently opposed views, had genuinely engaged in the 'conversations' which we have been enjoined, as a national Church, to hold, and that seems, most encouragingly, an endeavour in tune with the aspirations of "Living in Love and Faith". Theoretically congregations were to give their feedback to the Diocese by April 2022.

6. Ways in which the South Cambridge Deanery Synod can improve its effectiveness, as part of the Deanery Development Plan, requested by the Diocese.

Feedback from the Deanery representatives would suggest that positive aspects of the Deanery's present working include: good relations across the age groups in congregations; learning how to make virtual communications within the parishes work well; and increasing Connexions with parishioners who usually have no contact with the church as a place of worship but who have become involved with church members through various community activities, some of those very much connected with the response to Covid. Continuing challenges to the Deanery include: the desirability of better communications between the member churches about activities and plans; thinking about how best to reach the many new inhabitants of the numerous projected housing developments within the City and its environs; considering ways in which the Deanery could usefully act as a single entity. Future possibilities might include better collaboration about study and educational events; and a better system whereby parishes exchange information about events and plans. It was agreed at the last meeting that the Deanery should explore the possibility of centralising some administrative tasks, such as safeguarding, GDPR, grant applications, applications for 'faculties' (the permission needed for particular sorts of changes within church buildings), and eco-church. The Diocese has stressed that it is very anxious that all such plans should be led by the individual Deaneries and not driven by the Diocese – bottom up, not top down.