



# ST MARY BREDIN CHURCH LIFE REPORT 2021



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# WELCOME

2021 continued on from 2020 as a very challenging year. We started it still in and out of lockdown and finished it still under restrictions leading to our carol service being changed to being Carols in the Car Park. Despite the continued challenges of 2021 we can still look and see God's faithfulness to us as a church. It was a joy to be able to gather when we could and the return of congregational sung worship was wonderful and I found very moving. It has been great to welcome more and more people back over the months as confidence to gather has returned and it has been a joy to welcome new people into the church family as God called them to be part of the fellowship here in 2021. It was and continues to be brilliant that others can still continue to join us online as we stream our morning service and I am grateful to our projection and sound teams for facilitating that. Over the summer our Picnic church allowed us to gather and reconnect with each other unmasked and the return of the summer holiday club was also fantastic.

2021 despite the challenges also saw us move forward in our mission to 'Be holy and Be a Blessing'. The establishment of SMB as the Christians against poverty (CAP) debt centre for Canterbury was really important and increasingly vital. Tony Washington as the debt centre manager has been brilliant. It is so great when you see exactly the right person called to exactly the right role at exactly the right time. The same can be said of Megan Johnson who started halfway through 2021 as our Youth Pastor. This vision to invest in our youth ministry has shown to be exactly the right thing. Megan is brilliant with the youth and has already laid some great foundations for the coming years. One of the highlights of 2021 was the launch of our Youth drop in café 'Café Lumen'. It has been brilliant to see around thirty young people a week come and find a safe space to chill out and enjoy each other's company.

As well as Tony and Megan coming on board the staff team in 2021 we have also had Marlee Worsley providing maternity cover for our finance role for which we are really grateful. There has been a change in our office as well with Catherine Colley moving on from the Church manager's role and at the end of 2021 Sarah Buchan stepping down from the church secretary's role. As a church we owe a huge amount to Catherine for keeping things going through the first part of lockdown and Sarah who joined us during a really challenging period gave a huge amount to us. Katie Mickleburgh took up the church manager's role and has been amazing. Again and again God has provided for us as a church just the right person at the right time and Katie is another example of this being a wonderful asset and a great blessing to us as a church.



I continue to praise God for my church family at SMB. It is a great privilege to be part of a wonderful and faithful team and I continue to be blown away by the faithfulness of the congregation in giving so much to the ministry that God has called us to here at SMB. I look forward to seeing what God has for us as a church in the next few years knowing that no matter what the challenges he has work for us to do and will provide all we need so that we might 'Be Holy and be a blessing'.

Barney de Berry

## BE HOLY, BE A BLESSING

As God's people, followers of Christ, we recognise that we have been saved, forgiven, redeemed and accepted by God exclusively and completely because of His grace, which he made available to us by His Son's, our Lord Jesus Christ, sacrifice of Himself on the cross. In response to God's mercy, as individuals and as a church, we are called by Christ, as Living Sacrifices, to obey the two great commandments: to love the Lord our God with all that we are, and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

We look to obey the first by setting ourselves apart as God's people seeking to Be Holy, being shaped by His word and transformed by His Spirit. We seek to live lives that are being conformed to His good, pleasing and perfect will, which in obedience to the second great commandment includes being a blessing.

As a church and as members of the church we long to be a blessing to all we encounter, loving our neighbour as ourselves. In this we acknowledge that the greatest blessing we can be to someone is to be those who share with them the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We are committed to this so that they, too, may come to know Christ and come into a saving relationship with Him; being welcomed in as members of His people, His household, His family. This great message of love and hope, this message of salvation, this great Good News is something we seek to declare in all we do, not only proclaiming the Good News but being Good News. Proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ through word and action.

We want to be a blessing to others in the Body of Christ: in SMB, in our city and across the world. A blessing to the communities we live in, work in and are called

**Serve**



**Pray**



**Give**



# OUR PCC

The current members of the PCC are:

**Stephen Carter**  
Associate Vicar



**Barney de Berry**  
Vicar



**Charmaine Muir-**  
Curate



**Peter Bobb**  
Churchwarden



**Rosemary Wade**  
Churchwarden



**Sarah Genders**  
Child Safeguarding Lead



**Philip Lewis**  
Adults Safeguarding Lead



**Pam Webster**  
Secretary (Ex-Officio)



**Simon Webster**  
Treasurer



**Zac Bawtree**



**Chloe Baxter**



**Martin Collings**



**Tom Gilbert**



**Margaret Griffin**



**Andy King**



**Sam Locke**



**Harry Macdonald**



**Jacob Nicholson**



**Angela Swindley**



**Nedine Watson-Cutts**



# WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Women's Ministry was dormant during 2020 and 2021 as a result of the pandemic and lockdowns. However, at the end of 2019 we had started to consider whether the timing and format was serving the needs of SMB ladies as our numbers had dwindled. Before we began meeting again we wanted to know how ladies were feeling about the ministry and what they would like it to 'look like' going forward. September 2021 saw the launch of a survey that was sent to every lady in the church directory and resulted in 57 responses.

We launched a new look ministry with a supper on 10th December 2021 that was attended by 42 ladies. As a result of all the comments we continue to now meet monthly although it is now alternately on Saturdays 9:00 to 10:30 am for breakfast and Fridays 6:30 to 8:30 pm for supper. Each meeting includes a ten minute testimony to encourage and challenge us in our walk with Jesus. It's exciting hearing how God is moving in our lives and to be able to talk and pray together about things that concern us.

Sadly our February supper had to be cancelled at the last minute because of storms Eunice and Franklin which meant 30 ladies missed out on a scrumptious meal. The breakfast meetings in January and March were however well attended. It was exciting to welcome a number of ladies who had not been to a Women's Ministry event before and also to see some ladies bringing non-SMB friends. Going forward we have supper meetings planned for April, June, October and December with breakfasts the other months except August when we take a summer break. We look forward to welcoming many more ladies to these events where we seek to be holy and be a blessing.

Anne, Lucy and Lynn





# FLOWERS

This year has been yet another unusual one. Dried flowers were arranged by one member as a background for our YouTube services. During the summer when services were held out of doors this was discontinued.

At last, a rota was put together from the beginning of September when we returned indoors and we could once again give glory to God through our arrangements. A highlight was the Christmas decorations and we could enjoy bringing bright colours into Church.

Every weekend (usually) pairs of our faithful group come together to work, design and create beautiful arrangements and hopefully bring pleasure to all. At special times of the year, such as Easter, Christmas and not forgetting Mothering Sunday, the team come together over tea and cakes to arrange the flowers.

We are always looking for people to join our friendly team and all ages are welcome. The rota is not onerous with the average being two weekends a term. It is very peaceful when arranging the flowers and I enjoy the quiet time and feel close to God.

Please see our **SMB Flower** page.

**Maureen Danilewicz and the Flower Team**



**Christmas 2021**



**Spring Arrangement**

# FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Fellowship Groups continue to be the primary place that we encourage church members to get involved so that can continue to grow as disciples through the reading the Bible, prayer and fellowship in community. It is also the primary place for providing pastoral support.

At the end of 2021 we had 18 active Fellowship Groups. Two new Fellowship Groups had begun through the course of the year, one of those groups meeting primarily on zoom and catering for those with young children. There are currently 186 people in groups.

As lockdown eased, some groups have returned to meeting in person, while others have remained on zoom, with occasional meetings in person, and other groups have developed a hybrid meeting pattern with a mix of in-person and online. Groups have done a variety of bible studies from Leviticus, Ezekiel to James and 1 Peter. Over the year some groups have also read books together such as ‘Gently and Lowly’ by Dane Ortlund and ‘Garden City’ by John Mark Comer.

The Fellowship Group Support Leaders (David and Pauline Whitehouse, Jan and Bob Newport, Stephen Carter and Charmaine Muir) continue to provide support to the Fellowship Group leaders.

Charmaine Muir



NUMBER OF FELLOWSHIP GROUPS	NUMBER IN FELLOWSHIP GROUPS	REGULAR MEMBERS IN FELLOWSHIP GROUPS
18	192	47%

**BE HOLY  
AND BE A  
BLESSING**

# BUMBLEBEES

We were finally able to re-open in September 2021 after the disruptions due to Covid. Not everyone was confident to join in again, and most of the toddlers of the spring of 2020 had by now grown up and moved on to playgroups or school, so numbers were significantly lower to begin with than they had been previously. So it was important to spread the word of our return, and reassure parents and carers that we had put appropriate precautions in place, with adjustments to the serving of snacks and sanitising routines, and of course ensuring compliance with all the official rules and guidelines. Having fewer families at our sessions has been beneficial, though, in making it easier to spend more time getting to know people, and really engaging with how they are getting on. Several months down the line, we are now welcoming about 30 families, many of whom have never been before, emerging from the lockdowns and subsequent prevalence of myriad infections. Our top priority is to offer an unconditional welcome to all, and we see mums, dads, grandparents and childminders as well as a diversity of language and background, everyone appreciative of the opportunity of giving their little ones an engaging play environment and themselves an end to isolation.

During the Covid break, the team spent some time re-thinking our vision for the group, and we had the opportunity to draw ideas and inspiration from training courses and research projects, the event organised by the Parenting for Faith team being especially helpful. Our advertised aim is now to 'nurture families physically, emotionally and spiritually', and we have been developing a 'spiritual growth and craft' table in order to foster that spiritual element in a way that is accessible. We have also run special events for Christmas and Easter, and these are always well received.

We have a committed team, who faithfully serve on each Monday morning in term time, and we are indebted to Sam and Rowan who go the extra mile to get the set-up under way too, but inevitably team members who have their own small children cannot always get there. We would love to hear from anyone who might be able to offer some help, even if that is no more than once or twice a term. We can all testify that it is a richly rewarding ministry!

Angela





# CHILDREN

Just like everything in 2021, Children's Church had to change multiple times and both the teams and families were very good at adapting to new requirements. At the start of the year we were still meeting on zoom and although it wasn't ideal, groups continued and there were some imaginative games and storytelling happening to keep the children engaged online. It was wonderful to be able to meet together socially distanced in person in the summer term, and for many of the children it was the first time they had been back in the church building in over a year. We rearranged rooms to accommodate groups spreading out, and made weekly individual packs for the children to use. During lockdown we had spent some time recording action song videos to use over zoom, which have continued to prove useful when meeting in person, and the younger children love being able to choose songs to join in with each week. In September we were able to move back to our usual rooms and set up, and the team have continued to be brilliant at stepping in at late notice if someone has had to isolate. It has been wonderful to welcome new people to the team across the different age groups, especially as we have had more families with young children joining during and post lockdown – if you're interested in finding out more about joining the team, do get in touch! January 2021 we ran our first Parenting For Faith course which worked well on zoom in the middle of lockdown. We had around 60 parents, grandparents, godparents and children's and youth team taking part. We thought about how we can give children a window into our faith life, help them unwind wrong views of God, and use 'chat and catch' to talk to and hear from God.

After the success of the Christmas 2020 zoom Bake Along with Faith in Kids we joined in with their Easter Bake Along. We made chocolate brownies with mini eggs and heard how each colour of the mini eggs could represent a different part of the easter story. It was a lot of fun and definitely something to think about doing again in the future!

In the summer we were able to run Super Stars holiday club in person which Stephen Carter and I led along with a fantastic team of volunteers as we spent a week being superheroes at the Olympics! Although we had fewer children than previous years so we could spread out more, it was still as mad as usual with messy games, crafts, videos, challenges, and stories about heroes from the Bible.

Unfortunately due to high rates of covid in schools I haven't been able to have much time in our local primary school through the year. I managed to take in cake for the staff on occasion, and we were in regular email contact so could support families in emergencies when they arose.

. It is a joy and privilege to work with the children and families at SMB and to see God working in their lives. Do keep praying for them as many have had a very disrupted school experience the past few years. I'm looking forward to 2022 and building on all that we've been doing and seeing God use us to tell others about Him.

Mim Taylor

# YOUTH

2021 has been a year full of new beginnings and exciting adventures. The summer term (July 2021 ) ended with our regular groups both Younger Youth (age 11-14) and Older youth (age 14-18) getting ready for change in September and all of older youth left for the adult world and a new cohort entered the groups.

I have had the massive privilege of getting to know both older and younger youth since September and we have some amazing inquisitive and respectful young people at SMB.

At the start of September both the volunteers and I came up with a plan for the next term of sessions for the young people and prayed faithfully each week that the young people would gain a deeper relationship with God.

Younger youth started off the first term with the same sessions as the adults in the main sessions, and as a result of this we found that each of the young people had a lot of questions about what it means to be a christian and one of the stand out questions was “how do I know if I am a Christian?”. So from that we have been looking at Youth Alpha and the young people have continued to amaze me with both their reflections and considerations of what they have learnt and also their ability to pay attention so early on a Sunday morning.

Then in Older youth we have been through Matthew and Romans and which although may sound simple, we had our fair share of deep questions and debates. All the older youth are excellent at wanting to understand the Bible and God better. Also, the fact it is over dinner time, and we have pizza most weeks is an added bonus.

Next year I am excited to see how the young people grow in their faith and try to deepen their understanding of God. With everything getting back into a familiar rhythm has also meant that the stresses of GCSEs are also back and looming closer so please pray for our young people that they may know God's plan for them and feel peace in their preparations.

Also a huge thank you for the amazing volunteer team, these groups could not run without you and you have been an asset to me and the young people over the last two terms. and Thank you to the young people who continuously show up to the groups and are ready to learn about Jesus. You are all amazing.



# CAFE LUMEN

Our new addition to the **SMB** weekly schedule has been **CAFE LUMEN**. This started out as a vision to see the young people who have to walk past the church to get to the bus station finding a drop-in youth cafe that is a safe space for them to hang out after school.

It took a few weeks to get all of the layout just right and we had to buy so many different coloured chairs, but eventually with all our resources ready and an amazing team behind us we opened our doors.

Since September our numbers have only grown and so has the activities we provide.

We started off with all the usual fun youth club classics, pool table; table football; ping pong table. Then we added some crafts, one of which involves food which will cover a variety of young people. Then we have consoles, 3 types including some of the latest video games. Then it would be a cafe without our cafe section where you can chill and chat with your friends while also eating a toastie or drinking our famous milkshakes.

As time has gone on we attained the football cage, which is a large metal cage with 2 small goals that contain the football while allowing all the fun of a game.

We have also added some tablets for homework as the homework room we originally made never got used as young people were worried about missing out on all the other fun. However, now our cafe area and sofas have become some homework spaces.

At Cafe Lumen we have a variety of **SMB** kids; other church kids and also unchurched, and we would say there is a fairly even spread if not more unchurched young people attending our group, and although we have a regular bunch of 30 young people each week, we now have almost 60 young people who have signed up or signed in to our group at one time.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all the volunteers it honestly wouldn't happen without you and it is a joy to see how you have built relationships with these young people. We have also been blessed with each volunteer having unique sets of skills which meant we can offer different activities such as sports or embroidery. So if you have a skill please do contact me.

Overall, this group is a great core bunch of young people who see church as a safe space to be, and while we gave them "the real easter egg" and christmas gift all complete with tracts about real meaning of christmas and easter. We know that we are able to show them Jesus' love through the safe space we provide and it's very exciting to see.

So please pray we can reach those who we need to reach and bless those who already come to our group.

Megan Johnson



# STUDENTS

**SMB Students** is an undergraduate community following Jesus together, to become like Jesus, to do the things that He did. In line with the **SMB's** vision, we want to **Be Holy and Be a Blessing!**

2021 began with another lockdown which meant the in-person but socially distanced student nights were put on hold and again replaced by online gatherings. Having studied Matthew chapters 1 – 4 in the Autumn term, from January to April the students met online to read, hear a short talk and discuss the Sermon on the Mount. These online evenings were kept to 60 – 75 minutes to avoid 'zoom fatigue' and developed a faithful following even though a few students who'd join in the Autumn dropped off, finding online too difficult to commit to and engage with.

The Summer term continued with Matthew's Gospel (chapters 8 – 11) but as we entered into May some of our meetings were able to be in person again. It was special to end a socially-distanced year with picnics, beach outings and a canoe trip too! The third years also managed to meet on Sunday evenings in May for pizza as we worked through the LICC Routed material, preparing them for life and faith beyond uni.

The Uganda trip scheduled for 2021 was postponed until Summer 2022 (for third years), with the hope for a full student trip to our partners at Jenga in Summer 2023.

As we moved into Autumn 2021 the student team were conscious that numbers were lower with previously committed students having graduated and left, and only one year group of students who had been present to remember 'normal times'. We made it our dual ambition to reach out to Christian students seeking a church at uni to make their spiritual home, and also to 'put out the nets' again, sharing the gospel and welcome newcomers in. With this in mind we collaborated with City Church to run a Thursday Evening Alpha, based at SMB, where we served food and had three small groups. We still have members of SMB Students with us who first came through Alpha. We feel offering students Alpha in the Autumn term is something we'd like to revisit next year too.

Once again this year couldn't have happened without some wonderful student champions. Nathan Marsh, Jacob Nicholson and Rose Ross have continued to give selflessly in serving our students. The team was ably boosted by our Discipleship Year Students Rowan Lovegrove and Sam Deal, never tiring in setting up events, welcoming students in, and donning an apron.





# DISCIPLESHIP YEAR

The Discipleship Year is about growing as disciples of Jesus, learning how to serve him and his Kingdom with the whole of life, for the whole of life. It takes students on a life-changing journey of discovery and adventure, where there'll be inspired, get practical Kingdom experience, make life-long friendships, and have a lot of fun in the process!

Having rested our NWDY Hub for 2020-21 in no small part due to covid we were thrilled to recommence with five students for 2021-22: one based at Seasalter; one in St George's Deal; one in St John's Chatham; and Rowan Lovegrove and Sam Deal based here at SMB. Significantly for three of the students (including Rowan and Sam) we also began a partnership with the Church of England Ministry Experience Scheme. We now run the MES training centre for Canterbury Diocese, delivering content and training primarily through our tried and tested NWDY programme. Partnering with MES has meant we're able to advertise further afield for students and also benefit from a significant grant per student to enable participants to enjoy volunteering the year full-time, without the need for further employment. Sam and Rowan have been a blessing to SMB and the staff team this year with their hard work, humour, compassion and creativity.

With Revd Charmaine Muir also on staff for this year's cohort they've been treated to a weekly hour of morning Bible study, working their way through the whole Bible narrative, taking it in turns to prepare, deliver and receive feedback for their talks. It's been good to welcome back previous speakers for our Wednesday training days, but also new ones too. In Autumn 2021 we welcomed Revd Jon Marlow (DDO), Revd Andy Bawtree (River), Revd Laura Collingridge (Hatfield), Olly Knight (City Church), Revd Gareth Dickinson (Maidstone), Mollie Morrison (Fusion), Elliot Curryer (UCCF), Revd Rob Dillingham (Chichester Diocese) to supplement our otherwise internally delivered curriculum.

In October 2021 Stephen drove a minibus full of DY students, picking up the Tunbridge Wells Hub along the way to the first residential weekend at the Pioneer Centre at Cleobury Mortimer. Paul and Becky Harcourt (All Saints Woodford Wells) ministered to the participants on themes of identity, purpose and design, setting a tone hungry for God's shaping presence and power for the term ahead. As we prepare for 2022 we are currently producing some promotional material that we hope will help us recruit students and develop partnerships with other local churches. Pray that the Lord will send the right people to the right placements! Do also pray for Sam and Rowan as they look to their next steps beyond NWDY.



# THE TAP

The Tap is for those in their 20s and 30s. While Fellowship Groups provide the regular bible study, prayer and fellowship, The Tap provides the opportunity for focused teaching for those in this age group, as well as opportunities for social events.

2021 began with events on zoom – starting with our annual prayer and praise evening to kick the year off. As the year progressed, we began to meet in person, some small group events in homes such as a games night and outdoors with a picnic and annual fish & chips at Tankerton. In the autumn we had a teaching event on 'Being a Christian in the Workplace' and a wine and cheese evening. Amongst the more organised events were some Sunday lunches and evening drinks.

The Tap committee at the end of 2021 was Elyse Hall, Becky Lees, Sam and Naomi Lines, Rebecca Lodge, Charmaine Muir, and Joshua Unsworth. With thanks to Rose Ross, who stepped down from the committee in 2021.



# SENIORS

Once groups could consider restarting, Barney asked me to take on the leadership of a seniors' ministry, to enable former leaders to take a step back (but not out!) I am grateful for their continued support. After a survey to find out what people wanted, the new Meeting Point group was born in November. Whilst similar in format to the previous Connections group we are open to new ideas. We aim to provide a programme to appeal to a wide range of interests both for church members and others in the community, to provide a supportive environment for the lonely and those caring for others, and to encourage faith. If something is of interest, anyone is welcome. Birth certificates are not required!

After a launch in November, in December we had Christmas readings and carols followed by an amazing Christmas lunch - thanks to Masterchef Iain Nicholson! Each gathering begins with a simple lunch provided by our wonderful catering team headed up by Anne Young (soup maker extraordinaire!) and a chance to chat and make new friends. Then we adjourn to the lounge. Our 2022 programme has included hearing about Canterbury Welcomes Refugees, learning some exercises to help us keep fit and mobile, a variety of puzzles and quizzes, and reflections on Holy Week and Easter. There is a lot of lively conversation and laughter as well as a chance to think about the relevance of our faith to the different themes. We conclude with tea and cake. We are also planning an outing for the summer.

I hope the group will continue to grow in number but also in faith and provide a way in to the church fellowship. It has been good to see new people joining us already. Occasionally we will precede the event with a Communion service which is open to all, whether coming to Meeting Point or not. Why not give us a try and make it known to friends and neighbours?

Nina Coulthard



# GROWING LEADERS

In September we began the Growing Leaders course from CPAS. This is the third time the course has been run at SMB. This time we have 21 participants, ranging from students through to retirees. The course was offered across the diocese, and we have one participant joining us from another church this time.

The course aims to grow leaders in leadership whether they have had no experience of leadership or are already leading whether in church or the workplace. The course focuses on call, character, and competence. Each participant has a mentor to meet with between sessions.

Charmaine Muir and Stephen Carter





# ALPHA

Our passionate and dedicated Alpha team were fired up to run 2 Alpha courses during 2021, but despite extensive promotion there were sadly insufficient sign up of guests for the courses to go ahead. The beating heart of Alpha is the small group – both to stimulate discussion on the topics raised in the Alpha videos each week and to build trust and relationships. With so few sign ups it was therefore not possible to achieve this. For those that did sign up we were able to offer them a place on one of HTB's online courses, so that they did not miss out. The team were naturally disappointed that we were not able to run an Alpha this year, as we all missed seeing the transformative work in people's lives that we always witness on Alpha, but we are praying and trusting that God will open up the way for people to invite someone along to do Alpha in 2022. In more uplifting news, the student team ran an Alpha this year which you can read about in the Student Ministry update.

God bless

Cheryl and Manny Mvula



# EVENTS

At the start of 2021 we were not able to run our normal programme of events however as the year went on we were slowly able to meet as a church again. One of our first events we enjoyed together was Pentecost. We decided to have an outdoor service in Kendal Hall gardens and it was great to have so many people come together after such a long time apart. As this was such a success, we decided to run Picnic Church over the summer. When the weather allowed, we held an outdoor service in Kendal Hall Garden and people brought picnics to sit and enjoy together afterwards. It was lovely to be able to start having fellowship time together, which is such an important part of church life.

September allowed a return to the regular pattern of church services as we resumed indoors, although, our events calendar was still not fully back. Gradually we were able to start running groups in church again and it wasn't long before there was the happy buzz of church life as men's prayer breakfast, hotspot and senior ministry began meeting. It was lovely to see lots of the church family coming back to these groups and enjoying catching up with one another. Another new ministry Café Lumen meant that we had the joy of lots of young people coming into the church as the space was transformed into a café serving amazing milkshakes and toasties.

We started to plan the events for December as we were all feeling more confident that we would be having the Christmas we hadn't had for a while, of course Covid had its own idea and it meant that we were not able to hold our traditional Christmas carol concert. However, as we had grown used to thinking outside the box, we thought rather than cancelling we would transform our carpark into a venue for Carols in the Car Park. My husband Peter brought our food truck to the carpark the festoon lights went up, the mulled wine and mince pies were warmed, the cradle, made by our own Stephen Carter, was placed under the events shelter and we sang carols accompanied by the wonderful Ruth Washington and her violin. It was a memorable evening and yet again showed our resourcefulness as a church.

Katie Mickleburgh



# Eco Church

This year has been something of a regathering for the eco-group, with a lot going on under the surface – sending out roots to do more in the coming year.

In line with this pattern of starting small, we've been encouraged by the shift away from paper in the church's communications, and a greater emphasis on recycling and reusing resources. Likewise, after many months of languishing in the chancel, the solar panels have returned to the roof!

Continuing with the theme of the building, we've also undertaken a heat loss survey to consider where we may need to place additional insulation, and to attempt to work out a heating strategy that keeps us warm without contributing overly to the warming of the entire planet. If you take a look in the nave, you will see that we have begun to install additional glazing as a direct result of this survey. Less noticeable to the eye will be the tightening of several windows throughout the building to reduce several substantial drafts, but it is these sorts of small fixes that have an outsized impact.

We've also begun to consider land usage – it's been a delight to see the Garden of Remembrance open up into a space that can be effectively used on Sundays. Building on that, we have plans to rewild the grass along Nunnery Fields, creating alongside the trees, a wooded meadow habitat. This will increase the biodiversity of the area, as well as providing an attractive and visually interesting frontage to the church for passers-by.

As a result of this activity, we are now very close to achieving the Bronze level of Arocha's Eco Church Award, and anticipate that by the time you read next year's report we will be speaking in similar terms about the Silver award. Of course, we do not do what we do in order to achieve these awards, but they are useful markers of the progress that is being made towards a church culture that models the Anglican Church's Fifth Mark of Mission: "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the Earth".

We recognise, however, that we cannot – and should not – do this alone. With changing situations for several of our members, and the urgency of the call to care for God's creation at the forefront of our minds, we have spent much of this year recognising that only if the church as a whole takes hold of its stake in our ministry will we produce change that lasts beyond ourselves. To this end, we want to end with an encouragement – if you are at all interested in the environment, concerned by the climate crisis, or feel a prompting from the Spirit to join with us, do reach out.

God Bless,

Rowan Lovegrove, Chloë Baxter, Tom Gilbert, Harry Macdonald and Nicholas Thurston.

# HOTSPOT

The Hotspot Café resumed in September, having been closed since March 2020 but this year was the 20th anniversary. We meet in the link from 10-12 on the last Wednesday of every month, except December and it is very relaxed. Some come for two hours, others just pop in for a short time. It was a slow start but gradually people are coming back and it has been lovely to welcome some new people.

We have an area with toys where adults can sit and chat, while their children play safely, away from the main cafe and this has been well used. We welcome people who don't come to services but love to come for a coffee and chat. It is a great bridge between the church and community and has been an entry point for some into other church activities.

There is always a wonderful selection of home baking as well as lots of tea, coffee and juice, and mulled drinks at Christmas. We usually have a well-stocked Traidcraft stall with lovely cards, gifts and food items and occasionally other craft or card stalls. All the donations go towards sponsoring a little girl in the Philippines through our mission partner, Georgie Taylor, working with YWAM.

We have a fantastic team and are very grateful for others who step in when needed. Especially if you're new, it's a great place to meet people in an informal setting or to catch up with old friends. If you've never been, please do come along. We'd love to welcome you.







# MENS PRAYER BREAKFAST

Another year has passed, another year of looking back at what has happened, what has changed, the highs and lows, the things we said we were going to do and yet never got round to it because events took over. Life after COVID is getting back to normality, isn't it? Well, yes and no.

As the Men's Prayer Breakfast (soon to be the Men's Prayer Breakfast/Supper), we have been meeting in church twice a month on Saturday mornings (and online for those in other countries or unable to come along) and if I am honest numbers have been a little on the low side. So not quite back to normal, (what is normal?

Answers on a postcard please) but getting there. We have enjoyed a great time of fellowship and just mulling things over together and most importantly praying for each other and the issues that surround us both locally and the wider world.

We would encourage you to come along and enjoy out time together. 7.20am on a Saturday, bit of a stretch? Well join us on a Friday evening for the Men's Prayer Supper, (more details later), it has all the elements of the Breakfast except it's a curry or pizza or a BBQ.

The most important element? YOU! Because you have an important part to play in the prayer life of the men and the church. As we start a new church year let's do the things we said we would; let's pray together as men of God and bless our fellow brothers as we journey through this Christian life of joy, turbulence and redemption.

See you soon.

Iain Nicholson





**May I never lose the wonder  
Oh, the wonder of your mercy  
May I sing your hallelujah  
Hallelujah, Amen**

# WORSHIP

We began 2021 in a further period of national lockdown but were grateful that our livestreams were able to be in the building. As the year moved on and our Sunday services were able to regather in person so has the need and opportunity to regather, recruit and train more musicians and worship leaders. Without having any staff available to lead worship this has meant all our worship leaders being asked to lead a little more often. It has been brilliant to add Naomi Lines, Becky Lees and Chloe Baxter to our team of worship leaders to compliment the already long serving Alistair McCutcheon, Kez Bawtree, Ben Hackett, Dave Raffel and Toby Ovenden.

It would be remiss not to also mention the tech teams that bring us sound and visuals each week, including Iain Nicholson, Harry McDonald, David Whitehouse, Hazel & Josh King, Trevor James, Sam Locke, Mark Shrimpton, Joshua Unsworth, Gail Collings, Megan Johnson and Deri Jones.

These worship leaders, their band members and the tech team turn up, set up, practice and lead us with such skill, diligence and passion in their worship. As a church we are mightily blessed by them all. That said we're always in need of recruiting more and giving others the opportunities to exercise and grow their gifts. If you're a musician or worship leader and keen to get involved please speak with Ben Hackett. If AV or sound are more your thing then please speak with Harry McDonald or Mark Shrimpton respectively.

In our life and worship before Jesus Christ may we never lose the wonder.

Stephen Carter



# MISSION PARTNERS

At SMB we believe wholeheartedly in the great importance of mission, both overseas and at home. We supported fifteen mission partners throughout the year, some of which are organisations. Our partners work in Argentina, Hong Kong, China, Vietnam, Uganda, South Sudan, Mozambique, Egypt and the UK.

Our usual Mission Sunday in March did not happen because of Lockdown, however, we put together short videos from all the partners and sent this to all the church members. It will still be available if you haven't seen it. We continued to focus on a particular mission partner every week in Family News and they all greatly appreciate that. We give 10% of our general fund to mission and it is really encouraging to see partners greatly blessed as our support arrives just when they most need it. It is such a privilege to partner with these people and to be part of what God is doing around the world.

Despite Covid, we did have brief visits from both the Harvey and the Muerasses families. Some of our partners continued to join our services virtually from around the world, which was wonderful. We always keep in touch via newsletters, email and social media and every partner has a champion in the congregation.

The Mission Partner group meets quarterly under the leadership of John Ward, the other members being Anne Young, Tom Gilbert, Tiffany Carter and Martin Williams. The mission booklet is available from the office and there is more information in the mission section of the website.

Anne Young







# MERCY MINISTRIES

## STOP THE TRAFFICK

**STOP THE TRAFFIK KENT** has been very active throughout 2021. During the various lockdowns certain sectors of the labour market shut down, and the organised crime groups behind the trafficking of human beings in the UK moved their victims into forced begging, sex work and delivery services to profit from the increase in online shopping and fast food deliveries. To counter this we partnered with Kent Police to carry out welfare checks amongst fast food delivery drivers in Medway and supported warranted searches of premises involved in sex work across Kent, resulting in 12 arrests and 4 female victims safeguarded.

We also partnered with Kent Police on visits to nail bars and car washes in Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable to try and identify victims and get them to safety, along with a warranted raid on a car wash in Medway that was suspected of trafficking and of drugs and arms offences. We also supported a male victim of labour exploitation and a sex trafficked female to enter the National Referral Mechanism and access safe houses away from their traffickers.

Our usual awareness raising activities with the general public, on how to spot the signs of modern day slavery and where to report any suspicions to, were scaled back due to covid restrictions, but we did run a really fruitful street event in Whitefriars in Canterbury featuring our “I am not for sale” live shop mannequins! We were also invited to give talks to raise awareness with many different stakeholders including to the Crown Prosecution Service on Child Trafficking and the UN Canterbury branch on modern slavery. We also secured a feature on ITV Meridian News to raise awareness of trafficking from a survivor’s perspective that we journey with. Our members advocated for victims and survivors by joining the UK anti-trafficking sector in lobbying our MPs re the unintended negative consequences of the new Nationality and Borders Bill on victims of modern slavery. We await the outcome of this from the government.

Throughout the year we continued to walk alongside and support survivors of modern slavery, particularly females that have been sex trafficked, helping them to navigate the Home Office’s broken system of support for victims and to support them in moving forward with their lives post rescue. 3 of our members opened up their homes to survivors, with one member provided a home to a female survivor of trafficking for 9 months. It is wonderful to see the transforming power of love shown in practical ways on someone’s life after having suffered so much trauma.



At Christmas we ran our Christmas Angel Appeal at SMB, and raised funds to provide Christmas gifts for 15 children of female survivors in Kent, along with gifts for 20 rough sleepers who are vulnerable to trafficking in Canterbury.

The abundant fruit this year is all down to the big hearts for social justice of our many active **STOP THE TRAFFIK KENT** members, from SMB and other local churches, and to God's continual miraculous provision in opening doors and in equipping us with the courage, strength and guidance to be His hands and feet in some very dark places. God bless

Cheryl & Manny Mvula



# MERCY MINISTRIES

## CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY

The Canterbury CAP Debt Centre relaunched on May 9th 2021 when Tony Washington completed his (stages 1 and 2) initial Compulsory Training with CAP. He is not a Debt Adviser, but an agent of CAP qualified only in initial contact and support. It has been a real privilege to work out of the SMB Office and be part of the team for some of the week. It is great to be so well resourced. Nevertheless, the work has felt very hard at times. It is slow and often painstaking, and there are no quick solutions. None of our clients so far are debt free.

To date the centre has been allocated 25 clients, which includes those who have finished the process with us and have been passed on to a Head Office Team (or taken an independent route), those who have yet to have their first appointment, and those who are at various stages in between, on the 'three appointment process'.

Some experiences with clients have perhaps shed some light on our society and the issues people face:

- The vast majority of clients are women, most of whom are bringing up school-age children.
- Many appointments have been missed through poor communication, Covid-related reasons and anxiety. Many other appointments have only happened because of persistent and laborious re-scheduling, and re-organising both client and the befriender.
- Many are struggling in barely adequate or unsuitable housing, adding other pressures. Most clients are also dealing with other issues. Debt may be the origin or the consequence of those other issues.
- Of those clients who have completed the three-appointment process (25% of those allocated so far) only one has been deemed to have enough disposable income to be considered capable of paying off their debt. A situation that can only become more common.

## Some highlights:

There was a wonderful and encouraging involvement of the Fellowship Groups in providing much appreciated Christmas Hampers in December. One client came to the 'Carols in the Car Park' as a result of her interaction with the FG leaders who had delivered her hamper that morning.

Every client has accepted an appreciated prayer at the beginning and end of most appointments.

Two clients have loved meeting at SMB and soaked in the atmosphere – perhaps feeling God's presence.

## This is collaborative work:

The Debt Centre could not function without our lovely befrienders. I was able to start straight away in May 2021 because there were experienced and faithful befrienders who served with Becca and Lynn up to the end of 2019. This ministry needs and appreciates you! We have added a few more from Smb this year, and there is the prospect of more to come. **PLEASE BE IN TOUCH IF YOU ARE INTERESTED and WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE.**

We need befrienders all the more because in May 2022 a new Debt Coach will be joining the Centre! Please pray for Karen Sexton as she joins the team, sponsored by City Church. And pray for me; I have been operating like an amateur one-man band, now I have to manage a centre with a colleague and with more capacity for seeing clients!

We need your prayers! I try to produce a regular prayer bulletin. If you would like to join the list of those to whom I send it, please let me know. [tonywashington@capuk.org](mailto:tonywashington@capuk.org)







# MERCY MINISTRIES

## MAKE LUNCH

We started running MakeLunch in February 2017 as a place for families to come in school holidays whose children would usually have free school meals in term time. Over the years we have built great relationships with these families and it has become a tight community which is lovely to see. We have a great relationship with the local primary school who we work closely with to build links with the families. Over lockdown we moved from one off sessions face to face in school holidays to delivering food parcels to around 23 families, totalling 120 parents and children a week. Overnight we turned the church into an organised system of labelled tables as FareShare delivered all sorts of food every Thursday – they collect and redistribute unwanted or close to use by date food from supermarkets and local retailers, and we never knew what we were getting until it arrived! There was a hive of socially distanced activity as a brilliant team of volunteers came weekly to sort, pack and deliver the food parcels. This began back in April of 2020 and continued through to June 2021 with over 10,000 meals worth of food delivered, as well as crafts, books and activities for the children to use included regularly.

It was a joy to be able to gather the MakeLunch families again in person outside in Kendall Hall garden for a circus performance and workshop by The Flying Seagull Project in June. They usually work in refugee camps around the world but with Covid stopping international travel they started working with vulnerable children in the UK. It was a fantastic time of laughter and silliness, and the children loved being able to have a go at circus skills – they surprised themselves with how much they were able to do! It was great to see the families having fun together after such a long and challenging year.

We reintroduced face to face sessions in the summer holidays which the families were extremely pleased about. We had a lovely time being able to talk and eat together again. This continued at October half term and Christmas where we also gave out hampers to all the families we had delivered to in lockdown. As one of SMB's Mercy Ministries, we wanted to use what God has given us to be able to bless our MakeLunch families through the pandemic, and the families have been so grateful. Do continue to pray for Makelunch firstly as we look to form and train a core team to work closely together to shape MakeLunch going forwards, and secondly as we strengthen relationships with current families as well as getting to know new families.

If you want to know more about MakeLunch or are interested in joining the team please do get in touch with me.

Mim Taylor



# BAPTISMS

“Baptism marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God’s love. For all involved... it is a joyful moment when we rejoice in what God has done for us in Christ, making serious promises and declaring the faith. The wider community of the local church and friends welcome the new Christian, promising support and prayer for the future...” Pastoral Introduction to Holy Baptism, Common Worship

Having had no baptisms in 2020 owing to covid we were delighted to initiate six persons into the family of faith (adults: Ben Wild and Natasha Lee); infants: Josiah Carter, Lisa Emptoz, Samuel Emptoz and Abigail Kuhn). Another adult, Lewis Welsh, reaffirmed his baptismal vows through immersion.

In 2021 two children, Zipporah and Tirzah Bawtree were dedicated to God in a short service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child.

We are hoping that in 2022 we will be able to send forward candidates for confirmation. If you would like to be baptised or confirmed, or have your child dedicated or baptised please speak with one of the clergy.



# ADMINISTRATION

I joined the office as Church Manager in April 2021 just before the APCM. Having been part of the church family for that last 16 years and served in a variety of different roles it has been amazing to have joined the SMB staff team in this role. I have found the job to be challenging, interesting, humbling, busy and fun. We have a wonderful staff team here at SMB and it has been a great privilege to have the opportunity to come and serve alongside them. I have learnt so much from being part of this team who have made me feel so welcome.

I have enjoyed my first year in this role so much and have relished all the different challenges of managing the church, from mending leaking roofs to welcoming the many different people that come into the church for different activities from week to week.

When I started in the role, church life was still quiet however it wasn't long until we started to take bookings again and have groups come back into church. It was lovely to see the church being filled with people again. We are very blessed here at SMB with lots of generous space which made the transition to getting back together easier.

Manny continued to keep the church well maintained and looked after with the help of James Jenkins our cleaner who is also a student at Christchurch and member of the church family, both invaluable members of the staff team.

Towards the end of the year Sarah Buchan, our office administrator, decided that it was time for her to move on, so in December we said goodbye, we were very grateful for all that she had contributed to being part of the office team here at SMB through a challenging time. We have also been very blessed to have Marlee Worsley in our office covering Helen Birch our finance officer while she has been on Maternity leave. Marlee has been a great member of the team, she will be leaving her post here at the end of April. We are immensely grateful for her dedication, commitment, professionalism and kindness that she has given to SMB throughout this last year.

Moving forward Debbie Cavero stepped into provide some temporary support for the office, we have been very grateful for all that she has contributed. Finally, we are excited to announce that Tana Harris will be joining the office team in April as the new Church Administrator in a part time role.

My hope and prayers are that the church office and those that work in the team continue to be a blessing to our church family and all those who visit SMB.

Katie Mickleburgh

# CURRENT STAFF TEAM

**Barney de Berry**  
Vicar



**Stephen Carter**  
Associate Vicar



**Charmaine Muir**  
Curate



**Mim Taylor**  
Growing Faith Pastor



**Megan Johnson**  
Youth Pastor



**Katie Mickleburgh**  
Church Manager



**Tony Washington**  
CAP Manager



**Marlee Worsley**  
Finance Officer



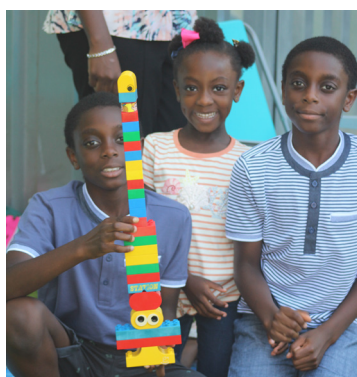
**Manny Mvula**  
Caretaker



**James Jenkins**  
Cleaner









# ST MARY BREDIN

## CHURCH LIFE REPORT 2021



Charmaine's priesting June 2021