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THE PARISH POST

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF SANDFORD, NEW BUILDINGS AND UPTON HELLIONS CHURCHES

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15th May 2022

Vicar's report for APCM – 8th May 2022

First of all, a huge thank you to Linda and Chris for all they did as churchwardens during the pandemic and vacancy and for the support they have given me since I arrived. It has been a challenging time. Thank you also to all the PCC members and all the church members, who have continued to keep St. Swithun's going through the last two years, that have been challenging in so many ways. Your time and commitment is hugely appreciated.

I haven't been here very long, but you have all made me feel so welcome and for that I thank you. I acknowledge that there was disappointment when your new vicar wasn't going to be living in Sandford and that there was concern that I wouldn't be giving Sandford the attention it needs, but I am committed to loving this church community and the wider community of Sandford.

I have taken on a challenging role with eight parishes and eleven churches, but I feel more than ever, that God has called me to this role. As we move forward as a body of churches and communities, my prayer is that we will seek to serve one another in the love of Jesus Christ.

The PCC have heard me speak of my vision for our church, but I realise that the wider congregation have not. As we prepare for the formation of the Crediton Hub, I am confident we can make it work, if we pull together and share a common goal. My passion is to see God's church grow, so that His Kingdom may indeed come on earth as it is in Heaven. I want to see us as a body of Jesus followers who are so in love with Him that

people find that love infectious and that they will be drawn to this place where God's love and grace flows freely from His followers.

St. Swithun's Church is already a place where I find that love flowing, but we can always show it more. I am blessed to be here as your priest and look forward to working with you as we grow God's Kingdom here in Sandford.

Within the new hub, we will have a few larger churches that will be hub or resource churches. These churches will be the place where the smaller churches are able to come and find help in different forms. To this end, St. Swithun's Sandford and St. Matthew's Cheriton Fitzpaine, will be the two main churches in this part of the hub. My plan is to grow these two churches, which means concentrating my energies into these two churches, so that we can grow capacity. Already, out of our Lent group, has come the Coffee and Company on Wednesday mornings, which is providing a place for people to come and have a chat and some company, while also enjoying a cup of coffee and home baked cake.

In order to grow our church, we will need to step out of our comfort zone. I would like us to run the Alpha course, the Freedom in Christ course and start home groups. I hope that we can strengthen our relationship with the school and in the community, so that this church will become a beacon of love, light and hope to those around us.

On Saturday the 25th of June, we will be having a mission community day together with a bring and share lunch in the Sandford Village Hall. This will be looking at how we live out of our baptism and we will have the opportunity to dream dreams and look at how we want to move forward together. I hope that you will all make it a priority to be there.

I am looking forward to continuing moving forward with you all as we seek to bring Jesus to those around us. Let us continue in love and hope together to make this church a true hub for Christ.

Revd Janet May



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