

All Saints, Hérault: Priest-in-Charge's Report for 2014

2014, our second year as a chaplaincy, was a year of steady growth and progress in our corporate life. The Chaplaincy Council's report details the many ways that we continue to grow and flourish as a church family.

Unity in diversity has been one of our guiding principles and I hope we never forget that. I know that I keep on about it, but it's particularly important in our situation here, where we serve such a diverse community. God made us as we are, wonderfully, gloriously different from each other. Let's rejoice in those differences and learn from each other.

Another strong principle, that came from the original congregation before we were a full chaplaincy, was a high level of congregational participation in making decisions. We have tried in 2014 to bend the normal Church of England way of doing things into a more participative model. There is now an opportunity for meetings of the congregation every three months, instead of just at the AGM; the choice of charities we support was made after receiving suggestions at one of those meetings. It is, of course, also important that the Chaplaincy Council continues to be the body that runs the chaplaincy: after all that's what they are elected for and I thank all the members for their excellent work.

My thanks go to Richard for all his support during 2014. His accident in December was a shock to us all and our hearts go out to him, Carol and the family. I was very proud of the way that you all rallied round to support Richard and Carol both practically and emotionally.

As always I thank very much the team that has served us so well over the last year. Patricia and Nigel are truly excellent churchwardens, who take so much of the administrative load and deal tactfully with many a difficulty before it becomes a problem. Thank you again Barbara for being a conscientious treasurer. Thank you Julie for your stint with the website and Andy for your excellent work there so far. Thank you Sally for your help with the website and publicity. Thank you Jenny for continuing to look after our safeguarding. Thank you Alison and Ros for your work on our events. Thank you music team for your thoughtful and time-consuming work on choosing our music. Thank you again, Julie, for representing us at Synod.

My final thanks are to Delia for making sure that I do those many things that I otherwise would have left undone; also for coming to Synod and for taking the Chaplaincy Council minutes so efficiently.

Congratulations to Julie Johnson on being approved by the Diocese in Europe for training as a Reader.

There is much to look forward to in 2015, a lot more of the same and some innovations too, such as the planned Maundy Thursday service with washing of feet and the contemporary worship service at Pentecost.

Roger Smith
Priest-in-Charge

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