

## CHAPLAINCY OF ALL SAINTS' MARSEILLE WITH AIX-EN-PROVENCE AND THE LUBERON

### Archdeaconry Synod Report 2020

2020 was of course an unusual year for everyone. For our chaplaincy it brought unexpected challenges and opportunities, which have ultimately made us a stronger and more united church family.

Foreseeing the long-term impact of the pandemic, our Treasurer launched a campaign early on to increase online giving, which did much to mitigate the loss of personal giving via the plate. Meanwhile our new Chaplain, Jamie Johnston, rapidly implemented services online via zoom, which resulted in a doubling of our numbers, encouraging us into more regular worship attendance and bringing us together across our wide geographical area. Those who before the pandemic could not reach a church building for several reasons – including distance, family commitments, illness or disability - now have the opportunity to worship with the rest of the chaplaincy on Sundays. We also introduced a weekly compline service on Wednesday evenings, which has been a welcome source of comfort and support to many. Calls for pastoral support also increased during the *confinements* as people experienced loss, grief, loneliness, separation from loved ones and illness, and in considering how best to respond we are currently seeking pastoral lay ministers to join our ministry team. We introduced the necessary protocols for attendance at church once this was permitted again, and though we have missed our singing and fellowship after services, there have been compensations too.

An important part of our mission involves the care of seafarers. Owing to the lockdowns we were unable to attend the Seamen's Club for much of 2020, but we now take part in a new ecumenical service for seafarers streamed from Marseille, and have been supplying parcels of essential items to the Club for distribution to seafarers stranded on their ships far from home.

Our ecumenical relations have also been strengthened by our presence at a local community founded on Franciscan principles for those suffering from addiction. One of our PTO clergy, supported by one of our Readers, offers an Anglican Eucharist at the community in the absence of a full-time priest there. We plan to work more closely with the community as an adopted charity during the current year.

We have also been able to engage with other charitable efforts as a result of the pandemic. At Christmas we were made aware of the hardship suffered in the area of London near Grenfell Tower by one of our zoom congregation working with a charity nearby. We ended up supplying 200 chickens to provide Christmas lunches in the community.

In November we were delighted to welcome our new Curate, Roxana Teleman, whose ministry is already valued across our different congregations. Our two Readers were also relicensed in September, so there have been several reasons to celebrate.

Thanks to a generous donation, we have been able to invest in new technology for zoom services and live streaming. Several families were disappointed that they were unable to celebrate weddings in 2020, but we are hoping these will be able to go ahead this year.

Overall, it has been an unexpected time of blessing against a backdrop of global concern and uncertainty. We have much to be thankful for as, under the leadership of our new Chaplain, we begin to plan new vision and mission for the years ahead.

Jane Quarmby and Christine Portman, Archdeaconry Synod Representatives