

# Response to Life-Giving Questions – Final Report

## APPENDIX A1 – GATHERED WORSHIP

### General

1. We have been forced to adapt our ways of worshipping & service structure during lockdown and moving forward our services need to have a structure that is more adaptable to change while retaining core elements.
2. There should be a wider variety of styles that can engage as many parishioners as possible, especially those who are currently less invested in/present at services (e.g. young people) so that we don't become irrelevant or stuck in our ways
3. Many people spoke of wanting to re-engage with others in physical spaces (church buildings) but also appreciated what the digital service offered, particularly the fact it brought us together as one congregation. Moving forward we should maintain our online service as it allows those who are unable to attend physically (for whatever reason) to join in, and as we re-open our separate buildings we should focus on creating opportunities for the Parish to come together as a united body, both indoors and out.
4. The importance of sharing the gospel and not subscribing to the values of society
5. Non-exclusive - less middle class
6. Think about balance between on-line and in-person services
7. Closer relationships with other churches in Tonbridge
8. I feel church has gone to the people, and less that the people have gone to church
9. The four separate congregations have effectively ceased. A skeleton single, central parish has emerged
10. Felt more part of 'The Body of Christ'
11. Reach the elderly, living on their own
12. The importance of worship in the midst of a storm
13. Working together we can still have church services
14. Continue to meet together in our church buildings, but make one service available on-line with a strong invitation to anyone watching to make contact with us

### Content

15. Interviews with local public figures to continue.
16. More attendees to tell us what they do Monday to Saturday
17. Introduce individuals and families to the congregation
18. Testimonies appreciated – getting to know people through these, cross parish
19. More opportunities for social gatherings
20. I don't approve of anything in the nature of 'dumbing down'

### On-line Services

21. Livestream services after we are permitted to congregate
22. Identifying who has been coming along and reaching out to them – Alpha
23. Appetite for these to continue
24. Develop access to church
25. Buddy system
26. Continue On-line
27. Having services recorded and available on the internet would be a good thing to continue
28. Virtual church accepts the fact that people are time poor
29. Many non-Christians feel uncomfortable with entering a church

30. Local church is obviously vital, but the virtual church has allowed folks who do not or cannot come to church to access services.
31. Online services are an excellent means of bringing the Word of God into our homes
32. Make the wider community aware of the on-line services
33. Ask who are on-line visitors are and do follow-up with books, Perspectives, Alpha, or Facebook Groups
34. Put selected highlights of services on social media – excerpts and quotes from talks, prayers and interviews
35. Impressed how slick and expert our church has become with on-line services
36. Is it possible to identify who is accessing the on-line services?
37. Invite those who watch on-line to join a homegroup
38. The on-line services complement public acts of worship
39. On-line services are not for everyone, but they do offer flexibility in timing and ability to visit other churches easily
40. Thoughts for the day have been good. Provides comfort and reassurance
41. The on-line offerings have been great
42. On-line services have a capacity to accept different styles of worship from week to week. Do more of this in the future
43. Beware of screen fatigue. If more people work from home, they will perhaps prefer to meet in person rather than watch services on-line.
44. Help with technical skills, for those unable to attend in person
45. Need more technical skills in editing and stitching videos together
46. I think the YouTube services with the mix of live and pre-recorded content works really well

### **Physical Services**

47. Physical interaction with one another
48. Missing communion
49. The importance of choice in 4 churches with different styles.
50. Reluctance to return with health fears
51. Messy church
52. Missing singing
53. Do we need 4 churches all at 10 or 10:30 on a Sunday morning?
54. Burden of 7 services per week
55. Pattern of distinct congregations needs to be examined – more gatherings in one building
56. Provision for those with Dementia
57. Worship as a united church in one building – use other buildings for outreach and community activities
58. I have detected a greater sense of being one church in four settings
59. Perhaps parish-wide services could be more frequent
60. The pattern of 4 church buildings needs to be examined and more gatherings held in one building
61. Worship outside – open-air services – in the churchyard or the park?
62. Change time of evening services – perhaps at 4pm, especially in Winter?
63. Take one's own plastic cup to Communion
64. News and testimonies within weekly services
65. Offer a diverse range of services
66. Clergy to lead or preach once per month in each church
67. There is a danger that members on the fringe may be lost if we do not open daughter churches. Aspirations for a more 'centred' parish have a value, but may leave out recent contacts
68. Meeting together in church helps build and strengthen long-term relationships

## APPENDIX A2 – FELLOWSHIP

### **Sense of being family but not knowing everyone**

1. “We are not good at knowing each other – who do we worship with? Lockdown and streamed services have shown us people and families that we have not met in the parish.”
2. “It's been wonderful to hear and see members of other churches we wouldn't normally meet.”
3. “I have very little opportunity to get to know children older than the Clown Fish children or teenagers apart from at Holiday Club and would appreciate the opportunity to do so.”
4. “She would love to meet the youngsters she prays for.”
5. “I have no idea what most of our working adults do for a living”
6. I have missed conversations with my contacts in the local church
7. The young families who have been interviewed during Sunday Service whom I don't know that well
8. The YouTube videos and Zoom meetings and the involvement of so many familiar faces has maintained a sense of continuity
9. It has been wonderful to hear and see members of other churches we wouldn't normally meet
10. Get to know each other better by mixing more. Good to continue to mix, e.g. in breakout 'rooms'

### **Home/Life groups**

11. “With Stepping Stones and some Homegroups having met on Zoom during lockdown, maybe we should think about having a Zoom Homegroup for those who can't get out during the evening, e.g. those with young children.”
12. “I love and value and need fellow Christians- my home group...”
13. “Small groups such as home groups and Stepping Stones are important. I realise that personally I get a lot from the small groups that I belong to.”
14. “Link more people to Home groups as these can be a way of caring pastorally for people as well as building our faith and reaching out.”
15. “Home groups, social groups, study groups, local groups, are different ways of describing a good way of pastorally caring for folk.”
16. “One of the (many) blessings at P&Ps is the fantastic homegroup we are part of...perhaps we can encourage anyone who isn't in a homegroup to join one”
17. “Caring for each other is much more practical done in small groups e.g. home groups”
18. “Home groups play a very important part both in Bible Study, practical care and prayer support. Folk who are not yet in a Home Group could be encouraged to join.”
19. “With only about one in three or four of our members currently involved in groups, there is still much to be done!”
20. “Joining a homegroup is less daunting than coming to a church, especially for Generation Z and Millennials, with little or no church background”
21. “My vision is that the homegroups become a more significant part in building up the body of Christ in our church, and a more effective part of our outreach into our community beyond the church.”

22. "Home groups have been meeting by zoom in many cases and new people have been drawn in."
23. The main purpose of the group has always been fellowship (Women's Fellowship)
24. I get a lot from the small groups that I belong to
25. Perhaps time to change the name of all the groups to 'Life Groups'
26. Review all those groups in the Leaders Matrix
27. "When we have Zoom Stepping Stones meetings, after chatting for a while, we are put into several Breakout Rooms. This has been good to mix us up. When we do return to meeting in church, it would be good to continue to mix."
28. "More groups with a non-threatening environment – like walking groups"

### **Nurture personal relationships**

29. "Encouraging relationships/hospitality across the Church family"
30. "Nurturing personal relationships that are important"
31. "Doors have been naturally opened!!! Relationships have deepened!"
32. C-19 has awakened a desire to form deeper and more meaningful relationships
33. "Relationships can suffer and need to be worked at continually."
34. "My home group felt it would be good, once we get back to having coffee after the service in church, if people mixed more rather than keep within the groups they already know."

### **Hospitality**

35. What a blessing we had those hospitality months before lockdown! I think they worked really well and is a great way to serve and bless each other as a community.
36. "Encouraging relationships/hospitality across the Church family"
37. "Perhaps this is something we can encourage"
38. "The hospitality weeks in November last year and Jan/Feb this year were excellent, and it would be wonderful to keep this up"

## **APPENDIX A3 – SELF-AWARENESS AND LIFE BALANCE**

### **Spending Time with God – 'Quiet Time'**

1. Step back and listen to God
2. Desire to spend more time with Him
3. C-19 has encouraged a lot of us to take more time to be still, read our bibles, pray and enjoy God's creation
4. Open to Holy Spirit
5. Slow down and listen to God. Make space for Him
6. Awakened in me a greater sense of the of God's presence and dependence upon Him.
7. We need to step back for a while and just listen to God
8. We've had the space and time in our lives to pray, read the bible and develop a relationship with God like never before
9. Slow down – listen to God – make space for Him. I don't think I've ever seen Him so obviously present
10. More time with / for the LORD. This does not mean doing more work for the church!
11. In times of extreme difficulty, God is there for us
12. I need to listen more and be patient, asking God to show me where He is leading me in my future ministry

13. The routine of spending quality time with the LORD (staying close) really does make a difference
14. The slower paced life has given me chance to read the bible daily
15. I have been able to spend more time with Him, both at home and on my walks, more time to read His Word, and more time to pray

### **Awareness of Life and Creation**

16. This pandemic has made me think of brokenness again
17. Less responsibility leading to feeling calmer
18. The value of silence
19. Awareness of the fragility of life
20. It has allowed us to think about what is important
21. How precious it is to know that I am a child of a God who loves me, and knows what the future holds for me, and that Heaven is my ultimate destination and Home.
22. I totally engaged with nature and found healing from walking and talking to the LORD in the woods and just longed to be in His presence and sit at His feet.
23. Take time to appreciate God and His creation
24. A stronger sense of own mortality, as well as gratitude for being in a marvellous Christian community
25. I have welcomed rest, rhythm and finding freedom within a framework
26. I have to say how much I appreciate and value this time
27. Have we lost sight of, and gratitude for, what is NOT changing, and for all the choices and freedoms we still have?

### **Awareness of God**

28. It is only when we allow our cup to be filled that we can fill the cup of others
29. The single most important thing I have learned over this period is the fundamental importance of our personal relationship with God, and how we must do whatever we can to encourage this in ourselves and in each other
30. The desire to know Him better, and to show His love for others
31. Learning to see Christ in others
32. Above all God needs to be an integral part of our lives and not an 'add-on'
33. More time with the bible needs to be carved out, but God's word has reached me in unexpected ways

### **Reduce 'busyness'**

34. Need not to return to busyness
35. Another benefit of lockdown was the decrease in busyness, especially for those who commit so much time to Parish activities. The timing of services should be more varied so we don't have so many services happening at the same time - "too much time and effort are put into running all these" - and therefore don't fall back into 'busyness as usual', something that is already starting to happen!
36. Excess busyness, excess consumption and excess planning for the future – re-think it all
37. I have valued being less busy, resulting in more time to read scripture, listen to the LORD and respond

### **Prayer**

38. Prayer Network
39. Prayer triplets set up across the parish

40. Prayer course – ‘How to Pray’ book by Peter Grieg
41. Fell strongly that we should be praying, preferably all together, and at the same time asking for His guidance
42. Our monthly prayer group has doubled in numbers
43. We need to provide means for people to discover more of prayer – to connect with Who hears their prayers
44. When I have asked if I can hold people in my prayers not one has rejected my offer
45. Our prayers and our care should be broadened to include others outside our community
46. Importance of regular prayer life
47. We need to pray for our town and nation
48. St Andrews used to call on folk who lived in that area asking if they had any prayer requests
49. We need greater awareness of our local parish community and our own frontline ministries to enable us to pray effectively
50. Share prayers on-line
51. Stand in silence – perhaps St A and St S could be used more for quiet prayer and reflection
52. Now is the time to pray for revival and to be alert to the Spirit
53. Pray for those who you feel able to pray for

### **Repentance**

54. Need for repentance
55. Repenting, fasting, praying
56. Repentance, restoration and renewal

### **Other Responses**

57. Don't count the days, but make the days count
58. Sharing our vulnerabilities
59. Balance of giving and receiving
60. More outward focus in my life
61. My identity disappeared with the crisis, so I'm still not sure of my own identity
62. For me, my life has seemed busier than ever. I have simply been unable to keep up with all the communications from the church and the many links to talks and articles.
63. I have gained more friends and offered friendship more readily, from spiritual awakening
64. We need to seek love and joy before we can be peaceful and patient
65. C-19 has made people of all generations deeply anxious, seeking answers and open to guidance as never before
66. The importance of self-care, both in health and creativity
67. Ensuring self is sustained through caring for one's whole self, physically, emotionally and spiritually in order to sustain outward giving
68. I resolved to be more outgoing, instead of expecting others to care for me
69. Learning to put ourselves in other people's shoes so we can understand their needs better and therefore able to help
70. We need to be available and prepared
71. Many people are being prompted to reassess their physical health and make changes

## APPENDIX B1 - COMMUNITY

### General

#### **Community Hub / Action**

1. Can we be 'a seven day church' with 6 days of activity and work in the community, and then Sunday is a day of rest and praise for the work of the week?
2. Relationships with people who are not perhaps our usual social grouping need to be strengthened.
3. Worship as a united church in one building – use the other buildings for outreach – food banks – community activities
4. A hub from which practical action is co-ordinated
5. Volunteers and those cared for will most likely 'learn faith on the job' or through the care given
6. A church that allows people a sensible balance in life, social prescribing!
7. Amongst other things, I was inspired by The Living Well project – small beginnings one winter giving shelter & food to a few rough sleepers, which grew into a regular kitchen, a food bank, a clothes bank, numeracy & literacy support, repairs, addiction support, a choir, art therapy, music therapy, meditation, prayer, Alpha & more!
8. COVID 19 has already highlighted areas of greatest need- more need for large community foodbank, debt advice or other financial issues, shelter, unemployment, domestic abuse, mental health issues, loneliness. Some of these could be pointers through social media

#### **Exploit the massive surge in volunteers during C-19 – when there seems to be greater community spirit.**

9. How do we harness and perpetuate the massive surge in volunteers and the generosity of giving?
10. A renewal of community. In many places there have been spontaneous expressions of neighbourliness. We need to find ways of building on this.
11. There may be a need for newly formed neighbourhood bodies to cope with the latter phases of the virus and with the kind of life that emerges beyond it. Bottom-up creativity will be seen. Churches are highly visible in most communities and can provide a hub from which practical action is co-ordinated. People want to do things. And it's notable how this often translates into the growth of personal faith as people essentially learn the faith on the job as they volunteer.
12. Neighbourliness seems to be more in evidence and even smiles and greetings as people exercise.
13. As community has served community – have Christians effectively joined in with this and how can this continue as we become more of a church serving outwardly and not serving one another?
14. Neighbourliness seems to be more in evidence
15. St Saviour's location in the middle of the Dry Hill triangle is already being exploited by the local community, and Wendy Carr is building on this via the local What's App group. This should be an area for growth and outreach

#### **Faith in action**

16. We need to develop services for the community for which we expect nothing in return, and for which they say: 'Why are they doing that?'
17. the Church should see this as a time of huge (perhaps unprecedented) opportunity to reshape itself as the Body of Christ in ways that are meaningful and effective.

18. the Apostolic Church was obedient to the impulse of the Holy Spirit - and was *outward looking as well as inwardly caring*. The result of our waiting on the Holy Spirit will surely be 'sent out'. We need to prayerfully discern what 'sent out' looks like for us.
19. Authentic evangelism has to be surrounded by practical demonstrations of love
20. People respond well to you when they see your actions. Actions are the truth, then words are believed.
21. I would like to see church (by this I mean us as a family of believers) meet people at their point of need. Bring Christ to the people in the form of service. The actions will bear witness to God's love.
22. Be less shackled to our buildings – value LIFE not productivity
23. A greater desire to immerse ourselves in a community full of multiple & complex issues, social isolation, mental health & poverty, supporting professionals/expertise in different areas of frontline ministry caring for the 'whole person'!
24. We need to ensure people don't see us elitist – too above them to be able to come alongside them!
25. We need to be seen as vulnerable people who simply have the strength of our faith to see us through, nothing that anyone else cannot strive for!
26. People need to see us in the everyday parts of their lives. We need to be prepared to serve where we're at & build relationships that care for the 'whole person', where trust can also be built & eventually safe conversations can be had about faith!
27. Sometimes greater trust comes about when physical care is given, rather than just words. Conversations flow naturally within this context.
28. Intergenerational healing alongside healing of other imbalances must be encouraged.
29. Beyond having our Sunday services available on an open platform we failed to see other intentional ways in which the church was reaching out to those outside the Parish family.
30. I do think that a visible presence of people praying for problem areas in the neighbourhood and also something like 'Street pastors' groups offering to pray for people and prayer walking the roads around the church would be an effective use of time..
31. Help on food bank and helping others—this is reaching out and expecting nothing in return.
32. There's a huge amount going on in our town but I think the perception has been that the Church works in it's own circles. Hopefully we've been able to show that's not the case and that we can support people in need.
33. We are community & this should not be exclusive!
34. Individual communities should continue to be consulted about their needs. Identify what are the needs in our specific community eg loneliness, broken relationships, financial and employment concerns etc and prioritise these.
35. Love our neighbours....hug the prodigal son
36. whether we are folks who need to interact daily or more solitary types, belonging is important and feeling cared for is important too.
37. It's not about getting people into church, but acknowledging Christ's love for them where they are and nurturing it (i.e. 'Doves not pigeons'). Unconditional, non-judgemental, practical love. We need to see the main causes of the breakdown in society rather than be judgemental about the symptoms.
38. Sadly, the bulk of the population do not respond to simply being asked to come to church or to 'believe in God'. They do respond to a genuine interest in them as individuals as we engage with them on a purely 'human' level. Once that relationship is established, they are far more likely to respond to us at a spiritual level.
39. I feel the church has gone to the people and less so, people to church.
40. We need to get across the fact that we can offer friendship and practical help without initially expecting them to come to church. I think St Phillips does this well.
41. Learning to put ourselves in other peoples shoes so we can understand their needs better and therefore able to help

## Delivery

### **Food Larder/Feast**

42. Through FEAST our church identity spreads. Caring for people's personal needs is vital both for our own congregations and as outreach into the community. Actions speak louder than words.
43. Expressions of generosity - a growth in donations to food banks etc. Maintaining that level of generosity may be difficult in the long term - the Church can be a beacon.
44. The prime mover is not increasing numbers in church services but through actions witnessing to God's love.
45. I think initiatives like FEAST have been very important in the community and brought the church into people's lives and homes and think that sort of initiative is very important.

### **Open House**

46. We should be generously feeding the hungry, and I think it is right to start 'Open House' again as soon as possible.
47. The re-opening of Open House, the Coffee Bar and other facilities for outreach will be welcome in due course.
48. It's not just about food but food can be the springboard for other things, as Jesus well knew.
49. We had been building relationships with the community around St Philip's through the Saturday morning Open House prior to Covid 19, so when it is safe to do so, it would be good to see that take shape again. Friendships over the coming months, when anyone of us may well find the aftershock of Covid-19 hitting us physically, emotionally, spiritually or financially are going to be very important.
50. I've been really struck by how much Open House seems to be perfectly positioned to fulfil this need. A place to meet people where they are and listen and support without judgement.
51. Open House should remain at St Philip's as it is just starting to be known in the local area.
52. The pandemic has resulted in an increased witness to the gospel, mainly through acts of service toward others. This should be maintained alongside an encouragement to witness through word as well as deed.
53. Open House at St Philip's has been a good start in connecting with the local community.
54. Open House needs to restart to reach out as far as possible and signpost to other events like Health Walks, Book club and others known in the community.

### **Develop the Coffee Lounge**

55. Could more be done to make the P&P coffee lounge more widely known as a place of companionship and help and signposting?

### **Open the Church Buildings**

56. Some felt that a more radical approach needs to be looked at - Unify all the congregations into a single church and use the other three churches for community use.
57. We should think more about how we can **draw non-churchgoers into church** and to connect with us.
58. A church with open doors for two way conversations & action, eg Open House, FEAST, meeting people at their point of need! ... Encounter, listen, mutual sharing, healing, transformation!

## Alpha

59. If we are honest, it wasn't really until the advent of 'Alpha' (or similar) that we really got to grips with the need to invite people to engage with the Gospel.
60. Should we run a **Christianity Explored course on Zoom?**
61. Would love to see the Church run a Christianity Explored/ Alpha course on line regularly so that we can feed people in when the need arises or as part of the Baptism preparation.
62. ZOOM Alpha would be a good inbetween for anyone new coming to us via online. Keep short, 20 min MAX presentation and 20 min group discussion, then stop. Many people sit at screens too long all day. Someone said, "Jesus never had a plenary session".
63. Facebook groups for nurturing specific interests or needs, perhaps a group forum for Alpha
64. Early on in lockdown I wish I had been able to refer 'enquiring minds' to a faith course and I recorded suggestion of Alpha courses starting- amazingly, they are now being planned!

## Engagement Across the Churches, Community Groups and Other Agencies

65. We need to join with other Christian communities/churches. A united effort will be much more effective.
66. It would be good to keep **closer relationships with the other churches in Tonbridge**, holding joint services every few months like we used to, perhaps have small social gatherings which mix us together.
67. We need to develop our relationships with other organisations & churches in the town and improve partnerships; we need to work with others more, especially the other churches.
68. I would like to see all churches, all denominations working together for the good of the community-Each church could specialise in one area of outreach and mission as there is duplication or no 'service' for need eg winter shelter in Tonbridge has been discussed for years.
69. It would also be good to try to connect more with care homes, retirement flats and other communities that can easily become cut off from the rest of the church like special needs schools or assisted living communities.
70. We have good relationships with most of the local Primary Schools but (seemingly) none with our local Secondary School - all of these need strengthening (Andy appreciates the irony of this).
71. Make sure there are clear referral paths to leading agencies for food bank, mental health, addiction, debt management etc
72. Shopping, company, financial support and guidance will need to continue as might be possible. Not every need can be catered for, but maybe we can try to point people in the right direction and facilitate them receiving the help they need.
73. An individual church is unable to satisfy every need eg food bank, mental health, debt management, addiction. Clear referral paths to lead agencies should be clearly signposted. Annual financial support to different organisations is a good way to raise awareness of different local charities.

## Walking Groups

74. great opportunities for conversation in a non-threatening environment. Good opportunity to invite non-churchgoers. There could be Men's, Women's and Mixed walking groups

## Segments and Cohorts

## **Mental health**

75. We all need to pay attention to our inner being and to take steps to maintain or improve our mental health just as we do with physical fitness.
76. Those who suffer with mental health issues have found virtual meetings, interviews and consultations very challenging.
77. I would like to see the Church supporting this charity (Fegan's) by possibly providing facilities for them to hold parenting groups &/or counselling sessions ..... the churches and schools in the area work with Fegan's to provide family and community support.
78. In light of the increased mental health issues across the UK, can we as a Church do more to support those suffering with it? For example, providing use of the building for drop ins, having all pastoral team members take a mental health first aid course, encourage C&YP volunteers to do the same for young people, have people give testimonies to break down the stigma.

## **The Elderly**

79. For some time now (even pre Covid) – and this is certainly reinforced by my recent experiences – I believe that ministry to the elderly (and their carers) is critical. Over the past years, medical technology has developed to help maintain life and this has the effect of there being growing numbers of elderly who have a very low quality of life.
80. When I consider the elderly, some witness the passing of their spouses, siblings and friends and the loneliness that follows. Again, for some, when loneliness is combined with poor health, misery arises at an individual level which may be invisible to the outside world.
81. I appreciate that we have had a pastoral care programme in place and that members of our fellowship undertake visits to care homes. To co-ordinate this and build on it for outreach – do we need an “Elderly Minister”
82. With those who care for the elderly as they have bear a lot of the hidden burden and experience on a daily basis the effects that infirmity has on our senior citizens.
83. Also reach out to those who care for the elderly

## **The 20 somethings**

84. how do we reach and develop this age group?
85. linked to this is the real need to have younger people brought on with more senior members of our congregations serving as mentors to them and being ready to hand on their ministry to others.
86. I'd love to know how we can support this further as a church and grow the future of st P&Ps even more, both youth, and also 20s/30s who are the missing element in our otherwise relatively diversely aged congregation!
87. the point of need for young people in their twenties now is, and will be especially in the future, careers help, cv writing, interview coaching, some upskilling, maybe mentoring.

## **The unemployed, the homeless, the hard-up**

88. How do we reach them?
89. Do we need a bit of a shake as the 'haves' to be reminded of Jesus' heart for the poor and broken? To be reminded of the need for sacrificial love?
90. So for Tonbridge Parish Church, will that mean freeing people up to be more available to be a witness, but also to be involved in social action? To be near though who are suffering? Is there any more we can do to be supporting those struggling in our own community? Could that be a way of intentionally sharing Jesus?

## Local Businesses

91. Ask local businesses how we might help them recover
92. Be prepared to give praise where praise is due, to local businesses on our social media
93. How do we offer security to the “precariat”, those who have no safe job or regular income?

## The Self-Employed

94. Home group suggested offering a room and host to be a weekly forum for self-employed to meet

## Young people

95. Once again, meeting these young people at their point of immediate need may well develop relationships and conversations which could lead them on a road of enquiry to faith.
96. However, I do feel that a place for the young people to hang out in the area around St Philips is lacking. Somewhere they can have as a social club idea, watch football, play pool etc. The young people in this area need to see HOPE,, have role-models, stimulus (outside of screens), get involved in Community (litter picking), helping the elderly with washing cars, gardening ,mowing lawns (supervised), etc.

## The Lonely and the Isolated

97. I have truly been in lockdown during the last 3 months. The church has done really well in enabling this to happen: supplying someone to get my shopping, and a group and excellent group leader to keep me in touch with what is going on.
98. There has not been any acknowledgement that many parishioners are elderly, living on their own, and have no family near them, or regularly communicating with them.
99. Loneliness combined with poor health is exacerbated by C-19

## Other Responses on Community

### **We have an identity apart from the church community we are in, of the role we have in the wider community**

100. Community relationships
101. Work with local schools has been a great way to interact with the community.
102. P&P Community Day - really positive event. Could it be a bi-annual event?
103. Christian groups were able to reach out into their communities for example FEAST and the local food banks.
104. From conversations I've had it seems our church family have strengthened their relationships with the community on their doorstep during this time in various ways. The important thing is not to lose what we've gained, whether it is a closer friendship with another member of our church family, a neighbour, a community group or a business etc.
105. In some of the live stream services, there were **interviews with local public figures** and representatives of charities. It would be good if such people could be invited to speak about their work on a regular basis at our services and let us know how we can support them.

Include representatives of local businesses, schools and colleges, NHS, police and fire services, council services eg refuse collection.

106. During lockdown the biggest gap in relationships with the community I have seen is with the secondary schools – how can we improve that and who is there who can bridge the gap between church and the schools? We are already good at connecting with the primary schools.

### Other thoughts and ideas

107. Coffee/tea in the front gardens or by their back gates where they backed onto a communal area.
108. Neighbourhood quiz
109. Outdoor neighbourhood workout
110. In my neighbourhood we now celebrate each other's birthdays by going to the birthday person's house and singing 'Happy Birthday' to them. One or two ladies bake cakes and someone produces a bottle of prosecco.
111. Neighbourhood What's App
112. Showing a presence at non secular activities eg Dragon boat race, Carnival.
113. Litter picking groups
114. We might consider re-focussing the membership of our Home Groups on each road and area, so that they can be more effective in outreach in their immediate communities
115. Open house seemed to be progressing really well; also good to have people working in food bank, help with domestic abuse problems, help to apply for jobs etc (done in previous crisis?), debt advice, support for green issues... We need church to come alongside people, and to somehow be especially welcoming to those other than white middle-class!
116. Teddies and Tiny Acorns, etc can offer some opportunities
117. The hospitality initiative seemed to have worked well.
118. We must not place more value on those who are younger, those who have children, those who earn more or are more respected by the world. Church must be a place where all people can come and feel valued, seen, welcomed and encouraged with love.
119. We must not get so busy servicing the internal structures of the church to the detriment of having time to listen to, and to keep contact with, those with whom these last few months have provided a renewed contact.
120. It is vital for those who continue to be isolated to continue receiving personal phone calls, visits, Christian fellowship in some form or other.
121. General feeling was that we need to do more in the community and 'reach out' in both an evangelistic way and to those less fortunate
122. If we run some / many community gatherings and events, how do we turn those into opportunities to share our faith and tell others about Jesus? Some ideas include Messy Church, Evening services on other days
123. Should **Teddies continue to run virtually** as well as "in the flesh" once we are allowed to meet again? This would cater for different nap times and for those who can't get out, e.g. due to illness.
124. A skills audit of the congregation would show whether this need can be met from within the church family.
125. Need more families in church. North Tonbridge has a huge population and is only served by TBC, Methodists and St Philip's. They should all be full and run out of space.
126. we need to establish more links and friendships with people who live in our local community. Everybody, without exception, has needs of different kinds, and we can share the love of God by helping with those needs as far as we are able. We need to find out what those needs are.

One such need is loneliness, especially at this time. Here we can help by sharing in different activities. Another need is sometimes transport. And there are other needs. We can help by opening our homes, as I have been privileged to do, praying that as people call in and meet with us that they will meet with Him too.

127. Outreach by offering training and advice for new skills and support for those facing difficulties are also being explored.
128. Many of our members are involved in the Community are being witnesses there already. Maybe encourage us all to be more effective in those groups in witnessing for Christ. Coffee Lounge reaches out to all the users of our premises as well as to those who visit. Uniformed groups, Teddies and TA, Yvonne's Sewing groups are all reaching out. Mens Groups at ST Phils too. Danger of making the same people too busy by trying to do more. Is it better to do what we are doing, better?
129. Sending them a Perspectives, to show the events and groups, so they can come to something in person
130. Be at fairs with intriguing/engaging things to make talking points – glitter jars, steady hand game

## APPENDIX B2 – PASTORAL CARE

### **The Call Contact System**

1. "I have enjoyed contacting a small number of people each week and, for two separate contacts in particular, have been able to source help they have required. We have drawn closer together."
2. "Good interconnectedness between churches and ringing round including those who do not come to church regularly."
3. "The phone contacts network has both increased a sense of inter-connectedness and shared the pastoral 'burden' – It would be good if that was given a more permanent and perhaps wider, expression."
4. "The support system of ringing people has been good. It would be good to continue this support system in some form once we are able to meet again at services."
5. "The pastoral calls have made have also created an opportunity to get to know certain people better."
6. "They've also benefited from the call tree and other ways to ensure they are kept in the loop and able to access services in some way shape or form."
7. "The Parish Contact system has been good"
8. "The community has been maintained to a certain extent by faithful telephone pastoral work"
9. We need each other and we need to keep in touch
10. The telephone contact system has been very beneficial to many, but only of limited value when not face to face.

### **Support for Different Cohorts – Elderly, Families, Singles, 20s and 30s, Youth and Children**

11. "I appreciate that we have had a pastoral care programme in place and that members of our fellowship undertake visits to care homes. To co-ordinate this and build on it for outreach

12. There is a real need to have younger people brought on with more senior members of our congregations serving as mentors
13. "I feel that society has neglected the older and more vulnerable members of the community."
14. We need to provide practical help for the housebound and isolated
15. Dementia Care
16. "future planning needs to include provision for those who have dementia."
17. "It would also be good to try to connect more with care homes, retirement flats and other communities that can easily become cut off from the rest of the church like special needs schools or assisted living communities."
18. "It would also be good to try to connect more with care homes, retirement flats and other communities that can easily become cut off from the rest of the church like special needs schools or assisted living communities."
19. "...the point of need for young people in their twenties is, and will be especially in the future, careers help, cv writing, interview coaching, some upskilling, maybe mentoring."
20. "...20s/30s who are the missing element in our otherwise relatively diversely aged congregation

**Pastoral Care (Caring for & serving each other – men, women, young families, sick and bereaved)**

21. "Offering... someone to chat or pray with (have a team; we have awesome pray-ers)"
22. "We need to adapt, change, listen and love each other"
23. "We need to identify and reach out to the lonely and isolated"
24. "If we don't take care of ourselves, we have no overflow. Without an overflow, we find it hard to take care of others — and almost impossible to obey Jesus' command"
25. "Caring for each other is much more practical done in small groups e.g. home groups"
26. "... build relationships that care for the 'whole person'"
27. There has certainly been an increase in caring for one another
28. Nurturing personal relationships that are important
29. But there are still numerous ways we can continue to serve each other
30. Relationships can suffer and need to be worked at continually. We all need each other to be whole.
31. We need to have better insight into the daily needs of our individual members
32. I know church isn't a building, but we do need somewhere to meet to encourage one another. Our individual church groups need nurturing and not just via Zoom coffee
33. ....its that of the father hugging the prodigal son!
34. Awakening an awareness of the importance of face to face contact for the maintenance of personal relationships
35. I have been greatly encouraged by other members of our Leadership team in our practical care for all those in the church family at ....

**Whole person health, especially mental health**

36. "Mental health is important for us all. We all need to pay attention to our inner being and to take steps to maintain or improve our mental health just as we do with physical fitness."
37. "We need to look after ourselves first, and this isn't being selfish"
38. "If we don't take care of ourselves, we have no overflow. Without an overflow, we find it hard to take care of others — and almost impossible to obey Jesus' command"
39. "... caring for the 'whole person'!"
40. "... build relationships that care for the 'whole person'"
41. Belonging is important and feeling cared for is important too

### **Technical Help for Non-tech People**

42. "Our concern is for those who do not have modern technology or who find it difficult/impossible to access or use or simply cannot afford it. Two blind ladies have made use of the telephone thoughts for the day. It is impossible for them to access anything else online or through the post."
43. "However, it would be good to remember those who can't get out to go to church, so recording services and having them available on the Internet would be a good thing to continue. One problem is that a lot of older people don't have the technology, but this will change as we all get older"
44. "perhaps we can help those who would like to be more technologically literate"
45. "It's harder for those without technology to feel connected I think."

### **Financial Support**

46. "Everyone should be encouraged to engage in good stewardship"
47. "Government help going forward will not be enough for the unemployed, the bankrupt, those on low incomes, the lonely, the stressed. There will not be enough government money to follow through after the initial response. The church family needs to do what it can to help those in need."

## **APPENDIX B3 – ISSUES – NATIONAL AND GLOBAL**

### **Inequality and Injustice**

131. (see Amos Ch's 2 to 8) read like today's headlines: exploitation and oppression of the poor, needy and helpless; corruption and injustice; decades of misuse of natural resources and pollution, with the single-minded pursuit of wealth above all else.
132. We will need to address the constantly changing needs of the more vulnerable members of society. Reboot the world in a way that reduces racial, economic and other inequalities exposed during the crisis.
133. There is so much inequality and injustice in the world. The pandemic has shed light on society's inequality, injustice, exploitation of people and the planet, greed, dishonesty, corruption of power, selfishness and self-gratification and pride.

134. There is too much inequality in society and too many people whose voices are not heard or valued.

### **Environment**

5. Appreciation of the environmental impact of quiet roads and clean air
6. The Church needs to take the lead in protecting God's world
7. The Natural World is in revolt – as Christians we are part of something so much bigger than our buildings and serving our local community
8. Recycle – make do and mend where possible
9. We must save the planet from economic greed and fight for change
10. Give the planet regular rest periods
11. The lockdown has led to a greater appreciation of God's creation
12. The silence of lockdown.....
13. How do we aid the recovery of our planet?

### **Poverty**

14. We are beginning to see a potential tsunami of redundancies and bankruptcies
15. A new era of austerity beckons
16. Poverty and homelessness are very likely to increase
17. As the Pope said recently, to see the poor and see that we value people in other ways than just their financial contribution
18. Government help going forward will not be enough for the unemployed
19. Do we need a bit of a shake as the 'haves', and to be reminded of Jesus' heart for the poor and broken?

### **National Issues**

20. There is no moral leadership or compass in our society, and no trust in anything.
21. Why is the Church not calling out more, why is it silent about the exploitation?
22. How best do we continue to recognise the contribution of undervalued professions?
23. How do we offer security to the 'precariat', those who have no safe job or regular income?
24. In the light of mental health issues across the UK, can we as a church do more to support those suffering with it?
25. Mental health support is needed for children, young people and their parents
26. Sunday morning services on the BBC. We need to encourage the BBC to restart these.

## APPENDIX C2 – WHAT IS CHURCH?

### **What is Church?**

27. Re-define what church is. Is it a set of believers meeting on a Sunday for prayer and praise, or is it more than that? And if so, what more is it?
28. Church really is the community of those trying to follow Christ rather than the building in which we meet
29. It must be a place where people can come and feel valued and be seen, welcomed and encouraged with love
30. We do not want the church to be marginalised
31. The church really is the people and not the building. However, belonging is important
32. Does believing or belonging come first?
33. The prime mover is not increasing church numbers but witnessing God's love in action
34. The church is the community of God's people worshipping and serving him
35. The people are the church not just the building
36. We always need to be attracting new people
37. A hub from which practical action is co-ordinated
38. Question why we go to church – lifelong habit or real desire to worship?
39. How can we make the faith we share an expression of the abundance of God-given life rather than an act of worship on a Sunday?
40. As a church we need to meet people where they are
41. We are a community and this should not be exclusive

### **The Crisis**

42. Over the past four months we have been operating as one church
43. I have felt more part of the body of Christ
44. A skeleton church has emerged
45. I feel the church has gone to the people, and less that people have gone to church
46. Has much of the tradition been stripped away in the crisis?
47. Did the scripture and reasoning also go, or have they been more evident along with experience in the lives of individuals and the church?

### **Opportunity**

48. The church should see this as a huge (perhaps unprecedented) opportunity to reshape itself as 'The Body of Christ' in ways that are meaningful and effective.
49. Opportunity to build something new
50. It is an opportune moment to reach out with the Good News
51. Start again at the beginning...
52. Lockdown has been an invitation to listen, to learn and to grow
53. There is no going back to being a Sunday-only Christian
54. Justin Welby's comment – that we should not go back to where we were
55. Take advantage of present situation to re-think
56. There may be people seeking more of the meaning of life as a result of C-19
57. There is spiritual hunger out there
58. We see this as a watershed, time for reflection and to focus on what is important
59. C-19 brings a greater sense of urgency to share the good news

- 60. Entirely appropriate time for the church 'to take stock'
- 61. Increased appetite for the things of God

#### **How is it Viewed – Internal**

- 62. Together with God we are strong
- 63. Feel of Middle England, from a middle-class background, in employment, with nice children and a leaning to benevolence. It is comfortable, cosy and we are very 'nice' to each other, but is it fulfilling and challenging?
- 64. We need to be less middle class
- 65. The church has lost its vision
- 66. More frequently nowadays the church relies on its retired element to staff and action activities
- 67. How hard it is for older churches to adapt and promote new ideas, younger people and accommodate change
- 68. Have we lost unity? We are all children of the same God.
- 69. Are we falling short in evangelical fervour?

#### **How is it Viewed – External**

- 70. People see us as elitist
- 71. Church is seen as a cosy club, content to grow from within and rarely going out to find 'lost sheep'.
- 72. People these days are not interested in what we offer. Could it be that they are not interested because we are not really interested in them?
- 73. Perception is that the Church works in its own circle
- 74. That we have an identity apart from the church community we are in and the role we inhabit in that community

#### **Change Our Attitude**

- 75. Repentance needs to start with us
- 76. Repent as a church. We don't feel the need for penitence like our mediaeval predecessors
- 77. Be less shackled to our buildings
- 78. Strive to keep changing and moving rather than trying to reach 'normal' again
- 79. Less focussed on making things comfortable for people, and more on the exciting prospect of change and new ideas

#### **The Buildings**

- 80. Running 4 churches and 7 services puts an enormous burden on the clergy, the staff and the volunteers in many roles. Too much time and effort is put into running these
- 81. It also means we need to support and maintain 4 buildings
- 82. More radical approach – unify the congregations and put the other three buildings for community use
- 83. It is not about the buildings (although they do provide a special place to meet)
- 84. Keep our church buildings as beacons of hope, of testament to faithfulness over the years, as sacred places to cherish, where people can drop in and just be, and where we can worship together when it's safe to do so.

85. As individuals and as a church we are not defined by our church buildings
86. Some additional alternative uses of our buildings will be called for

### **Steps to Develop**

87. Start by reassuring people of what is not changing
88. We need to look after ourselves first, and this isn't being selfish. We need to flow over
89. We need a period of prayer and fasting coupled with opening ourselves to the Holy Spirit. Taken seriously this can lead to heartfelt repentance and a re-ordering of priorities
90. Unless we sincerely and obediently seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will just be applying our own ideas. It will manifest in surprising, even shocking ways!
91. We guard against subscribing to the values of society
92. We all need each other 'to be a church'. Everyone has different gifts and talents. We need to use these not only for ourselves but for others
93. We must not get so busy servicing the internal structures of the church
94. Think more about how we draw non-churchgoers into church and to connect with us
95. Hold off from restarting numerous programmes and look for synergies
96. Redefine the issue of communicating the gospel
97. Use on-line to reach out and then invite people to attend a church building service
98. We must remove old habits and develop new ones
99. Think about the things we should stop doing, or be doing differently
100. We need a mission statement
101. On-line Alpha is a good move
102. Focus on who we worship, and who or what is central to our lives

### **Sections of Society**

103. The future of the church is its youth
104. Bring the generations together. Both older and younger people have much to offer in experiences and skills which we can all share and benefit from.
105. Involve the younger generation in church life
106. Tonbridge is a fast-growing suburban environment for the younger generation, an age-group we must attract and exist for
107. We need to be an inclusive church
108. Consider whether we should have four churches functioning in the same way

### **Outcome**

109. These priorities are largely focussed outwards
110. Can we be a 7-day church, with 6 days of activity and work in the community, and one as a day of rest and praise for the work of the week?
111. Leaner and fitter
112. A responsibility to pass on the Good News
113. Aspirations for a more 'centred' parish may have value, but may leave out recent newcomers