

Dear friends,

I hope that you are keeping safe and well and I apologize for the long gap between this and the last newsletter. So here is a quick update for each of the three Lifestreams Churches, sorry that it cannot cover everything!

SAINT CEDD'S

It was such a shock to receive an email from John Perry at the end of September informing us that he resigned from the Pioneer role at Saint Cedd's, with immediate effect. This was due largely to health grounds, mixed in with a number of other factors which makes for a complex story. We are grateful for all the projects that John started and for the impact that he and Sonia had made in the area and at Saint Stephen's. They will be hugely missed. However, we continue on, seeking the next step that God has in store for us. We have spent some time picking up the pieces and will re-connect with Lancaster School and CAP Lifeskills as soon as possible.

At the annual meeting Dawn Gilbert was appointed, alongside Sandra Bull, as our Churchwardens. Please pray for them as they carry out these significant roles.

Worship continues in the church building on Sunday mornings, at 11am, taking various forms, with thanks especially to Vi Baldwin, Liz Stone, Revd Peter and Diane Nicholson. Darren Middleton will be leading worship on 15th and 29th November. Communion will generally be offered on the last Sunday of each month.

Liz Stone completed her contract for Lifestreams and due to the current extraordinary circumstances (particularly financial) we mutually agreed not to extend her contract for another year as had previously been discussed. Liz continues to explore the possibility of training for Ordained ministry.

Some people at the church have been made

redundant and we come alongside them and pray and support as best we can. The good news is that Liz and Adam are expecting the birth of a new baby in March. Liz is doing well and started a new job back at the beginning of September.

We have begun to reduce the height of some of the shrubs and trees that are growing along the boundary by the bungalow in Bridgwater Drive - there is still a lot of work to do!

Tea and Chat is continuing, now with a £2 charge for biscuits and a bottomless cup of tea!

Due to the coronavirus pandemic the usual autumn and winter festivals have largely been cancelled or reduced or put online with the other Lifestreams Churches. There will be some Advent and Christmas celebrations, look out for the leaflets coming out soon or on the Lifestreams website and Social Media.

Looking forward to 2021, we plan to appoint staff to fulfill the role that John has vacated.

Income has significantly dropped and we are keen to rent the hall out again as groups are allowed to meet again. Several groups have either been closed, reduced or moved to other premises, so there are a few available slots. Please put the word around.

We have just received our Parish Share allocation for 2021 and it will be over £8000 for the year. In addition we need to raise funds towards the running of the building together with part of the salary for the Pioneer Minister. It will be a struggle but we are in God's hands and believe and trust in Him for a bright future.

Saint Cedd's
sort code 20-19-97
account number
23801896



Saint Stephen's Prittlewell SS2 6QS



Saint Peter's Westcliff SS0 0QF



Saint Cedd's Bridgwater Drive SS0 0DS



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Saint Peter's

The church seems as lively as ever. The Lifestreams Coffee House (LCH) has been open from 10am-1pm on weekdays since the beginning of July. We have seen an increased amount of customers. It has become a much needed place where people can meet safely and without any pressure to move on and for a really good price get a very good cup of coffee. Sir David Amess said it was the best coffee in town!! The staff have been great, adapting to a much more vigorous regime of cleaning tables and chairs along with different serving practices. We have been grateful to Jasmine Vanboven who has been volunteering many days during the last few months. She has just gone away on placement for University. Many other staff have worked hard, there are too many to name here but I do want to thank Vi for doing many extra shifts and management. Again, responding to requests the LCH has become a place for carers with toddlers to meet on a Friday morning. We have called the group 'Droplets' and are considering formalising this group at a later date. Thanks to Hannah for taking on the responsibility of leadership.

Sunday mornings have a different feel now, with the chairs spaced out, a booking system in place and temperatures and 'track and trace' taken upon entry, along with sanitiser, of course. What seems most strange is the non-singing of songs and hymns, or the muffled sound of voices beneath masks. I think we are becoming used to this altered reality. Our capacity is for 45 people so it essential that people book early via the emails sent out. We can cover up to ten people in the coffee house as an overflow but we don't advertise these spaces. There have been several weeks when we have reached capacity. Some churches are still not open for worship on Sunday and we have enjoyed having with us quite a number of new people, some from other churches and some from the local area. It is wonderful to see what God is opening up for the future. I am mindful that many of you cannot or choose not to come to worship in the building yet and I really understand that. Hopefully you are

receiving visits or phonecalls. I'm so glad that Revd David Pierce did

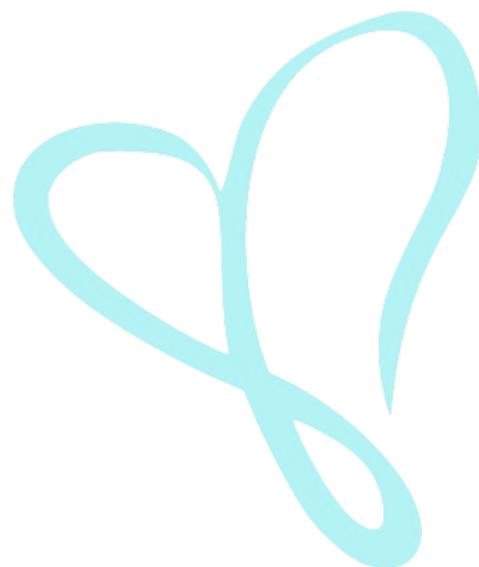
LIFESTREAMS

the training a couple of years ago for the whole congregation to take on the pastoral care of others. Perhaps God put this in place for us at the right time! I hope that in the spring time the threat of the virus will have passed so that people will be safe enough to venture out to church again.

Income for Saint Peter's has been hugely curtailed and we are grateful for those who continue to give generously to the work and mission of the church. The loss of income from the halls so far is £26000, this makes a huge dent in our already struggling finances. I include the bank details below if anyone wants to make use of them! Thank you.

We are planning a reduced programme for Advent and Christmas and will produce another newsletter nearer the time. Please keep in touch. You can phone me on 01702 352448 and leave a message if I'm not there and I will get back to you.

Saint Peter's sort code 55-50-28 account number 07117272
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saint stephen's

Saint Stephen's is a remarkable church. Through all the difficulties we are still meeting, fortnightly at 213 for Holy Communion, with a small gathering of four to five people, which is about right and safe in the lounge. The church building has been cleaned by the Church of Pentecost and the floors polished in anticipation for their return, from the 1st November.

Have have two exciting projects taking place now and the future looks surprisingly bright! Let me start with the garden project. The garden is being slowly developed after receiving grant money some time ago. Of course there have been delays but work is picking up again now, getting ready for the springtime. We are grateful to Mick and Hannah for doing some of the work and Jake and Charlotte (and family) tidying up the front especially. The gardeners have been disappointing in that they have not contacted us again with a revised price for the work. Much of the paving has been completed, the trees lopped and shrubs reduced. We are helping out Darren and mate as they find themselves both being made redundant and they are helping us by carrying out small packages of work. The lawn outside the lounge is taking shape and the base for the benches and planters are being established. Sharon is continuing to submit grant applications and we are confident that money will be forthcoming for a project manager, a polytunnel and other equipment. Connections are being made with community groups for a launch of the project when the weather and virus situation improves in 2021.

Alongside the garden project the new building plans are progressing. We have been negotiating with Southend Planners who, with some amendments to the plans are backing the scheme. This process has delayed the project by another couple of months but it is worth it to get their support. We have reduced the size of the building by omitting the crèche facilities and accommodation. This makes space for the extensive car parking that the council are insisting that we include despite our philosophy

to encourage people to walk and cycle.

LIFESTREAMS

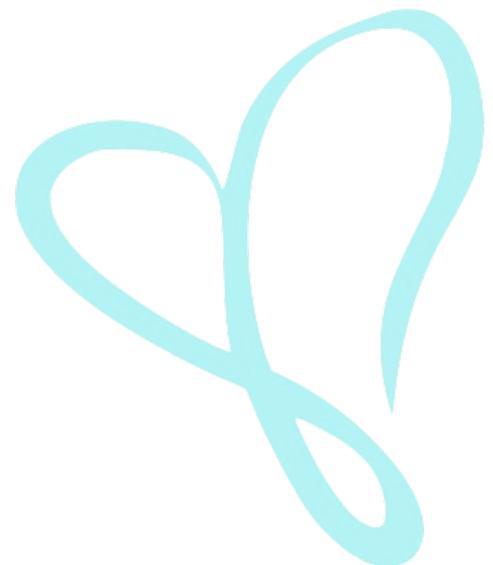
However, life is full of compromise and we are learning to discover exactly what God wants for us. The building is more efficient and we won't need to raise quite so much funding....silver lining?

Please continue to pray for this project, especially during the first week of December when it is due to go to the Planning Committee. Then we can start to tackle the funding!

Saint Stephen's has lost over £4000 since lockdown began, and although it is a smaller loss than the other churches it is very significant on our very tight budget. We are grateful to everyone who continues to give generously to the work and mission of the church, thank you. I leave the bank details below if you want to make further direct contributions. Thank you for your support.

We are planning to re-establish some groups at 213 in 2021, by opening a carer and toddler group alongside a (limited) Lifestreams Coffee House. These, together with the garden project will start to bring new life back to the parish. I'm still not sure about any sustained meetings for worship on Sundays until we become more established, so we will focus upon our online presence, for the time being.

Saint Stephen's sort code 20-79-73 account number 20792705
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213 GARDEN PROJECT

The garden had been neglected for years and then became too great a task for volunteers only. To enable the Garden project to be created the garden needed some infrastructure work to be carried out, so that the garden becomes manageable again. Grant funding is enabling this to be done during 2019/20, despite being slowed down due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Front and side of property - tree work



Before...

Ivy is removed from trees but remains as a manageable green boundary, instead of replacing the whole fence. Trees are also pruned professionally.

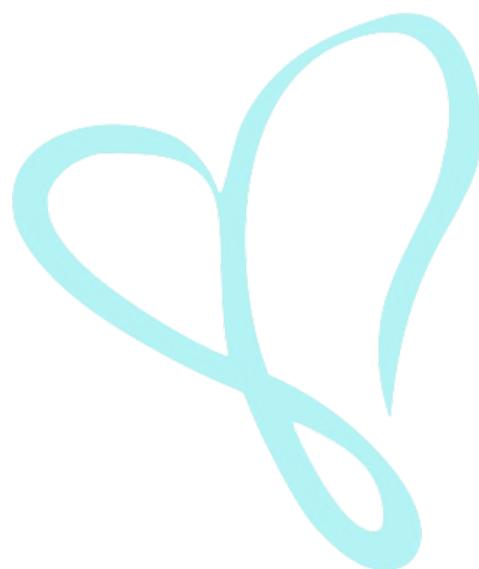


...and after



213 Garden Project - Rear garden - overgrown trees

The work to the trees and ivy continue in the rear garden, by the professional team to clear the space for the development. Brambles and shrubs are being cut back by volunteers.



Front and rear garden - patio/paved areas

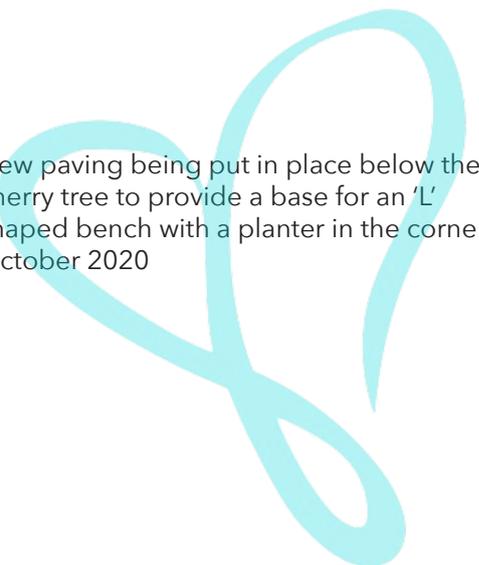
Once the coal bunker and lean-to were removed the patio area could be created, making the ground surface even and accessible.



and looking out from the lounge...



New paving being put in place below the cherry tree to provide a base for an 'L' shaped bench with a planter in the corner. October 2020



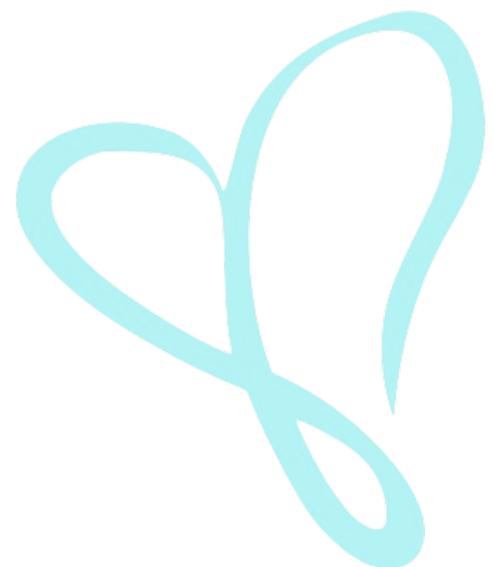
213 Garden Project - Front of property

Creating parking space for cars, buggies and bikes and a new front boundary

At the front a space was cleared, bike racks installed and the area paved for electric motorbility scooters, all adjacent to the newly created parking area.



A new hedgerow was planted, replacing an unstable brick wall.



other news

We come into the remembrance season and of course we are unable to bring the Memorial service as we usually do. Remembrance Day will be marked by worship at Saint Peter's that is being livestreamed. We will not be able to host the uniformed organisations this year and the capacity remains at 45.

We are excited by possibilities that worship online brings us. I continue to broadcast Daily Prayer at 8am and Night prayer at 8pm on weekdays. These services are available on YouTube and maybe you can watch them on your television, if you have a recent one. There are quite a number of people taking part in this act of worship each day, some from other countries. God seems to be using this to minister to many people.

We continue to support the Storehouse and Foodbanks and Operation Christmas Child. If you



would like to fill a shoebox or donate some food to those in need please give the office a call and we will arrange to send out a box and pick them up.

Back in September the Macmillan coffee morning on the three sites was held, despite the difficult conditions. Over £400 was raised so thanks to everyone who organised cakes and drinks, and everyone who donated.



The process to discover the new Bishop of Chelmsford continues apace. There has been a huge response by people throughout the diocese giving the views of the people. During November there will be various meetings and I think a decision will be made. We will make announcements as soon as we have any further information, though that may be in the new year.

If you have any needs or requests please do call the office. We may not be able to see each other but we are still praying for you all and are able to support you.

That's it for now, I'm having a week off. God bless you !

Grace mercy and peace be with you all.

Colin

GET INVOLVED



CELEBRATE

online + in church

COMFORT

&

TOGETHER