

JOURNEYING TOGETHER - THE SYNOD

a report from Christ Church, Heald Green

The replies which form the response from our parish were assembled from notes taken at an advertised meeting together with the content of emails sent into the parish office and one letter. The exercise was clearly published and information was made available both on line and with hard copies available at the back of church for those who could not attend the meeting. However, less than twenty people in total participated. The exercise was led by two parishioners, Christine Bodley and Joan Bleackley, who are also submitting this report.

1. The Journeying Companions

Although numbers in church are gradually building up again, they are still well down on what they were pre-covid.

We attribute this to a sense of fear in some. In others we believe there has been a loss of habit. Others feel sidelined as the roles they undertook have disappeared, even though they understand the reasons why. We are, for example, gradually bringing back altar servers but sadly have lost several en route.

We also are aware that it has not been possible to take out Holy Communion to the housebound on the scale we used to do. There was a lot of ringing round in the first lockdown which has diminished as churches reopened and people are able to make more personal decisions about whether or not to attend.

However, we do feel we should reach out more to keep in touch with the genuinely housebound and also to encourage others to return to shared worship in church. Teams were suggested.

2. Listening and 3. Speaking Out

Those who were present at the synod meeting expressed the need to meet together in discussion. Even the regular parish meeting was missed! But we also wondered how we could extend the variety and breadth of people who attend and how do we deal with the perception amongst some that there is a "clique" which excludes others. We wondered if there were meetings we could reinstate without necessarily involving the clergy and what they might achieve apart from being a toothless talking shop, generally for the same people.

4. Celebrating

We all reinforce the catholic love of the Eucharist but:-