

Open Forum – future of Music in Worship at St Michael's
Monday 19 April 2021 on Zoom 846 662 9590 P/C 834900
Aide Memoire

1. Lockdown Worship and Music:

What has been of blessing in these hard times?

Organ music, live and earlier on Zoom from home
Single Cantor and small group singing – in church and from home
Zoom connection for worship and fellowship
Children and Young people participating e.g. reading
Wed 10 am communion – as close as possible to 'normal'
Greater inclusivity
Innovation
Prayers led by a variety of people including those new to this ministry
Spoken psalms with responses
Video Choir (Summer 2020) and CTBS singing
Visiting and pastoral outreach by lay people

What has stifled faith and worship?

What have we missed from previous experience of music and worship?

Banning of choir
Absence of full church and praise with raised voices
Sense of being together – impaired by distancing
Constraint of ritual, ceremony, sacrament
A sense of 'us and them' around limitations to singing
Less richness in our worshiping diet
Outreach and special services lacking e.g. Schools
Fellowship and conversation constrained
HC diminished
Baptism
Noise and bustle of children diminished
Focus on regulations distracts from focus on God
Parish Praise orchestra
Parish Praise children's involvement
Wearing of masks: inhibits, distracts, disheartens
Lack of concerts to bring people in to the building
Restrictions in being able properly to welcome and engage with newcomers and visitors

2. Going Forwards:

Have there been lessons learned and gifts discovered?

Keeping in touch with Zoom – further development possible?

The singing of Cantors and small groups

Flexibility and variety in worship

Different sorts of music

Use of organ and singing for reflection times

The choir – with more informality, flexibility

Embracing adaptation and spontaneity

The commitment and inclusiveness of congregation members, participating and contributing to worship and music

Congregational singing in the churchyard

What old treasures might be restored, perhaps in a new way?

The choral tradition we have enjoyed

Congregational singing in church with the organ

Songs of Praise services as a way to renew congregational singing?

Choral Evensong

Specialist services e.g. Advent, Palm Sunday

Taize

Sung Eucharist, BCP, singing the Creed.

Young people in the choir

Holy Communion at 10 am – Sometimes? Always?

Children's and Families involvement and ministry

Further redevelopment of organ music

*A question – do we think we should naturally return to the **status quo ante**, or is this a moment to reshape, perhaps significantly, our ongoing worshipping life?*

The Service of the Word might be a better framework than sung Parish Communion, for engaging newcomers?

Other forms/times of worship might be better to reach out for families, children – should we consult and seek opinions?

Practical questions – how many people will physically return to church, especially if online worship is developed?

How many will return to choir? What sizes of congregations will we have - enough to meaningfully sustain the diet of main services we used to have? Or will some choices have to be made on the basis of practical realities and resources – singers and worshippers?

Ultimately these are questions for PCC and incumbent to decide: good to have space for all to share and listen to opinions and ideas.

3. Appointing a Director of Music:

Has our discussion given any pointers for the nature of this role in 2021-?

To kick-start choir, seek to re-energise junior choir

There is a challenge and opportunity to share in redevelopment

An opportunity for innovation, an 'open field' for initiative

Quality organ playing important

Someone who can nurture instrumentalists

Someone comfortable with flexibility in music

The job description needs some adaptation from that previously envisaged in 2019-20

Consideration of the salary needed if we are to attract someone capable of addressing this agenda

Engagement with schools, especially St Michael's: recruiting choir, bringing in school choirs, musicians into our worship?

Singing workshops 'Come and sing': culminating in worship, as a way to engage singers, nurture and recruit?

Link to ministry of proposed Families Minister

Need for collaboration, support and input from wider church – cannot be a 'hero' ministry of a lone ranger.

Need for a real Christian faith

Rebuild, innovate, discover

Any suggestions for PCC to consider, in framing ongoing process?

PCC to consider on 10 May (this Aide Memoire to be previously circulated)

PCC members at the 19.4 Forum encouraged to share a reflection at the 10.5

PCC meeting, please.

Set up of a Working Party/Appointment Group for DoM appointment?

Would Forum members like to be considered?

Please notify DW if so.

There will be practical limits to the size of an Appointment Group: might Forum attendees offer to act as part of a 'Reference' or 'Consultation' group, continuing to offer perspectives to a DoM Working Party? Please notify DW if so.

Finally – THANKS – to all who have offered, organised, prepared and shared music in worship, and for coming to the Forum to share and hear thoughts and ideas.

Derwyn Williams, 20.4.21.