

## **ST MARY THE VIRGIN RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN**

### **SUNDAY CLUB REPORT - APCM OCTOBER 2020 - APRIL 2021**

Over the past twelve months we have, like many other clubs, needed to adapt to virtual sessions as a result of the global pandemic. This has been both challenging and rewarding in equal measure. We have tried to find the right balance between weekly and fortnightly sessions, to run a range of stimulating, engaging bible focused sessions that continued to capture the children's enthusiasm whilst collaborating over zoom. We have seen the level of engagement increase for some families, no longer having to juggle church with a multitude of activities, and a decline for some families where children are struggling to connect on zoom. What has been extremely encouraging is the level of communication that we've seen from all of our families, wanting us to know that the children are ready and waiting to return, as soon as we are able to do that in a safe way, so it's exciting to think that we may be able to do this in the year ahead.

We are so very proud of what we have achieved as a club this year in such extraordinary circumstances and have been pleased to welcome 5 new families to Sunday Club during the past six months!

In March/April we quickly realised that we were in this for the longer haul and that the children, not having much connection with their school friends at that point (home schooling in its infancy) might need a weekly connection point with their Sunday Club friends. We organised a weekly rota, which included leaders and members of St Luke's parish which we ran right the way through to the summer holiday break. We covered such activities as the Good Samaritan and new beginnings as a theme. We were able to take part in a number of Easter activities. We made Easter gardens which we left outside of Church and in our gardens as a reminder to our community of Holy Week. We also made palm crosses from paper and last years palm leaves via an online zoom session.

As a Parish we all underwent a VR journey for Thy Kingdom come with daily prayers and activities. The children loved this as it was such a different experience which really brought to life the prayers, and symbolism within the bible readings.

In September, after our summer break, we started to focus on the Harvest festival lunch. We made and laminated 80+ lunch mats for people to use, as we weren't able to put on our usual harvest lunch in the church hall. These were really well received and the wealth of different mats showed exactly how creative our Sunday Club members are.

Returning from Half term we recognised again that there would be a need for weekly sessions (being in tier 3) and started preparation on Prayer baubles, prayer mats and nativity scenes for the congregation to have as a reminder that they were all in our thoughts. We also worked hard on two nativity sessions, one recorded on zoom and one in church. Our plan was for half of the club to be in church and half to have recorded a version on zoom to share with those members of the congregation that weren't able to attend church. Unfortunately we weren't able to be in church but have a ready-made script for next year! Thankfully we were able to go ahead with the recorded zoom version which was a fantastic achievement by our leaders and loved by all who were able to zoom in to watch it.

We are currently preparing for our Easter play which will take place on Palm Sunday via zoom, we are very excited as it is the first time in a little while that we have done this and this time we will be 'live' so hopefully it will be all right on the day!

We have had such fantastic achievements this past year, which couldn't have been pulled off without the passion and enthusiasm of such a wonderful group of leaders, engaging children and parents.

As leaders Ali Wakefield has completed the C2 safeguarding course. We have agreed with Greg Barry from the central safeguarding team that Sarah, Lizzie, Hattie and Michele will complete this course after we are able to resume in person Sunday Club sessions later this year. We are all mindful of the safeguarding commitments that we make as leaders and have ensured that our parents have been engaged to oversee our zoom based activities during this past twelve months.

Ali, Sarah, Lizzie, Hattie and Michele