

4. Looking to the future

As mentioned earlier, it would be great if we could extend our Pastoral Care Teams and extend our outreach. We have been joined recently by our new Assistant Curate, Rev Jan Radford, who has particular expertise from her role as a hospital chaplain. Jan and I hope to spearhead some new work with elderly people by offering occasional worship services for frail people, including those with dementia. We hope that these services will provide further opportunities to reach out to those whom we might not see in our congregations but who, nevertheless, have spiritual needs.

If you would feel God may be calling you to serve him as a Pastoral Carer, or if you'd like to know more, please contact me.

Thank you.

Rev Pam Rolls
Associate Minister (tel 834475)
March 2015



St Matthew's Harwell with All Saints' Chilton

Pastoral Care Report March 2015

1. Introduction - The Role of Pastoral Carers

*The role of our Pastoral Carers is to seek to share **Christ's love** with the people of our two parishes through:*

- **Visiting** those who are ill or infirm at home or in hospital and those who have had to move to a care home;
- **Befriending** and supporting those who are lonely, especially people who are housebound;
- **Coming alongside** people who have been bereaved;
- **Providing Holy Communion** for those who are unable to join us in Church because of age or infirmity.

All that we do must be undergirded by our own private **prayers** and those of our two congregations.

2. Our Pastoral Care Teams

Each of our parishes has a small, faithful, Pastoral Care Team comprising lay and ordained members. The teams are led by Rev Joan Impey (Harwell, tel 820346) and Mrs Audrey Slater (Chilton, tel 834558). I have recently taken on a new role with overarching responsibility across the benefice for pastoral care and, particularly, the care of our elderly parishioners.

Of course we should also acknowledge that a lot of love and care is extended by people outside the Church who kindly look out for neighbours and friends. As Christians, our distinctive contribution is that we serve in Jesus' name and share his love with those whom we encounter. We all have a role to play in this whether we are officially a Pastoral Carer or not.

Let me give you a little more detail on the headings earlier in this report:

Visiting: There are many opportunities for us to visit people whether they are Church members or not. But we need to know who and where they are. Your help in keeping us informed of needs, and names and addresses, is invaluable.

Befriending: Loneliness is a growing feature amongst the population, even in our lovely villages, particularly with older people who don't see many visitors. But other, younger people might also feel isolated because they have recently moved here or have a new baby. Please let us know of these needs too so that we can try to come alongside them, befriend them and introduce them to the greatest friend of all, Jesus.

Bereavement Care: When people are bereaved they are often open to exploring their faith in a deeper way. Usually ministry to bereaved families has been exercised by the minister who conducted the funeral, but there is a great opportunity for us to grow a team of people who might specialize in caring for those who have lost loved ones.

Holy Communion: Our clergy currently offer home communion to anyone who would welcome it on a quarterly basis – Easter, summer, harvest and Christmas – but we can take it at other times too.

In addition, there is a monthly short service of Holy Communion held on the third Tuesday of the month at 10am at Cherry Tree Court (behind St Matthew's Church, Harwell). All parishioners, not only residents of Cherry Tree Court, are welcome to join us.

3. What we are not

We are not social workers or medical practitioners nor can we provide a regular taxi service. There is already provision for these through the County Council's Social Services, the NHS, local transport companies and the Didcot Volunteers. In addition, many kind neighbours, friends and family members assist with shopping and transport. Where we become aware of a need which is beyond our remit we may be able to suggest ways in which further help can be obtained.