

## Let's Talk –

### Response from St James the Great, Longburton , Sherborne, Dorset

#### What is the 'Personality and character' of your local church?

St James has recently been re-ordered. Pews were removed and an efficient heating system installed this has enable us to be much more flexible in how we use our worship space, we are comfortable and able to offer the warmest of welcomes to our visitors and parishioners. The ministry of hospitality is key to the personality of St James and we see this as very much at the heart of our personality and character.

#### What are the priorities of your local church?

Attracting young families is our first priority and then to build on work we are doing with young people and the wider community eg running a Village Café to coincide with the visit from the Library Van

#### Is there one thing you would like to take on or develop in the coming year?

Using our 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday service which is non-Eucharistic to develop as a family service with themed services well-advertised eg a pet service

#### Are there ways in which we can work together with neighbouring churches to achieve more?

Working with our local Methodist Church we have been able to hold combined services and organise 'Carols in the Pub'.

The Methodist church joined us for a harvest lunch which was held in our re-ordered church.

Members of the congregation are involved with 'Open the Book' in Sherborne Abbey Primary School where they work alongside members of the Abbey congregation as well as members of the Sherborne Methodist/URC church.

St James plays a full role in Sherborne Churches Together

#### How can we best measure the quality and impact of church life?

- By how we are received by the wider community; eg Village Café held once a fortnight as a place to meet and chat and to offer support and care. Used by many who never come to church.
- By offering opportunities for young people to meet; e.g. Tea, Toast and Table Tennis, an after school drop in which does what it says on the tin! This has had an offshoot in that some of the youngsters are learning how to ring the church bells.
- Personal named invitations to every child in the village before Christmas/Mothering Sunday etc has brought good success. Children like to receive mail for themselves.

Revd Lesley McCreadie – Assistant Curate Sherborne Abbey Benefice and Chaplain to Longburton