

HOPEFUL

Weddings, Brightlingsea Music Festival and a PCC social are just three of the events I have enjoyed in the month of August and it has been such a joy to meet up with others, listen to live music again and bask in the sun. In so many conversations,

I am hearing about people's hopes and plans and dreams: from starting courses to visiting loved ones to building projects to holidays and adventures, many of us have used the past couple of years to think about what matters to us most and are making an effort to enjoy life, either by returning to things and people we love or by meeting new people and trying new things.

A number of our Church members have particularly earned a break. Our hard-working PCC has been making decisions all year round with kindness, courage and faith in the face of uncertainty and constant change.

Our heroic All Saints' Project group has just finished submitting a massive, detailed application to the NLHF for tower repairs, the addition of a kitchenette and accessible toilet at All Saints' and a wonderful Activities Plan full of nature, heritage and art activities for all ages – please pray we get the grant funding we need for this exciting project!

In September we start new Bible Study groups, choirs begin again and Harvest season approaches. Our young people change schools and colleges or go off to University or begin work and some of us will be starting new jobs.

Perhaps it is the mix of sun, sea, sand and sugary ice-cream, but I am enjoying a bouncy, hopeful feeling about what the coming months will bring. Our Church is entering a time of praying and planning and reflecting on who and what we hope to be over the next 3-5 years.

What is our vision, what does the community need from us, what is important about our contribution to the life of this town? Alongside our looking to the future, we also look to the past. This month has seen VJ Day commemorations at the War Memorial and it is fitting that we remember the work and sacrifice of others: the work and sacrifice we build on, year by year, to make life better here.

Living in Brightlingsea is often about holding onto the richness of tradition and heritage in one hand and the creativity and innovation that is possible in the other - and trying to get the balance right.

So as one of the churches in Brightlingsea, we invite you to get involved in our time of questioning, praying and thinking about who and what we are becoming.

Tell us your memories of All Saints' or St. James'. Let us know what you appreciate about our Church, what you would like to see us do and be and offer, what might tempt you to get involved, and where you'd like us to get more involved. What should the Church be?

You can email revcarolinebeckett@gmail.com with your thoughts or mail them to The Vicarage, Richard Avenue, Brightlingsea CO7 0LP. We would welcome your ideas.

Blessings to you all, Caroline