

Greyfriars and New Hope Annual Report 2021



Greyfriars Church

Friar Street

Reading

RG1 1EH

Registered Charity No 1129381

Greyfriars and New Hope Annual Report (for the year 2021)

Thank you for taking time to read the Annual Report on the mission and ministry of Greyfriars and New Hope for the year to 31 December 2021.

In this report you will find details of some of the many activities at Greyfriars and New Hope, together with a summary of the financial position at the end of the year. A more detailed report of the accounts of the churches, prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 together with the Charities Act 2011, is available in a separate document. Copies of the financial statement may be obtained from the church office.

Under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) is required to cooperate with the vicar in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church. This report describes how this has been achieved during 2021, as we have come out of Covid and begun to rebuild church community.

Further details of the activities of the PCC and of the various ministry areas of the church can be obtained from the PCC Secretary, Malcolm Summers, at Greyfriars Church, Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1EH.



Introduction from the Vicar, Revd David Walker

As One Family, we continue to pursue our vision ***to see Reading transformed by the love and power of Jesus***. 2021 was a mixed year, with part of it in lockdown and part of it emerging from lockdown. It has felt as if we are rebuilding church with new people, ministries and mission in the town. It was also a key year in terms of the physical rebuilding of the church as the new Atrium opened in November.

This report celebrates and gives thanks to God for all that He has done through Greyfriars and New Hope in 2021. It is divided into four sections:

Section 1: Governance

Section 2: *Equipping* the congregation

Section 3: *Reaching out* in mission

Section 4: *Resourcing* the wider church

Section 1: Governance

Parochial Church Council (PCC) (Malcolm Summers, PCC Secretary)

Under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956, the PCC has responsibility for:

- consulting with the vicar on matters of general concern and importance to the parish
- cooperating with the vicar in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical
- the conduct of the financial affairs of the parish
- the care, maintenance and insurance of the church, its contents, and of other church-owned buildings.

The PCC oversees the mission and ministry of the church, setting values, vision, strategy and policy, and overseeing the use of resources. Churches are charities, and its PCC members are the church's trustees.

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) each year, five members are elected to the PCC to serve for three years. The clergy, two churchwardens and members of the congregation elected to the Deanery, Diocesan and General Synods are also members of the PCC.

Following the 2021 APCM, the following Officers of the PCC were elected:

Lay Chair - Arfon Rees, Treasurer - Ben Daniel, Secretary - Malcolm Summers, Deputy Secretary - Katy Lyne, Electoral Roll Officer - Beth Morris, Gift Aid Officer - Andrew Twigger.

The names of the PCC members who served, the number of meetings they attended and the number of meetings they could have attended, in 2021 are as follows:

Ayo	Akintoye	8	10	Nick	Lam	5	10
Jonathan	Alden	6	10	John	Ledger	10	10
Joy	Atkins ¹	7	8	Katy	Lyne	7	10
David	Aubrey-Jones ²	3	3	John	Missenden	10	10
Nick	Beard	9	10	Jennifer	Nhau	6	10
Harriet	Booth	8	10	Simon	Porter ¹	7	7
Amy	Cavender	0	10	Arfon	Rees	10	10
Alan	Cross	10	10	Matt	Riley ¹	0	7
Ben	Daniel ²	3	3	Tryni	Seals	9	10
Gabriel	Diaz ²	2	3	Deepa	Senapathi	8	10
John	Freeman	8	10	Steve	Smith ¹	3	7
Chris	Greaves	9	10	Margaret	Stone	9	10
Rachel	Harrop	8	10	Malcolm	Summers	10	10
Deborah	Jeffries	10	10	Chris	Tinker	10	10
Harvey	Jessop	10	10	David	Walker	10	10
Maddie	Kulkarni ³	1	1	Natalie	Worsfold ⁴	3	3

¹ Stepped down from PCC July 2021, ² Elected to the PCC in July 2021, ³ Co-opted on PCC in November 2021, ⁴ Joined the PCC in July 2021

Finance Report

Greyfriars APCM Report 2021

12 Months Simplified Accounts	Actual	Budget
2020	2021	2022
£'000	£'000	£'000
Income		
701 Giving Income	652	670
114 Other Income	104	452
815 Total Income	756	1,122
Expenditure		
22 Ministry Net Expenditure	15	35
305 Salaries and Staff Expenses	303	464
153 Parish Share	152	150
185 Operating Overheads	253	400
76 General Tithe	67	67
62 Other	(5)	29
803	785	1,145
12 Surplus/ (Deficit)	(29)	(23)
31-Dec-20	31-Dec-21	
£'000	£'000	
2,632 Fixed Assets	4,830	
14 Stock	32	
90 Debtors	59	
4,040 Bank and Cash balances	2,394	
(334) Creditors	(312)	
6,442	7,003	

Following a surplus of £12,000 in 2020 there was a deficit in 2021 of £29,000, largely as a result of reduced giving as the Church emerged from Covid-19. Giving Income for 2021 was budgeted at the 2020 actual level, less a 6.7% downshift. With the anticipated expenditure in 2021, this would have resulted in a Budget surplus of £4,000.

In addition to the ongoing activities of the Church, we operate Designated Funds as follows:

- Tithe Fund: consisting of 10% our giving, which is distributed to local organisations; (£1,641 at 31 December 2021)

- Redevelopment Fund: designated for the redevelopment of the Church site (£2,119,687 at 31 December 2021).
- Redevelopment Tithe Fund: consisting of 10% of gifts to the Redevelopment Fund (£22,313 as at 31 December 2021).
- The PCC continued the practice of tithing 10% of donation income for supporting local charities connected with the poor and needy. These included CCA, Yeldall, CIRDIC, FAITH Christian Group, Door of Hope, Mustard Tree, Amethyst, Reading Frontline, Reading Lifeline and others. We also support Transform Reading (Reading Christian Network).
- The Church's published accounts are more complex, as they have to meet various accounting standards, and in addition to the simplified church accounts set out above they include the activities of Greyfriars Ministries Ltd.
- Our thanks particularly go to Julian Rowlandson, and his team, to Andrew Twigger, the Gift Aid officer for the church.

Reading Deanery Synod (Alan Cross)

Deanery Synod is the first layer of church governance above the parish level and draws together all the parishes in the greater Reading area. It is jointly chaired by the Area Dean and an elected lay chair – a role now held by Mark Burton from Emmer Green, who is also the Deanery Treasurer. Synod normally meets four times a year, but in 2021 met only three times, all by Zoom. Lay Synod Representatives are elected for three years; the last elections were in autumn 2020 and synod will be re-elected in 2023. All clergy are also members. The first meeting of 2021 appointed three Assistant Lay Chairs to help with the leadership of the Deanery, of which Alan Cross is one. There are also four Assistant Area Deans, three who serve various areas of the Deanery and our own Vicar, David Walker, in connection with our role as a Resource Hub.

The June meeting took time to share how different churches were coming out of lockdown, and it was agreed in principle that Parish Share payments by churches would be frozen at 2020 levels for 2021. Diocesan Synod representatives were also elected and John Missenden continues to serve in that capacity. In the autumn Revd Graeme Fancourt, who had been Area Dean, announced he was stepping down in January 2022. The Synod meeting formally confirmed Parish Share for 2022 and discussed the way the Deanery operates to inform the process for the appointment of the next Area Dean. Synod members (along with those in other deaneries) elected the Church of England General Synod for the next five years.

Goods and Fabric Report (including redevelopment update)

As well as the church buildings themselves, the church owns a number of other properties which include 26 Prospect Street, 72 York Road (occupied by Curate and Youth Pastor), 64 Friar Street and Memorial Hall (occupied by the Greyfriars Nursery), 2 & 4 Sackville Street (which house the staff offices, prayer room and new toilet facilities) and 10 Sackville Street (used for mission purposes). We also have responsibility to oversee the New Hope Centre and New Hope vicarage, which we lease from New Hope Ltd.

2021 saw the completion of phase 1, as well as the start of phase 2 of the redevelopment project, which received planning permission early in the year. By the end of the year, the new Atrium was up and running and church staff were installed in the new offices. The old centre had been demolished and the piling was in place. We worked hard to ensure that the buildings continued to be Covid compliant as the rules were relaxed. It has been great to have been able to welcome people back into the redeveloped site and to see the Atrium grow in popularity.



We have continued to work on other church properties with something of a major focus on 72 York Road. There have been minor issues around other church properties which have been addressed during the year. We are particularly grateful to Derek Gee.

A major damp problem at No 26 resulted in the need to replace the kitchen, which we were able to carry out on insurance. We have completed a number of projects around our properties and we are very grateful to all those who have given their time and skills so sacrificially.

Section 2: Equipping the congregation

Teaching and Discipleship

During 2021 Greyfriars and New Hope spent time being equipped through teaching series in the book of James (Under Pressure), the Acts of the Apostles (Rediscovering the Way), Nehemiah (Out of Exile) and 2 Corinthians (Power in Weakness).

We also led a Preaching Course in 2021 to help raise up lay preachers. The course has resulted in new people preaching at the services across Greyfriars and New Hope.

Small groups continue to be a key focus for discipleship and pastoral care, providing places in which church members can grow spiritually, connect with one another in fellowship and reach out in mission. This has been especially important as we emerge from the pandemic.



Prayer and worship

In addition to prayer in small groups and on Sundays, we have gathered the congregations of Greyfriars and New Hope online to pray and listen to God in 2021. Faithful members of the congregation continue to gather for the Friday Morning Prayer Group, whilst others meet in homes and pray for one another, for Reading and the world.

As lockdown eased in 2021, it has been a blessing to welcome the congregations back to Greyfriars and New Hope. We've also been able to maintain a presence online, through the tireless dedication of volunteers who enable online church across both our sites. Christmas services in 2021 were a particular joy as we gathered together to mark the birth of Jesus. The services back in church, led by our new Worship Pastors, Tom and Melissa Pollard, were a great occasion.



Pastoral care

We are grateful for the care and dedication that small group leaders give to pastoral care and through Covid they have been a lifeline to many, continuing to meet online at times and in person where possible. However, not all those who need support are part of small groups and so a number of pastorally hearted people from within our One Family of New Hope and Greyfriars have met together to pray and consider what pastoral care might look like as restrictions eased. This work has had to embrace significant change, the Church of England requirements having moved considerably. There has been time spent updating Safeguarding Training and DBSs and drafting a Pastoral Care Policy.



Alongside Sunday services the occasional offices (baptisms, marriages and funerals) create space for pastoral interaction. We have wept with those who've lost loved ones and celebrated with others as they've decided to make public declarations of faith. Also, in the autumn of 2021 a service to remember loved ones offered an opportunity for those who'd been bereaved to remember them in a supported way.

Café Hope and Silent Hope have continued to be a place of welcome and peace in the heart of the parish. The Atrium opened its doors to the public on 5 November 2021. It is growing in its momentum as a venue for mission, welcome and pastoral care; for example, our generosity vouchers are being used to provide meals and drinks for the needy in Reading and we are starting to host refugees in the space.

Children

In 2021, New Hope and Greyfriars held a joint online pancake party and provided online sessions throughout Holy Week and Easter. We continued to engage the children with a combination of zoom kid's groups and online sessions and materials until the cautious reopening of churches in September. The Sunday kids work at both New Hope and Greyfriars then began again from scratch, with numbers of volunteers reduced significantly, and the need for more vigorous safeguarding and recruiting processes. At Greyfriars, we started back offering small groups fortnightly, with children required to pre-book. As we moved into 2022, groups are slowly rebuilding in number, so we are looking to recruit more leaders who are excited about helping our children engage with God. We are also developing our all-age services once a month.

New Hope is in the process of trialling a new rhythm which allows for much more focused times for children and also different expressions such as dance worship. We do hope to go back to group work at some point but for now we remain a congregation together. The New Hope Toddler group has been running since September and is growing steadily. Children's outreach has been based around community events such as the Street Party, Scarecrow Trail, Narnia Experience and Pancake Party and we are shortly going to be opening a monthly afterschool cafe for the community.



Youth

As with many ministries, youth ministry began 2021 online. We ran online youth groups on Sunday mornings and Thursday evenings as we explored issues surrounding the persecuted church and our big questions and studied the Gospel of Mark. After Easter we were able to gather in person again, which led to sessions that were both challenging and fruitful. Many young people have found life difficult during the pandemic so the majority of youth ministry has been helping, supporting and pastoring them through the challenges they have faced, whilst also reframing what they understand about God and the Christian faith in light of the last couple of years. Over the summer we were able to gather for the New Wine Youth Online sessions alongside a week of fun social activities. As our churches have reopened and we're able to gather in larger numbers, youth ministry across both Greyfriars and New Hope has explored what it means for young people to become more integrated into the wider church family through engagement with services and serving on teams.

Students

We have been so blessed this year to welcome a number of first year students. Sam has prioritised meeting with students on a one-to-one basis and through this we have seen a number beginning to serve on Sunday. A student group has met on a Wednesday evening as part of the Alpha course and participants who don't know Jesus have attended and engaged. The students have asked to continue meeting through the summer term on a Wednesday night, following the completion of the formal Alpha course. We have endeavoured to support Reading University Christian Union, and we are delighted to have three Greyfriars members serving on the executive committee. Cyclical as student ministry is, we are also preparing three of our graduating students for the end of their studies.

Young Adults

In addition to the growth and importance of our 20s/30s small groups, the wider 20s/30s ministry has worked to begin regathering our wider young adult community. Our aim has been to do this both socially (with our Acoustic Night) and missionally (hosting Beer and Carols) and, as the team looks ahead to the coming year, we're planning a similar spread of events, as well as taking a group to Sixty One in the summer.

Section 3: Reaching out in mission

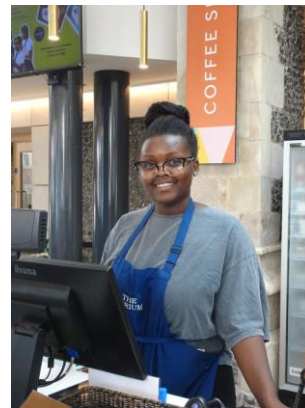
The Atrium

After years of planning and praying, it was with great joy that the Atrium opened in November 2021. With a new coffee shop facing onto Friar Street and an integrated bookshop and community space, the Atrium provides an amazing bridge to invite the people of Reading into Greyfriars.

The Atrium is overseen by Arash and Niloo, who work with a welcoming team of staff and volunteers. Originally from Iran, Arash and Niloo travelled to Malaysia where they got a sense of how to create a welcoming space in a coffee shop. They were then forced to move out of Malaysia and arrived in the UK in 2020. It was at this point they met the team at Greyfriars Church and began the journey towards overseeing the new Atrium.

The Atrium is also a space for local artists to display their work, for children to come and hear stories and for people to enjoy a wide selection of books and gifts. So far we have used the space to run Alpha and to have children from the Greyfriars Nursery and we have hosted refugee groups, music and reading groups.

The Atrium provides a wonderful front door to the church and is already bringing far more people into Greyfriars than before.



Refugees

Greyfriars and New Hope are refugee resettlement community sponsors under the UK Government Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme. In March 2019 we welcomed a family whom we continued to support through 2021.

We are part of the Welcome Churches' referral network of over 700 churches committed to welcoming refugees and now have a growing refugee community within the church. We partnered with Care4Calais to support asylum seekers with clothing requests and invitations to our regular activities and in October filled 100 totes with essential supplies through this year's alternative harvest festival.

During 2021 we signed the national City of Sanctuary and Reading City of Sanctuary organisation pledges adding our support to the vision that the UK and Reading will be welcoming places of safety for all, proud to welcome people fleeing violence and persecution into our community. We are members of the Church of Sanctuary subgroup working towards recognition as a Church of Sanctuary.

A wide range of information sharing, networking, training and prayer meetings have been attended, run by local and national NGOs. Refugee Sunday was celebrated on 21 June and David Walker participated in Christian Concern for One World's Refugee Week film on being a welcoming society.

A huge thank you to all those in our church community and beyond who have served in and provided and prayed for this ministry.

New Hope parish mission

New Hope Community Church continued to gather online in 2021, through Facebook for live-streamed services. After eight years of leading the New Hope Community, Joy Atkins moved on in August 2021 to a school chaplaincy role in Canterbury.

Since Joy's departure, the New Hope Community has been seeking God for the next person to lead the community; the recruitment process began in January 2022. New ministries including Café Hope and Silent Hope have grown during 2021, helping the community praise and pray to God.



Giving to mission (Redevelopment Tithe Fund)

Ten percent of our giving towards the redevelopment project is passed on as grants to recipients working locally or in international mission. In the course of 2021, grants totalling £126,705 were awarded from the Redevelopment Tithe Fund.

Beneficiaries included Project Possible (purchase of a 4x4 vehicle for Shining Light, who work with women in remote villages in Pakistan who face significant barriers to education and training), Tearfund (projects in the Central African Republic), Plan for Hope Initiative Uganda (post-pandemic resumption of activities for the "Towards zero child marriage" project), Reading Gateway Church (first instalment of three years' salary for a Children and Families Pastor), Nompumelelo Educare Centre (construction of play area and kitchen refurbishment) and Christian Books Worldwide (provision of books and resources for pastors in the developing world). Overall, we have given away approximately £605,000 through the Fund since October 2017.

Tuesday Special

Our ministry to adults with learning disabilities and their carers continued on zoom for most of 2021. We continued to share and pray in small groups, learn and sing together. Nick Launders produced and printed colourful service sheets and a picture for colouring related to the week's teaching and posted them out to all members, many of whom don't have access to computers and printers. Mel Bright hosted the online meetings, ever growing in technical ability and confidence to get the most from Zoom. Team members Janet Foreman, Ray Guthrie, Moji Kolawole and Lottie Joy played an invaluable part in keeping this online provision going. Our friends from the East Reading group continued to join us and their two leaders each took a turn at leading a session each term. In the spring term we looked at God's promises through Old and New Testaments and the term culminated with the highlight of the year, an amazing online Easter Celebration. We visited members in advance, armed with scripts, costumes and props to film the different parts of the Easter story. These video clips were then included in our online service.

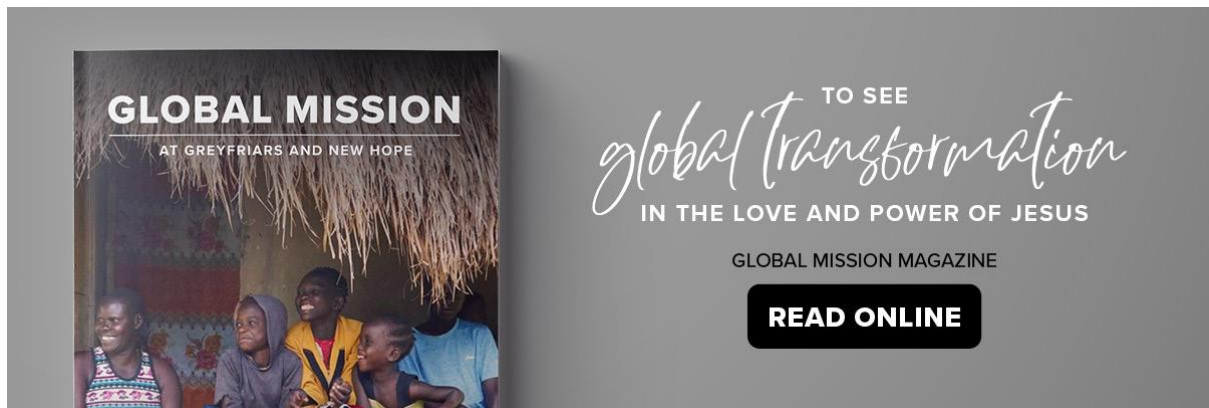


In the summer term we looked at stories from the book of Acts and in September we welcomed Ann Cogle, who had been a regular visiting speaker, onto the team. We took a closer look at the ups and downs of the disciple Peter and finally at the end of the year we had the joy of returning to the church building to meet in person for two sessions, including the Christmas party, which was an amazing celebration after 19 months of online gatherings.

This year two very valuable leaders are moving away. We welcome any new volunteers who are interested in helping.

Global Mission (Greyfriars Missionary Trust and Global Mission Group)

As well as quarterly meetings held online, during 2021, through the wonders of modern technology, members of the Greyfriars Missionary Trust (GMT) held 'panel meetings' with several Mission Partners around the world, including Richard and Riekje Wallace, David and Georgina Gray, RA and M&D (initials only provided as these Mission Partners work in sensitive areas). In early 2022 we were able to meet in person with Sam and Chloe Mutton, who were home from Uganda for the birth of their second daughter. Panel meetings provide an important opportunity to check in with our Mission Partners and to learn more about their current projects and challenges. You can read more in our first edition of Global Mission Magazine <https://greyfriars.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Greyfriars-GlobalMission-2022-final.pdf>



Trustees also met with Dan and Eli King who we are delighted to welcome as new Mission Partners from April 2022, working with YWAM in Cardiff. Eli is the daughter of Greyfriars members Sue and Arfon Rees.

There were a couple of changes to the membership of the GMT during 2021. After several years of faithful service Andy Kyte stood down as Secretary and Philip Giddings' term of office as a Trustee finished. Tim Seals joined us as a Trustee from June 2021, but the Secretary role has remained vacant for the past year.

The Global Mission Group (GMG) works closely with GMT. With a remit to encourage enthusiasm and awareness of global mission within Greyfriars and New Hope, the group met a few times online to plan our first Global Mission Sunday in over eight years.

A main area of concern for Trustees is the continued decline in giving and the widening gap between our income and expenditure – our income currently does not fully cover the costs of supporting our Mission Partners. In 2021 GMT's income from donations was £75k with a further £15k from rental and investment income, whereas the cost of supporting our funded Mission Partners in 2021 was £92k.

GMT was set up by Greyfriars Church as a separate charity, to work in close collaboration with Greyfriars PCC, to support Mission Partners sent out from Greyfriars and New Hope. GMT finances are quite separate from the church accounts so if you are interested in supporting our Mission Partners financially, as well as in prayer and other practical ways, you are encouraged to do so by giving directly to GMT. If you would like more information about global mission, please email mission@greyfriars.org.uk or visit the Greyfriars website and find 'Global Mission' under the 'About Greyfriars' tab.

Greyfriars Nursery (Greyfriars Ministry Limited)

It has been a challenging time for all businesses operating day nurseries during the Covid pandemic. Against this backdrop, the dedication and professionalism of the GML management and staff needs to be praised as they had to come to terms with ever-changing working arrangements which required flexible solutions and for the management team to consistently go the extra mile.

It has been beneficial to have consolidated the nursery fully onto the Greyfriars site and through the year the focus has remained on delivering quality childcare in a Covid-safe manner. As new children have enrolled and existing children have returned to the nursery, we have seen an increase in the number of children with special sensory needs, largely arising from their isolation over the last 18 months. We have secured some funding from RBC to help increase our staffing to help cope with this.



The opening of the Atrium has created significant new opportunities for Christian ministry to both children and parents. All the children now have craft and creative sessions with Thea and the Atrium team and it has been great to see several parents using the Atrium during the day. GML and Greyfriars will be looking to build on these new opportunities which supplement the 'Big Sing', which remains a weekly favourite with the children.

Following the passing of Graham Underwood at the beginning of 2021, Chris Tinker joined Steve Smith, Dave Jeffries and Fiona Joy on the GML Board. Please pray for the Board and Lauren Farmer, the nursery manager, and her management team as they seek to work with the church leadership and ministry team to refocus the ministry to the 100 or so nursery children and parents, whilst providing high quality childcare.

Section 4: Resourcing the wider church

Church revitalisation

As a Resourcing Hub in the Oxford Diocese, we were delighted to commission Nick Hill and a small number of people from Greyfriars to join Reading Gateway Church in South Reading to pioneer mission and ministry. Along with the Hill family, Carol Atkins joined Reading Gateway Church as an Ordinand (soon to be a Curate) and Greyfriars has been able to fund the Children and Families Pastor position at the church for three years.



At the same time, we are working with the New Congregations team and the local Deanery team in the Diocese of Oxford to identify the next potential church partnership.

Ministry resources

As churches open up again, we have been able to resource the wider church through Greyfriars members preaching and leading services. Our Lay Licensed Ministers (LLMs) have provided a very valuable service by assisting parishes in the wider Reading area.

Greyfriars and New Hope continue to be generous as we give £150,000 to the Diocese of Oxford through our Parish Share. This money supports the mission of smaller churches across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.

Bookshop

The Greyfriars Bookshop reopened in November 2021 as part of the new Atrium. Through the new team we have been working with churches, Christian charities and schools to resource the wider church with books, merchandise and Bible study materials. So far, the bookshop is doing really well at capturing a wider audience and we look forward to this growing in 2022.



Training for the Church of England

As part of this vision, we continue to train John Freeman and Amy Cavender (as Curates) and we have three people who are exploring ordination across New Hope and Greyfriars.

Transform Reading

Transform Reading has continued to meet online in 2021, focusing on prayer and supporting the needs of those in Reading, and has subsequently resourced a new initiative in Reading called 'Torch', which provides practical and community support across the churches in Reading (<https://torchhub.org.uk>).

