

Ministry Report to PCC

September 2026 – covering July and August

The summer has involved a good deal of reflection and preparation for the autumn, especially around our work with children and young people and our midweek discipleship. Some of this has meant simplifying what we do, but the aim throughout has been to help our ministries remain healthy, sustainable and fruitful.

Sunday ministry and SPK

Following consultation with the SPK team, it became clear that we could not reliably sustain the previous four-group Sunday-morning structure.

From September, SPK is therefore moving to two shorter groups during the latter part of the 10.30am service:

- Seekers: Reception-Year 2
- Diggers: Years 3-6

There will also be a parent-led crèche for younger children. Children and families will begin the service together in church before groups go out, returning towards the end.

A great deal of practical preparation has gone into making this possible, including work on rotas, registration, clearer roles and an SPK Handbook. We will review the new pattern carefully during September and make adjustments as we learn what works best.

The previous Sunday-morning Spark provision for older children is not continuing in its former form, while Ignite, our youth group, remains paused. This is a real disappointment. We very much want to provide good ongoing discipleship for our older children and teenagers, and will continue exploring what might become possible as more leaders are found.

Contagious

14 people from St Peter's attended Contagious East this summer. We are very grateful to those who went to help, and to all those who helped make it possible, including through financial support.

Our prayer hope is that the week will bear fruit well beyond the summer itself: in deeper faith, stronger Christian friendships and greater confidence in following Christ. We would like to encourage more people to get involved next year.

Tiny Tots

Tiny Tots has also been reviewed over the summer. It is a ministry we very much want to see flourish, and as a church we are willing to put significant time and resources into making that possible.

At the same time, it is a relatively resource-heavy ministry to run, and the key question is whether it is creating genuine opportunities for relationships, Christian witness and a pathway into the wider life of the church. One of the continuing challenges has been helping Tiny Tots families make that connection beyond Thursday mornings.

For the autumn, the intention is therefore to continue investing in Tiny Tots and to work deliberately at strengthening those links. At the same time, it may be wise to review the ministry on a term-by-term basis, asking whether it is bearing sufficient fruit to justify the resources involved and what changes might help it do so more effectively.

Midweek discipleship

This autumn we are launching EQUIP as a new part of our midweek discipleship.

EQUIP is intended especially for those for whom a regular daytime or evening Bible study group is difficult because of work, family life or other commitments. It will offer a more flexible way of learning, while still giving people opportunities for discussion, encouragement and fellowship with others.

It will sit alongside our other midweek provision rather than replace it. Christianity Explored will be starting again for those exploring the Christian faith; our existing daytime Bible Study Group will continue; and we hope that a second daytime small group may begin shortly.

EQUIP may become a significant part of our midweek discipleship, but the aim is to offer a range of ways for people to grow in faith, recognising that different patterns will work for different people and different stages of life.

Jericho Road

Further work has taken place around safeguarding, role descriptions and risk management for Jericho Road, reflecting the PCC's developing understanding that some of those with whom the group has contact may, on occasion, be vulnerable adults.

Dan Watts has been appointed as Ministry Area Leader. The group is due to restart in September and has continued supporting a small number of individuals over the summer.

At present, the chief limitation is simply the small size of the team. We hope that more people will become involved during the autumn, allowing the ministry both to deepen existing relationships and to respond more widely to opportunities for practical and pastoral care.

Pastoral ministry and care homes

Pastoral visiting and care-home ministry have continued through the summer, including regular ministry at Freda Gunton Lodge and plans for further opportunities such as *Hymns We Love*.

We are also seeking to give pastoral visitors clearer support and guidance, while being careful not to turn ordinary Christian care into something unnecessarily formal.

Looking ahead

The main task for the autumn is now to help these ministries settle and flourish: establishing the new SPK pattern, strengthening Tiny Tots, launching EQUIP well, seeking a sustainable future for youth ministry, and building the Jericho Road team.

There are some real limitations in what we can presently sustain, but there is also much to be thankful for. The aim is to serve people well, care for those who are already carrying responsibility, and create good opportunities for children, young people and adults to grow as disciples of Christ.