

Livestream (aka You-Tube) Ministry

In early May of 2020, when the original lockdown brought on by the Covid pandemic began, Chris Yeomans quickly set up equipment in Gena's chapel to broadcast services over our church's You-Tube channel. We will be forever grateful to him for this humble beginning of what has become a quietly serving ministry in our church life – the weekly broadcasting of our 10:30 worship services, and of other events like Evensongs, concerts, annual general meetings, funerals, even a wedding.

Mark Hauser took on the technical challenges of setting up equipment up in the nave and chancel. Over time three cameras have been put in place: – our 'music' camera is inconspicuously attached to the corner of the D'Arcy Sneath memorial plaque, close to the piano. Its view shows the organist, the pianist, the soloists at the microphones. In the background are the choir, the eagle lectern, the lay reader desks, the pulpit, and the action on the floor area at the foot of the chancel steps.

– our 'high altar' camera is attached well up towards the ceiling near the facade of pipes in the choir. Its view shows the high altar, the windows above it, and the action at the altar and the rail

– our 'floor' camera. This one, on a rotatable pole, in the first row right behind where the livestream technician sits at the computer console is our most versatile camera. It swivels and zooms and can pick up the action over quite a wide area.

Of course electrical cords connect everything. These are some of the cords that snake across the floor at the front of the nave, and some of them can cause an interesting noise if stepped on just so! Oh for some area carpeting to make that whole area safer!

All of this equipment was financed by an anonymous donor, except for the actual computer itself. The livestream team currently has four dedicated members. Mark Hauser leads the team of Joe Hauser, Kristal McCance, and Fran Koch. In past times Rob Marriott, and Edmund Hetke were also involved. Definitely new members of this team are wanted – to share the load. Participation takes just about a half hour more than the length of the service, each time any one of us has the responsibility of producing a broadcast. And definitely computer expertise is NOT a

requirement. One of the current members, almost completely computer illiterate, now can produce a quite acceptable broadcast, thanks to Mark's patient coaching over many months!

The mandate of this ministry is to bring worship at St. Mary Magdalene into the homes of those who are unable to attend in person. And to do so as unobtrusively as possible. Both mandates have been achieved.

In the weeks following any one broadcast of a service, there are at least as many views as were the number in attendance at that service. Very often the views:in-person ratio has been 2:1, 3:1.

And it is the special events where the real value of this ministry shows. View numbers of over a hundred, sometimes close to two hundred for some of those. And as for being unobtrusive, it is quite obvious that most present in person have completely forgotten that they are being filmed.

This livestream ministry is indeed needed, even now that Covid lockdowns are history. The consistent number of views indicate that. Our Primate, at the last Diocesan Synod, begged us to continue this ministry. We are proud to do so, and continuously strive to improve the quality of productions, with our limiting equipment facilities.

Your current livestream team: Mark Hauser, Kristal McCance, Joe Hauser, Fran Koch