

Christmas News from Helen

It is so strange to be writing my Christmas news to you now, remembering that this time last year I was still on maternity leave. Life seems to have moved on incredibly quickly, and James and I have settled down into a lovely family routine with our wonderful son Michael, now 21 months old.

I started back at CMM in March, and discovered that Lindsay had been tremendous in my absence. I took over the reins from her in organising a very special event—Roger’s 70th Birthday celebrations. We had a choir of over 200 and an orchestra of over 50 gather in Tamworth to learn and perform Rock together. I was privileged to train the choir, which included my mum and dad and it was lovely to have my sister Deb in the orchestra. James brought Michael over for lunch time, and he caused a bit of a stir of course!



My other CMM highlights have included leading musical-in-day events at Sandfields Methodist Church in Port Talbot, and Bingham Methodist Church. I was honoured to be welcomed to spend an evening and a Sunday morning working with the music group at Christ Church, Selly Park here in Birmingham, and hopefully I gave them some ideas as to how to develop as a team and in how they lead worship. I also led worship at the Women’s World Day of Prayer young women’s event at King’s Park in Northampton. Our CMM intern Rachel came along and was brilliant musically as well as helping look after Michael. I’m looking forward to leading worship for this event again in May at Swanwick (any young women you know - do encourage them to come along).

In the CMM office I’ve had more than enough to do keeping CMM’s social media up to date and editing two books—a poetry book by Alison Fuggle called ‘With all the Trimmings’ and a book of Bible Studies by Simon Cooper to accompany the musical Rock. I am also gradually uploading many of Roger’s best anthems onto various sheet music websites. Graphic design is a big part of my job, and this year I have designed the CMM Catalogue as well as the various newsletters. In the summer Rachel left and Gemma started her gap year with us in September, and I am spending a lot of time working with her and helping her with various tasks. It is very busy, but lovely to be back!



This summer my parents retired and moved to Conwy, and it has been lovely taking Michael to visit them and having them come to us. James, Michael and I have been on holiday both to the Lake District and Corsica, the latter with my sister Miriam and her husband. We have enjoyed walking with Michael in the rucksack, but will soon have to accept that he is too big for it! We managed to take Michael camping for the Naturally Supernatural festival organised by Soul Survivor, and are very sad that 2019 will be their final year. If you have never been to Soul Survivor or Naturally Supernatural, make sure you don’t miss out.



Other highlights of 2018 have included winning both the Mrs Sunderland Choral Festival (in Huddersfield—where else?) and the North Wales Choral festival with my choir, the Chanterelles. I have also managed to take part in 25 Parkruns so far this year (some with the buggy and some without), and sometimes play for Bromsgrove Netball Club. It has been a blessing to make Jazz Community Church our home, and I am really enjoying learning more about being a disciple of Jesus alongside such wonderful people.

Grace and peace to you this Christmas,

Helen