

2010

- Develop desirable resources for local schools that link curriculum and church in creative ways. Aim to offer them for use from September 2010.
- Improve the sound system and prepare a report (for DCC) on the possibility of reinstating the 'tape ministry' as a 'CD ministry' and podcast.
- Become a fairtrade church and explore ways to become an eco congregation and draw up a proposal for wider consultation on an appropriate sunday.
- Explore how we can develop our building appropriately and come up with a draft plan for wider consultation.
- Launch a Pastoral Care Scheme.
- Hold a planned giving campaign.

In order to achieve all of this, we will need continual prayers and support. Please do think about things you might like to be involved in even if you haven't tried them before!

Heavenly Father, Thank you for St John's and all it has been and will be. Give us your Holy Spirit that we might face the challenges ahead with confidence and wisdom. Keep us steadfast in you and in your vision for each one of us. Amen.



**St John's Church
Heath Hayes**

On 25th April 2009 a good number of St John's Church gathered together to talk about how they felt church was doing in three areas of ministry. Mission, Worship and Nurture. Below are the findings of that day followed by the steps we desire to take to move forward!

The Results of the Consultation

The consultation revealed that St John's is a church community with many positive areas of ministry, and some key weaknesses. There are some areas in which there are strong differences of opinion as to the way forward. There are some areas in which most people agree that change must happen, even if they do not necessarily know what form that change might take.

1. A Eucharistic community

Most people feel strongly that St John's is a Eucharistic community in which the celebration of the Eucharist is central to the life of the church. However, discussion revealed that there were some key issues regarding the Eucharist where some people felt change was necessary. There was dissatisfaction expressed with the non-celebration of the Eucharist on WFA Sundays. There was also an expressed desire to explore the admission of children to communion as a way of including them more fully in our worship.

So over the next 2 years we hope to:

ASAP

- Launch a Children's Church or Sunday School.
- Establish a group to organise regular social events.
- Address the safety, space and welcome issues around Sunday Coffee.
- No more New Wine...and an early communion service on Worship for All Sundays.
- Launch a regular bookstall.

Next 6 Months

- Relaunch the magazine and widen circulation.
- Facilitate regular short term study groups on bible and prayer.
- Dedicate one Sunday Sermon a month to exploring 'Hot Topics' (death, angels...or whatever people ask for!)
- One communion service a month, late on a Sunday afternoon. This is a service to explore the Eucharist in different styles (Celtic, silent, using Taize music etc).
- Launch a parent and toddler activity.
- Improve and update all notice boards.
- Hold a further Children's Workshop.

Moving Forward

On it's away day the DCC restructured itself into 4 working groups to begin to address some of these issues. They are Fabric and Finance, Mission, Nurture and Social & Fundraising. The ministry team will also revise itself before the end of 2009 and continue to overview ministry and worship at St John's.

The new working groups will, as appropriate and with the advice of the Vicar and permission of the DCC involve other church members in their conversations and activities.

These groups are task orientated and will dissolve once the tasks set by the DCC are completed.

This Action plan will be revised with a further consultation in 2 years time.

So what are we hoping to do in 2 years?

There are many things that we would like to do but we have to prioritise and it's best to try and stick to particular targets. SO we are trying to be SMART!

Specific. Measurable. Attainable. Realistic. Time bound.

2. A problematic building

Although some people felt that the current building worked well as it is (an opinion expressed strongly in discussion), most people expressed some uncertainty about this, and in discussion there was a desire to explore more flexible seating, and some people expressed a preference for the choir being closer to the congregation. Others asserted that the church was fine the way it was, or that the choir enhanced the experience of worship by being in the sanctuary.

3. Need for more accessible worship

There was a good deal of ambivalence regarding how accessible to all St John's worship is. The vast majority felt improvements could be made in this area, with the groups sometimes excluded named as being children and young people, the housebound, and those with special needs. Others strongly argued that no changes should be made to current patterns of worship in order to make them more accessible, as this ran the risk of watering down core elements.

4. Lack of positive connection to local community

There was considerable concern raised over St John's connection to and relationship with the local community. Most people felt that our worship does not always reflect the life of the local community, over half felt we could be better at being active in the local community. The majority of people thought the local

community didn't know our mission statement or what we're about, and the rest thought we could do better in this area. Knowledge of and positive contact with St John's was thought to be significantly higher amongst the over 65's in the local community than with those who were younger, with the majority of people thinking that there was either no positive contact or at least lots of room for improvement with those aged 0-40. Despite this, a significant group of us (over a quarter) still felt that St John's was representative of the local community, suggesting that we are in danger of becoming out of touch with the realities of our situation.

5. Need for work with children and young people

There was a good deal of concern about this area of ministry, which surfaced in all areas of discussion. On the one hand, there was concern that our worship was not always accessible to children. There was concern that we did not have positive contact with these age groups in the local community, though also an awareness that we had some significant contact through local schools. We were not perceived to be good at nurturing either children or teenagers in the Christian faith.

6. More work needed on welcome and communication

Despite some confident assertions that we were very welcoming, it emerged in discussion that there was some uneasiness about this. Some people highlighted that some groups of people (singles, teenagers, those without church backgrounds, guests at occasional offices) wouldn't feel at home in St John's. Other groups (children, young marrieds, working adults) were identified as 'missing' from St John's and we didn't advertise well enough what we were doing, or in some cases know enough about what they would find attractive. Communication (including use of notice boards) is important to develop.

7. A need for more teaching and encouragement in discipleship

Despite positive evaluations of St John's provision for older people and those already established in their faith in the questionnaire, the discussions revealed some dissatisfaction with the opportunities available for people to be nurtured in their faith, and a desire for more teaching and opportunities to grow. Concern was expressed that it wasn't clear where you could go for support in your spiritual journey. There was also some concern that groups without a clear focus or time limit, or ones in a single location or at a single time (whether daytime or evening) were not always helpful.