

Looking to the Future - A Report to the Congregation - July 2021



In the Parish of the Resurrection we have a Vision

Proclaiming the Risen Jesus

Steadfast in Faith

Active in Service

When we agreed the Five Year Plan we had four sections

Growing Disciples

Growing Community

Growing Younger

Growing Structures

The Church of England is developing a new strategy for the 2020s based around 3 fundamental words

Simpler

Humbler

Bolder

To grow into the future as The Parish of the Resurrection we need to have these four principles

Dynamic Partnerships - A Generous & Gracious Christian Character - Clergy & Lay People Working Together - Sustainability

The PCC commissioned a group of people to give recommendations for how we discerned things for the future as we emerge from the COVID pandemic. This was undertaken with a lot of prayer and a genuine desire to seek God's vision for the Parish of the Resurrection. The Futures Group were to look at: consulting widely amongst the Parish of the Resurrection Community, support groups within the Alton & District Community, in the Alton Deanery and amongst ecumenical partners; to provide a strategy for the use of our church buildings; to provide a rationale for an ongoing service pattern for the Parish of the Resurrection; to provide recommendations for ongoing worship, prayer and discipleship opportunities; to evaluate the staffing resource and make recommendations of future needs, deployment and employment; to formulate priorities and an action plan.

Following the group's presentation to the PCC and further discussion within the PCC we would like to share the following grouped under the same headings as the Five Year Plan. At the end there are some planned conversations which will need to take place and these will be agreed for the autumn. There is also more work to be done within the PCC on priorities and quantifiable targets which will be shared again during the autumn. The PCC Vision and Strategy Group take responsibility for the actions going forward and the conversations which now arise.

Growing Disciples

1. We will develop a network of groups, programmes and fellowship activities in which all the parish community will be encouraged to take part (ID groups - Christian **I**Dentity: **I**ntentional **D**iscipleship: **I**n-**D**epth Study)

1.1 each group and programme will have designated leaders, hosts and pastoral care

1.2 these groups will provide spiritual support and pastoral care

1.3 groups and programmes can take a variety of forms, meet at different times of the day and be in-person or via remote means

1.4 the Ministry Team to steer the provision of spiritual resources for the groups and programmes

1.5 the Ministry Team will have a role in supporting the spiritual and pastoral leaders by facilitating regular meeting and training

1.6 the groups and programmes will be part of the Parish welcome process and integration into the parish community

1.7 everyone needs to be confident in inviting people to consider the involvement in ID groups

1.8 the Parish will maintain a rolling programme of Alpha type groups to introduce people to the Christian faith and the parish - these will feed into the other ID groups and programmes

1.9 the ID programme should be communicated via the website and other means

Growing Community

2. We will encourage and enable the Parish church family to be 'active in service' and involved in events, activities and groups in the community
 - 2.1 develop and publicise a calendar/programme of activities and events in partnership with other churches and organisations
 - 2.2 invite a wider range of people to become part of the Community & Outreach Group which reports to the PCC
 - 2.3 seek out parish members who will take charge of individual activities and encourage as many people as possible to participate
 - 2.4 develop and initiate Fresh Expression/Pioneering Communities into the Wooteys/Manor area of Alton
 - 2.5 recognising the new housing developments across the community - use professional leafleting and networks to raise the church profile
3. We will expand the Parish's ecumenical partnerships
 - 3.1 explore the possibility of the establishment of an ecumenical group (clergy and lay) which builds on our experience of The Greater Alton Project and upon the existing ministers group which co-creates and oversees those things which make for good Christian unity and good Christian mission in the community, and which hears reports of the work of other organisations and ways to engage. To be able to plan joint evangelism, serving/blessing our community, joint spiritual events, and getting to know each other better
4. We will encourage participation as Foundation Governors in Church of England Schools (St Lawrence and Andrews Endowed) and Community Governors in other schools
5. We will make our parish buildings more available for regular and wider community activities - such as nurseries, schools, other churches and choirs

Growing Younger

6. We will commit to a weekly focus in services and other events for children/young people and families
 - 6.1 re-establishment of Lighthouse, Church@4, Teddies and other events reflecting on what was on offer before the pandemic and what has been offered online and in light of the easing of restrictions
 - 6.2 all liturgy, language and hymns and songs will be considered carefully for accessibility and using Audio Visual equipment as often as possible
 - 6.3 there will be an intentional focus toward contemporary styles of worship without losing the best of traditional worship, music and prayers
 - 6.4 a Children/Young People/Children Ministry Strategy Document to be refined and represented to the PCC
 - 6.5 grow a Youth Congregation using Alton College Journey Project and young people evangelism and discipleship
 - 6.6 look to younger members of the church community to take on positions of responsibility with relevant training and support

Growing Structures

7. We will develop a rhythm of sustainable and varied services across the parish
 - 7.1 the Ministry Team to put forward a suitably sustainable pattern of services across the parish extending to Bentworth, Lasham & Shalden based on the following points:
 - 7.2 leadership of services will be by both clergy and lay, men and women with training and support provided by Diocese, Deanery & Parish (eg. BCM courses, LLW & LLM courses)
 - 7.3 services will be a reduction in the number of communion services across the parish every Sunday

- 7.4 service and worship styles within the rhythm will be a mixed ecology - there are a broad range permitted and needed - including online, different timings, using varied or no liturgy, in public buildings and people's homes, reflective or active in style etc.
- 7.5 online services, prayers and encouragements will be offered across each month - this maintains and evolves the best of the pandemic experience
- 7.6 not all services will use robes and vestments for clergy and choir - they will be used in appropriate traditional services and in weddings, baptisms and funerals in agreement with the people concerned
- 7.7 all liturgy, language and hymns and songs will be considered carefully for accessibility and using Audio Visual equipment as often as possible
- 7.8 one Sunday sermon subject across all churches to ensure consistency and focus - using series or themes to be published in advance
- 7.9 sermons to be clear on 'What does this tell me about God?' 'What does this tell me about my life with God?' 'What does this mean for me tomorrow morning?'
- 7.10 leading of services, sermons and teaching to include discussion, interviews, video clips and other engaging delivery and participation
- 7.11 there will be an intentional focus toward contemporary styles of worship without losing the best of traditional worship, music and prayers

8. We will improve and optimise internal and external communications and publicity

- 8.1 develop an action plan to review, evaluate and put in place a systematic, efficient and transparent process where the parish can let each other and others know plans, arrangements and details of activities, events, meetings etc. - Review Parish Matters, Sunrise, Website, Social media, noticeboards and implement any new available methods
- 8.2 clarification of roles of Churchwardens and PCC members in cascading information to the wider congregation.

9. We will improve the use of our Parish Resources

- 9.1 overseen by the Finance & Administration Group to review the deployment of the current administration resources and to look towards the appointment of an Operations Manager, to ensure Ministry Team time is clearly used for growth, pastoral care and discipleship and to improve communications and Churchwarden time spent on buildings
- 9.2 following the pandemic experience of co-operation, All Saints Church to enter a formal agreement with The Butts Church to facilitate their need for space on Sundays and during the week and to increase the kingdom use and capacity of the building. Income generated will help with Parish running costs with The Butts Church contributing heavily to the cost of improving facilities
- 9.3 conversation to be undertaken on the 5-10 year future of St Peter's Church and the use of The Beech Village Hall for some services, activities and events
- 9.4 to continue the conversations about the re-ordering of St Lawrence Church to improve flexibility and sustainability; to serve more fully the need of the whole parish and community
- 9.5 implement a financial strategy and planning to ensure effective use of financial resources - to be overseen by the PCC and Finance and Administration Group
- 9.6 develop and support more training of lay ministry in the parish and wider Deanery so that we relieve pressure on the clergy, strengthen capacity and increase range of outreach

The Following Conversations are to be arranged and publicised as appropriate

A Parish conversation to look at congregational attendance figures, what we have experienced in worship during the pandemic and future service patterns

A Parish Conversation to look at the current parish communications and suggestions for future methods

A Parish Conversation on training offered for lay ministries - a presentation from the School of Mission

Those within our parish community with young families - to discuss the pattern of Lighthouse/Church@4 and other ways to engage and encourage faith and relationships

Those who provide music in our churches - to discuss service patterns, supporting each other, and musical choices in worship

With ecumenical friends and ministers to discuss a Churches Together forum

Those who lead small groups and have assisted in the leadership of Alpha, Prayer Course and The Bible Course - to discuss and evaluate existing provision and share experiences and ideas for future groups and programmes

Those who would form a focussed re-ordering group for St Lawrence Church with suggestions from Eco Church group

Those in the All Saints Congregation and other interested parties - to discuss the sharing of the church building with The Butts Church, forming a working group to continue conversations

Those in the St Peter's Church community and other interested parties - to discuss the 5-10 year possible future of the building and the use of Beech Village Hall for events, activities and worship