

St Peter & St Paul, Upper Hardres

Mission Review 2019

Mission statement

‘With God’s grace, we will know and share the love of Christ’

Our current work, worship and aims for future development are underpinned by the above statement. In particular, we will work towards increasing the membership of our church and to further its outreach in the community. To both these ends, we seek a greater visibility in the community and more practical ways to serve its members - to turn the word into reality.

The following are ways in which we feel we can meet these aims.

Encouraging membership of our church:

Younger Children

- A children’s corner has already been created in the nave for small children. This has recently been refurbished and will be enhanced by installing a display board for children’s work
- Sunday school to recommence when children 4+ are ready – this will take place in the newly sound-insulated and refurbished vestry area
- Children’s area of churchyard to be created with bug hotel
- Baptism anniversary contact will be made with children baptised into the Church 1-5 years after baptism.

Young People

- We will try to engage more with the young people of our community and to ask about their perceived challenges of being a Christian.
- Find out their views on what they would like to be involved in and encourage increased positive contribution to worship as welcomers/musicians/readers.
- We acknowledge that young people have a keen social conscience – input on charity ideas

Older Congregation and Community Members

- We will continue to assist and support our older population, ensuring they are able to attend church and church events when desired by making them aware of events and by arranging transport. We will take opportunities to meet with them at the afternoon tea and village breakfasts and after services.

Encouragement

- We recognize that many people are not likely to volunteer to take on a special role in the church but would nevertheless respond positively if asked. Our aim, therefore, is to encourage more members of the congregation to become actively involved in our services and to increase their support for the Church family. We will try to find opportunities to encourage this.

Special Services

- We will look for opportunities to contact and invite people who have used the Church for the sacrament of marriage and blessings, baptisms, funerals and other life celebrations to special services.
- The needs of interest groups, such as walkers and pet owners should be considered.
- The heritage of our church building together with its tradition of worship for almost one thousand years will be celebrated.
- Talks given concerning the work of different charities, which are typically given at one of our 11 o'clock services, could be repeated at Evensong and maybe reported in the Village News.
- We will consider following up special services with coffee/meal to encourage discussion.

Spiritual Growth – we will aim to support this by:

- providing quiet time for conversation and prayer in the Lady Chapel after services
- introducing short silences in our services to give more time for personal reflection
- providing a prayer request basket/board to be used in service prayers and through prayer partnership during the week
- establishing a lending library and CD shelf on the bookcase at back of the church with material offering spiritual support
- courses, such as related to Lent and Confirmation, will be well advertised and supported, where suitable, with related activities offering inspiration and discussion, such as the thought provoking Lent lunches

Outreach in the Community:

Local Community Engagement – Some people seem genuinely fearful of anything associated with religion and that is something we can try to change. To that end, we will look for more opportunities to bring our Church and its work to the local community. For example, by supporting and being visible at school and other local events - by inviting neighbours of the church itself to a coffee morning and to concerts and events that can

encourage people to feel at home in a church building. We will also continue to work with St Mary's, Stelling on regular community activities, such as the afternoon teas and breakfast initiatives and will look for other opportunities to further fellowship using our new facilities.

Pastoral visiting

– We will increase liaison with St Mary's Stelling and local carers. A note encouraging contact from anyone wanting a visit is to go in the Village News. Leaders on pastoral visiting will receive Diocesan training.

Support for Bereaved Families

– We will continue our work to make the churchyard an attractive, quiet place for visitors and will change the notices at the gate to emphasize welcome. We will put together a leaflet giving useful contact/support information to be given to bereaved families/friends

General activities

Music – we will continue to value the choral/music tradition in our worship and will encourage singers and musicians to participate in the life and work of our church.

Public Relations (PR) - we will make increased use of the church website by providing regular, up-to-date information and investigate installing a reader register to monitor internet traffic on the site. We also need to ensure appropriate links are given to other sites of information. We are investigating better links to and liaison with the Stelling Minnis website and associated opportunities to cooperate with St Mary's, Stelling. We will continue to distribute service and event posters throughout the community. We can also increase our level of PR by issuing more invitations to worship for special services and events directly to residents. Here we could enlist the assistance of young people - thereby encouraging their involvement - to help with the delivery of these.

Church School – we will encourage the congregation to support the school eg attend short Friday prayers at the school, taking one off assemblies for the children, attending special services at the school, and increase the number of school events in the church if wanted.

Contacts for more information

Anne Barlow 01227 709312 anne.bee@btinternet.com

Angela Hirst 01227 701063 ah@angela-hirst.com