

St Mary's Nettleton & Burton: Our Way Forward

1 Background

St Mary's has been in a recovery situation from 2006, when there was no churchwarden, falling attendances, conflict between church factions and the clergy, and the resignation of the entire PCC.

2 Objectives

Our objectives are:

- To reach out to the parish to bring back those who have lost touch with the Church;
- To encourage children to become familiar with and comfortable in Christian worship;
- To develop the Church as a positive and visible force for good in the community;
- To offer a glimpse of the love of God and His welcoming fellowship to those who do not normally associate with church activities;
- To provide fellowship and support to other Christian missions.

3 Activities

3.1 Worship

A) St Mary's will provide a range of services to suit a wide range of preferences, with two core elements:

- a Communion service, for the established Anglican worshipper;
- an informal service (TGI Friday) with varying content, specifically aimed at those who find formality and repetition an obstacle to hearing the Word of God (e.g. non-communicants and lapsed churchgoers);

supported by additional regular services (e.g. All Age, Big Breakfast), and Edward Bear Club for the very young.

B) St Mary's will encourage children to participate in every service.

C) Every service at St Mary's will have a social period with refreshments afterwards, to provide an opportunity for newcomers to bond with the family of the Church.

D) St Mary's Church will be open and available as much as possible for private worship and contemplation.

3.2 Outreach

A) St Mary's will ensure the parish is fully aware of Church activities, through:

- monthly fliers to every household;
- posters on village noticeboards;
- the Church's own web and Facebook pages.

B) St Mary's will send out personal invitations to those who have had contact with the church, but are not regular churchgoers, to join TGIF services that specifically relate to and reinforce their relationship to the Church. e.g:

- Supporters evening;
- Reunion for those baptised in St Mary's;
- Reunion for those married in St Mary's;
- Service for those whose relatives are buried in St Mary's.

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3.2 Outreach (contd)

C) St Mary's will promote secular uses of the Church building, e.g:

- Parent and toddler group;
- Young persons activities;
- Community activities

so that more parishioners find the church building a familiar and welcoming place rather than a strange and intimidating environment.

D) St Mary's will take an active role in the development of the parish as a community, through (e.g.)

- sponsoring the production of a parish plan;
- sponsoring or supporting community events (e.g. open day, pancake supper), activities and groups.

E) St Mary's will encourage visitors to the Church from outside the parish, by publicising the Church on web sites, and providing information and a welcome to visitors.

F) Members of St Mary's bring their individual Christian vision and energy into everyday community life through all sorts of activities. St Mary's will encourage and help members of the church to share and support each other's application of their Christian vision in community life.

3.3 Infrastructure

St Mary's will develop the Church building to make it more suitable for its present and future role, providing (e.g.)

- more flexible space and seating;
- better access for the disabled;
- improved heating;
- toilet facilities;
- simple kitchen facilities;

in a programme staged to match its ability to raise the necessary funding.

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