



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2017

A VISION FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY UPDATE

In April 2013 the PCC at St Peter's outlined eight priorities to enable us to respond to the God-given opportunities and responsibilities that we have as St Albans's city-centre church. They were set out in the booklet 'A Vision for Mission and Ministry – Strategic Priorities for the next five years. That period has now ended and in late March 2017 our congregations had the opportunity to offer their thoughts on our mission and ministry and on St Peter's church life. In the months to come the PCC will be reviewing our vision and will start planning for the future in the light of this consultation process. So in this, the fifth of our annual newsletters, we just look back on our progress in 2016/2017. Roughly half

of this time was a period of vacancy and the other half was the early months of a new Vicar's time in the parish. So it could not have been a time for innovation. But it has been a time of steadily living out our lives in Christ consistently with the priorities established back in 2013 and some real progress has been made, as this newsletter describes.

The Rev'd Mark Dearnley, Vicar of St Peter's

Richard Butler, Mission Action Planning Co-ordinator on behalf of St Peter's PCC

We give thanks for ...

Priorities in 2016/2017

Progress made over the last year in our priorities included:

◆ **Priority – Developing and extending St Peter's core community in terms of discipleship, spirituality and mutual pastoral care.**

- The weekday home group established by Margaret Tinsley has developed into a Contemplative Prayer Group and a new home group under the guidance of Charles King has started meeting fortnightly. This brings our home group numbers to six.
- We have continued with our Community Nights three times a year, largely led by home groups, giving members of our separate congregations the chance to meet each other.
- Tea on Tuesday has continued to meet for food and fellowship during the day.
- Two Bring & Share lunches took place after joint morning services – after the APCM and after the Patronal Festival – organized by Patricia Lloyd and Jos Perris.
- St Peter's participated in Holiday at Home hosted by MRMC in August 2016.
- Ministers have extended the number of visits to local residential homes for Holy Communion services, shared with MRMC and the Abbey.

◆ **Priority - Placing a greater emphasis on passing on the faith to children and young people and nurturing them within this.**

- An amazing 150 children and carers attended the Good Friday Messy Church in 2016 under the leadership of Jos Perris and Sarah Brandt. Messy Church has continued throughout the year.
- Youth Café for young people aged 13-16 years has continued meeting on Sunday mornings with good numbers of young people exploring many aspects of faith.
- Youth Café had a weekend away to Chellington with St Andrew's Bedford and a trip to Taize in France in August 2016 led by Jos and Bishop Michael.
- Friday@FiveThirty has continued to offer a full and exciting weekly programme for children aged 7-12 years principally led by Charles King.
- Messy Conversations to support parents in responding to their children's hard questions about life, death etc. was launched in 2016.
- St Peter's hosted a trial course for parenting teenagers led by Patti Seabright.

◆ Priority – Making the presence of our worshipping community and something of our Christian values highly visible to the wider community.

- Our Facebook group is now visited about 500 times a week and receives messages almost every day from people outside our worshipping community.
- Our Twitter account has over 200 followers, and growing.
- Our website team ensure that the site is an up to date first port of call for many wishing to know what is happening at St Peter's.
- Our Newsletter records the rich variety of activity at St Peter's. Becky Gillibrand and Deborah Butler have led on all these initiatives.
- On Shrove Tuesday in both 2016 and in 2017 St Peter's teams took part in the annual pancake race in St Albans city centre.
- Our choirs and ministers have again been very visible in the town on occasions like the blessing of the farmers' market as part of the annual autumn Food and Drink Festival, the Mayor's Civic Carols and on Remembrance Sunday.

Tasks carried over from 2015 and addressed in 2016:

◆ Explore development of a link with a specific overseas parish or project to enable our community to engage more fully in social justice issues as well as to provide a focus for individual and PCC funding.

- St Peter's has developed a link with Club Rafiki of which Patti Seabright is a trustee
- We have also gained a link with Stop the Traffik with the arrival of Ruth Dearnley who is CEO of the charity.



YOUR VIEWS AND YOUR PART IN IT

The Vicar and members of the PCC will be glad to hear your ideas for our mission and ministry. Thank you for the part you play already in the life of St Peter's and please continue to use our special prayer through the year ahead.

A PRAYER FOR ST PETER'S

Welcoming God,
we give thanks for our church of St Peter's:
for its worship and witness in every age.
Give us your spirit of hospitality and joy
as we seek to serve our city and its people,
to share our rich inheritance of faith,
and to celebrate the good news of your love
in our own generation.

Guide us, by your Holy Spirit,
as we meet new challenges and opportunities
in our ministry and mission.

May we give generously of ourselves
in response to your own generous love.

This we ask through Jesus Christ,
the one in whose company we travel.

Amen

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it .. there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services but the same Lord. (1 Corinthians 12.4-5, 27)

Fan into flame the gift of God that is within you .. (2 Timothy 1.6)