

# *Vision Action Plan*

*Building for the future.*

*This is intended to be a working document which will be added to over the coming months, starting with the ideas of all those who have gathered. Please be assured that there is no such thing as a silly suggestion! We can't promise that all our hopes will be possible, or achievable, or even the same in some cases! This is here to start the conversation of where we are now, where we might like to be going, and how we might get there.*

*It might help to remind ourselves that **Vision** is a statement that is out of reach but that describes our hopes and dreams for the future. **Mission** is what we are doing and involved in now and should be achievable. **Strategy** is the list of things we might do to get to where we are going, and all these things need to be grounded in our **Values**, which describe who we are and what we are here for.*

*As we seek transforming vision for the future of our communities we remind ourselves also of the Life Vision of our diocese, and the commitments made to these over the coming years:*

- Nurturing everyday disciples*
- Investing in people and programmes which excite young people to explore and grow in faith*
- Encouraging new and courageous ways of worshipping in different places which connect with more people*
- Being advocates for flourishing through initiatives which combat injustice, environmental destruction, exclusion and isolation*
  - Developing diverse lay and ordained leaders*

# Worship and Teaching

Our regular worshipping patterns across the benefice are broad in style and function. These aim to cater to a wide range of spiritualities, traditions, contexts and people. Worship schedules are constantly under review. Rotas for worship are prepared several months in advance, and discussed with the ministry team, wardens and PCCs before completion.

In a busy multi-parish benefice it is never going to be possible to do everything, or for each service offered to suit everyone we serve. However, we seek to support services both small and large including our various offerings for families and children, our services of healing and anointing, and our prayer and study groups.

<b>What we could do next:</b>	<b>How?:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Diversity in worship</li></ul>	<p>The ministry team will continue to explore ways to make use of: times of silence, services of remembrance, Taizé, BSL/Makaton, Celtic prayers etc. These will not necessarily be a regular feature of our worship, but over the course of a year would be expected to feature somewhere in the services offered.</p> <p>Some travel between our churches may be required for access to services. However, we will endeavour to make something available in each parish Sunday by Sunday.</p> <p>The exception to this will be 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays when a benefice service will be held at the St Mary's Church Hall (and not in our individual churches). On these Sundays an 8 o'clock Communion will also be available to fulfil the functions of Canon Law, and for those in need in the benefice.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Prayer and study</li></ul>	<p>Responding to a request for more training in different kinds of prayer, how we use prayers in our worship and exploring different styles of prayer is something that will be developed. Our regular intercessory prayer will continue with annual or biennial training on offer.</p> <p>Our homegroups continue to run, and the ministry team will endeavour to work with these groups in coming months to sustain and support them alongside new groups and other study opportunities. Confirmation classes will continue to be offered on a biennial basis, and seasonal studies run including the online Advent studies and the TCT Lent Courses.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Music and worship</li></ul>	<p>Music continues to be one of the most divisive elements of our worship and the area in which diversity across a wider geography (i.e. the whole benefice) needs to be recognised.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EcoChurch and All Age offerings</li> </ul>	<p>Hymn choices and music lists will vary depending on context, seek to utilise the gifts and skills of our local musicians and choir, and cover the breadth of music available from traditional choral music to more contemporary hymns. In our AllAge worship we will seek to use some of our schools' worship resources e.g. iSingPop. Polling for favourite hymns and suggestions from our congregations will be done every few years.</p> <p>Similar diversity will be shown in our worship styles, liturgies and practices including fresh expressions of church and possible new forms of worship alongside the more traditional services. Through the course of a year across the benefice these will include incense, bells, candles, extended times of silence, craft activities, drama, props and visuals used in a variety of ways. Wherever possible these will be used with consideration of accessibility and additional needs.</p> <p>Covered in the Vision Action Plan Pages for 'EcoChurch and Creation Care' and 'Children and Young People'.</p> <p>In addition to these plans the ministry team will continue to talk about and review accessibility and diversity in our worship to ensure we are enabling as many people as possible to access worship in suitable formats across our communities, with a broad range of spiritualities and additional needs included.</p>
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### **Next steps:**

- To canvas our various communities for favourite hymns and suggestions, and factor these into our planning for worship.
- Revd Joy to visit our existing homegroups during the first half of 2024 and explore options for new groups to be formed.
- Worship to be considered over the course of a whole year (currently bimonthly – to begin summer 2024) to ensure diversity to suit existing congregations and to explore new possibilities.

### **Dreams and visions:**

To celebrate a diverse and vibrant benefice of worshipping communities who are united in faith and purpose while flourishing in a wide range of spiritualities and practices. For the Church to be a place of exploration and transformation where prayer and worship enable and equip us to go out into the world renewed and refreshed for our ministry, mission, and engagement with God's world. To be a benefice of individuals who are at home in our worship, but also open to challenge and change, with doors open to newcomers and spiritual explorers.