

St. Peter's Mission Action Plan



A community of faith, hope and love in the heart of the city

Introduction

The Mission Audit has provided a wonderful opportunity for all of us to listen to God, to one another and to those who do not come to St. Peter's. It has been engaging, fun, interesting and illuminating as we've prayerfully discerned where God is leading us as a community for the next five years.

It has been particularly encouraging to involve the whole church in this process, which is critical if the vision is to be owned by us all. I am grateful for everyone who has participated, and for the wisdom and support from the team that has been guiding the process with me; Roger, Morna, Usha, Janet, Bill, Eddie, Anita and Jean.

Our aim has been to produce a Mission Action Plan that will tell the story of what we discovered and identify specific ways in which we can engage with our community.

We want to be a trusting people who demonstrate God's love to the world around us, so that, by God's grace, we move forward and outward into our local community and beyond, embracing the challenges with prayer, steadfastness, joy and faith.

We are conscious of the tendency for churches to drift without focus; we will not do this. The fact is that when we don't know where we're going, every road gets us there! We do not want this to be a picture of St. Peter's; instead we will journey with a clear overarching vision, a strong sense of direction, and a dependence on God to be our guide.

Rev. Paul Morris
Vicar, St. Peter's City Centre Church, Derby
28th February 2010

Why did we do this?

A Mission Action Plan (MAP) is a document which outlines the mission activities that a local church is going to do in the coming months and years. It is built on a clear sense of God's vision for the church – what God is calling the church to be and to do. So a MAP provides exactly what it says on the tin – an action plan for mission. A MAP makes sure that the life and work of a church is purposeful (doing what we are convinced is needed); developing (always improving how we do things) and focussed (not distracted by less important things).

With this aim in mind, St. Peter's embarked on a MAP in April 2009. This included setting up a Mission Audit team, listening to God, listening to one another through a Vision Day and questionnaires, and listening to others in our parish and local community.

The results have enabled us to produce priorities and an action plan for 2010 – 2014. It is these results that we present here, in the hope that we may all come to "yearn for the wide, boundless ocean" and be inspired by that vision to offer our particular gifts and skills in the service of Jesus Christ.

What do we value most?

- Jesus at the centre
- Bible based
- Mission
- Worship
- Mercy
- Diversity
- Hospitality

"If you want to build a ship, don't summon people to buy wood, prepare tools, distribute jobs and organise the work, rather teach people to yearn for the wide, boundless ocean"
Antoine de Saint-Exupery



Some of the Mission Audit Team

Turn over to find out more...

What did we discover?



Church weekend away at Clanfield, Oxfordshire, November 2009

What is good about St. Peter's?

The three main strengths of St. Peter's are its location, its people and their caring attitude. Friendliness, welcome and acceptance also feature highly, as well as boldness, the building, honesty, prayer and the use of ministry gifts. Church members perceive friendship, support and belonging as the best aspects of St. Peter's. Opportunities to

worship and develop faith are also greatly valued.

Many church members find church services at St. Peter's moving, other descriptions are open, homely, meaningful, accessible, involving and genuine. Support in terms of practical help, love, prayer and teaching have helped church members grow in faith.

A Christian presence, holiness and peace are highly valued aspects of the church building along with a sense of the history of prayer and worship.

The fact that the church is open throughout the week, together with Sunday Suppers for the homeless, contributes to supporting and meeting the needs of people.

What are our challenges?

Location is the most cited challenge (but also a strength!), which largely relates to the parking issues. There is a perception that St. Peter's appears closed or irrelevant to passers-by. Few church members feel a connection with people in the parish. Commitment, relationships and time demands are also listed as difficulties, with a few trying to do many things, and sometimes not in their areas of strength. Views on forms of worship vary, with some wanting traditional forms and others more modern approaches. Some feel that the church building has little impact upon the surrounding community except for our homeless ministry, and some highlight

When the LORD restored his exiles to Jerusalem, it was like a dream!

We were filled with laughter, and we sang for joy.

And the other nations said, "What amazing things the LORD has done for them."

Yes, the LORD has done amazing things for us!

What joy!

Psalm 126

This text was shared in our Mission Audit prayer journal

our lack of expertise in caring for the homeless. It is known that there is some connection with schools, mostly at Christmas, but the feeling is that more could be done in the area of children and youth. Pastoral care, outreach and communication are areas that could be improved. The low numbers attending the Sunday evening service are a cause for concern. The main factor in helping faith grow is considered to be teaching, but many fail to identify how they might grow deeper in faith. In response to the question, "in what ways do you really love to serve God?" the most common reply is being in a supporting role. This indicates that many church members do not have sufficient confidence to recognise themselves as leaders.

What are the opportunities?

Social events, including meals, barbecues, music, theatre and sport are suggested as new activities. Family activities and events for children, including rambling, hobbies, scouts and guides and talks, are considered appropriate occasions for inviting non-Christian friends. A number of comments reference the homeless, disadvantaged, refugees and the

challenging nature of the city centre. The history and location of the building are mentioned, along with beauty, bells and architecture. The potential for development is also recognised, to create a faith-based community centre, a place of worship and rest, and a venue for social activities. A lot of support is given to the plans to develop the buildings with some very positive comments.

Potential areas of opportunity were identified relating to the needs of church members, including support, friendship, worship, prayer and teaching. Training courses such as exploring spiritual disciplines are considered beneficial. Opportunities for developing our ministry to visitors and for engaging beyond our four walls were identified.

6 Conclusions for 2010-2014



Serve the City Derby, November 2009

1. A majority tend to see themselves in a supporting role, therefore there needs to be a focus on building confidence – in God, in how he has gifted us, in exercising faith.
2. A majority would like to know more about how they can grow spiritually, therefore there needs to be a focus on understanding why we should grow, the benefits and how this is achieved.
3. A minority expressed concern that pastoral care needs are not being sufficiently met; therefore, as we anticipate numerical growth, it is imperative to set in place appropriate sustainable pastoral care processes.
4. A number of widely differing expectations are expressed regarding styles of worship, ranging from traditional to modern; therefore, we recognise the importance and sensitivity of this issue and it will remain under review.
5. One of the needs not being met is outreach to our local community, including the social needs of the marginalised and disadvantaged; therefore, we will explore innovative and creative ways of outreach to develop our relationship with our local community, as well as reviewing existing approaches.
6. A majority referred to the location and opportunities presented by the church building as a significant strength; therefore, as we move forward with our plans to develop St. Peter's Centre, we will seek to identify ways to maximise the gift of our location in the heart of the city.

Saturday morning out on the town!

As part of the Mission Audit process, a group of us spent two Saturday mornings knocking on doors in our Parish, asking people what they thought about St. Peter's (had they even heard of St. Peter's?!) and what questions they had about God, life and faith. We were nervous! But fortified by coffee and prayer, we set out in faith...

What did we learn? Many things, but above all how VITALLY important it is to get out there and feel a real connection with our local area – where people are living, what needs they have, what challenges they face. It's only then we can really begin to respond and be bearers of good news. One lady talked about the need to clean up the street she lived on. Shortly afterwards, we were able to spend a Saturday morning doing just that – a very small step, but one that said, "We want to share God's vision of a world made new, of lives renewed and restored, of God's goodness and compassion for all." We pray that we will go on listening, learning and responding long after the Mission Audit process is over.



Church weekend away at Clanfield, Oxfordshire, November 2009



This picture was shared in our Mission Audit prayer journal

So what are we going to do?

1. Building confidence in faith

- Initiate SHAPE groups to encourage development of spiritual gifts.
- Provide opportunity for practical expression of faith through projects such as Serve the City.
- Encourage greater confidence through teaching courses about spiritual disciplines, leadership, servanthood and sharing faith.
- Identify leaders to undertake leadership training programme.
- Develop a programme of mentoring for new Christians.

4. Prayer and Worship

- Develop an understanding of worship as a way of life.
- Provide diversity of worship exploring different patterns and styles.
- Provide training for all worship leaders.
- Establish a sustainable pattern for corporate prayer.
- Establish and provide training for a prayer ministry team.
- Provide suitable occasions for members to invite friends.

2. Spiritual growth and development

- Develop small groups for bible study, prayer, fellowship.
- Train and equip leaders of small groups.
- Develop courses and groups to nurture new believers.
- Provide midweek teaching opportunities.
- Train and resource a team to disciple young people.

5. Outreach

- Develop a range of pathways for people to journey into faith.
- Explore new ways to connect with networks and groups.
- Explore new ways to engage with Toddler Group families.
- Develop links with, and be enriched by, the overseas church.
- Develop relationships in the city centre through Chaplaincy and Serve the City; and with the diocese, ecumenical partners and secular organisations.
- Use St. Peter's News, web site and local media for communication.
- Respond to environmental and justice concerns.

3. Pastoral Care

- Develop a shared understanding of pastoral care.
- Provide natural opportunities through social events for friendship and mutual care.
- Provide regular lunches for newcomers, older people and students.
- Develop systems to communicate pastoral needs, ensuring care for the sick, housebound, bereaved.
- Ensure that all involved in pastoral work are appropriately trained and supported.

6. Community Development Project: St. Peter's Centre

- To be people of mercy, constantly seeking to show compassion in action to all in need.
- Develop St. Peter's Centre in accordance with proposed plans, including facilities for the disabled, and to facilitate the priorities above.
- Constantly review and re-assess plans in light of changing circumstances and community needs.

And finally

We recognise a need to incorporate regular evaluation and review of everything we do. A MAP Assessment Group will be formed to identify measureable criteria enabling us to assess progress and set priorities every year.

We will not stand still as we seek to face up to the challenges of the 21st century. Instead, with this MAP, we will build on what has gone before and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us forward and outward, where we believe we will discover again and again that, with God, nothing is impossible.

Our hope and prayer is that this Mission Action Plan will:

- Excite you, for we have so much to look forward to
- Challenge you, as you identify the part that you can play
- Encourage you, as you become more hopeful about what God will do amongst us in the future
- Lead you closer to God, as we continue to put faith into action.

Receive this with joy and expectation, prayerfully offer your ministry to God once again, for it is as we work together in the power of the Holy Spirit that we discover that God 'is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.'