



Parish of Nuthurst and Mannings Heath Mission Action Plan 2023



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Introduction

The Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion, including the Church of England, are based upon the five 'T's': Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform & Treasure. These together should form part of a church Mission Action Plan, each, element is very important - without one, the others would become unstable. The Parish of Nuthurst and Mannings Heath has developed a Mission Action Plan around the Marks of Mission as these embrace the parish Mission Statements from the Parish Profile. This MAP is aspirational, not 'set in stone' and can be adjusted according to needs and desires within the parish. It has been agreed by the PCC and the Interim Vicar.

TELL

Communication is paramount - without it we would all be in a great muddle, as we know well when something is miscommunicated. Communication is about telling people something, in our case it is about the love of God, his Son Jesus Christ, and the impact this can have upon a believer's life.

As a whole church we should be telling people about our faith journeys, it should not be left solely to the vicar/lay reader. In the Parish of Nuthurst and Mannings Heath we fully understand and appreciate this; we also appreciate that communication goes way beyond regular church attenders and into the community, county and country. We understand therefore that how we communicate matters, as it is noticed and reflects upon us as a parish. We hope to bring the Good News to others by:

- Holding regular services that are accessible, meaningful, inclusive, inviting and open to everyone across the parish and beyond. This means we must be adaptable and creative in our approach to worship, especially to others, particularly those who are not 'churched' or are younger in age.
- Equipping the congregation to be more at ease in expressing their faith to others (see teach)
- Ensuring that the church as a body of Christians is more visible in the community e.g., through service to others.
- Being more 'open' for the community to see by becoming greater focal points in both places (St. Andrew's Church and the Church of the Good Shepherd) allowing access and enquiry for visitors and parishioners alike during the day, thus acting as triggers for enquiry.

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- Engaging more proactively as 'Church' with existing focal points throughout the parish, e.g., hamlet Village Societies and clubs.
- Engaging further with our local church school, in a variety of ways – taking assemblies, volunteering to hear children read, volunteering to offer insight/support with other areas of the curriculum, e.g., history WW1/2 experiences, acting as resources for R.E. lessons.
- Preaching at Occasional Offices – e.g., baptisms, weddings, funerals
- Providing a safe space for young people to relax, socialise and hear 'the message'.
- Provide a safe space for people to seek prayer with others or in private.

We also understand that information, communication technology is fast moving and changing and, that we as a parish need to keep up with these changes so that people of every generation have access to what we offer.

To this end, as part of our MAP, the parish will create a Communications Team. The team members will initially be PS and AB with support from others. The role of this team will be as follows:

- To maintain, review, add to and ensure the church website functions fully and is user friendly.
- To ensure that the weekly notices are produced in a coherent format, chronologically and sub sectioned for ease of use.
- To ensure weekly notices are distributed by email to the church circulation list.
- To ensure printed copies of the weekly notices (standard and large print) are available for those who do not own computers.
- To ensure that church noticeboards are up to date with the weekly notices.
- That information is ready and available for other community noticeboards across the parish.
- To ensure that special events are publicised in plenty of time.
- To ensure relevant information is given to the Community Facebook team.
- To ensure that the Vicar's 'monthly write up' and events are distributed to The Link for publication.
- To ensure that relevant diocesan materials are advertised on the website.
- To ensure that incoming enquires from the website are fielded to appropriate personnel quickly and efficiently.
- To ensure that positive support is given to team members if any issues arise relating to communication and, ensure that no member of the team assumes anything about any member's technical, artistic, creative ability, or understanding

of the Church of England and the Christian Calendar, (we are starting from scratch and the whole process is a steep learning curve for everyone involved).

TEACH

Much of what we tell relies on people feeling confident in their faith, and this usually stems from sound teaching, not just from the pulpit on Sundays. We hope to expound the message of Good News by:

- Ensuring worship is engaging, relevant and understandable – we should never assume everyone knows and understands what is happening in a service.
- Ensuring preaching is informed by scripture and relevant to active faith in today's world.
- Ensuring programmes of study are used seasonally (Advent and Lent), being made available to all, including those who might be new to faith or seeking.
- Running Home Groups (in homes or at CoGS) alongside seasonal courses to allow for continued study, reflection, learning and questioning in matters relating to faith.
- Nurturing new believers by holding generic courses such as 'Alpha' and 'Developing Discipleship' so that they may develop their understanding and therefore their relationship with God.
- Teaching new believers about baptism and confirmation, (see above).
- Teaching, in whatever manner appropriate, about prayer and the importance/impact prayer has on a believer's life.
- Preaching at Occasional Offices – e.g., baptisms, weddings, funerals.
- Being available and making personal contact with those who prefer to enquire/ask questions/learn as individuals.
- Expanding the teaching 'team' by identifying opportunities for training / leading Bible Study / Home Groups / Youth Group.
- Re-starting a Church Youth Group at the Church of the Good Shepherd once a leadership team is identified.

TEND – Pastoral Care

Within the Parish of Nuthurst and Mannings Heath we believe an outward sign of faith to the community is to be the hands, feet and heart of Jesus. To this end, in the same way that Jesus supported the sick, dying, bereaved and lonely, we believe it is our calling to do the same for those in need within the parish. The Pastoral Care Team is comprised of a small number of church members who feel gifted in the field of pastoral ministry.

As a parish we believe that pastoral care is a clear sign of God's mission within our community, therefore we will strive to:

- Continue to provide 'Open House' since re-opening after COVID; the objective being to provide a bi-monthly opportunity for lonely, infirm, older people to meet in a non-threatening, friendly environment at CoGS. This will continue to be free at the point of access.
- Continue to organise a Strawberry Tea in the summer and a Christmas Lunch in December for those who enjoy attending 'Open House', carers and canine friends being welcome too.
- Continue to inform each other, as well as the parish clergy and Lay Reader, of anyone who requests prayer.
- Inform parish clergy of those who request home/care home/hospice or hospital visits including those who request Holy Communion.
- Keep records of all visits so as there is continuity in how we approach people.
- Co-ordinate with the co-ordinator of Lay Ministers of Holy Communion, to build a team willing to take Holy Communion (reserved), to those requesting it, in the absence of a priest.
- Request training and support from the parish clergy in this respect and consider further development e.g., the diocesan Pastoral Care ALM programme.
- Communicate clearly and effectively with each other and maintain discretion and strict confidentiality unless permission is given otherwise.
- Send cards, take flowers, make phone calls to anyone who is sick, housebound, or facing difficulties.

TEND – Social Team

Background

The Social Team has existed in varying forms for several years. Whilst some fundraising events have been organised in the past, that has never been the principal purpose of the Social Team.

Team members have aged, activities have diminished and Covid lock down caused us to have to rethink the type and style of activities we now offer to and for the community e.g., The Christmas Market has become The Grand Christmas Raffle and we were able to hold a Tea Party last summer only through the help of parishioners outside the usual church community.

We have managed to raise the profile of the church in the parish since COVID lockdown and have a resourceful team. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee prompted the idea of holding a History Display in St. Andrew's Church. This was readily taken up by all 14 community groups, clubs and societies in the parish. We held our first Christmas Tree Festival at St. Andrew's for the whole community to engage with–The benefit of both events was that the active resource input came from beyond the church and demonstrated that community cohesion is possible if community members are invited to participate. The result being parishioners who we otherwise would not see, entered the church willingly, thus proving most people are not generally 'anti-church'.

Future

- We will continue to hold our regular informal events in the form of coffee mornings, either at COGS, in St. Andrew's churchyard or parishioners' homes. They show the friendly face of the church to a number of parishioners who enjoy these events but, for a variety of reasons, don't attend services.
- We will continue a newly established form of celebration holding Bucks Fizz and Nibbles after a service and in St. Andrew's to celebrate e.g., Harvest Festival, special birthdays and such like. (We have no church hall or village hall to use).
- Following the generous offer of the Allotment facilities for the licencing of clergy, we will consider what other celebrations/events/activities we could hold there.
- We will draw on the recent experience of our two inclusive community events – the History Display and the Christmas Tree Festival – to consider what other activities we may be able to run inside the church for the community.
- We will enable to the church building to be used by community groups for arts festivals/concerts, seasonal events (risk assessments/conditions of use, and such like permitting)
- We will encourage members of the church to support other local clubs and societies as they support us.

- We will continue to promote our events and activities on the local notice boards, the website, through St. Andrew's School, Link and Facebook, and where appropriate through the local press.

TRANSFORM

In our parish we recognize that part of Christ's Ministry was to protect the vulnerable; support those suffering in body, mind or spirit; feed the hungry; set the downtrodden free; and speak for those unjustly treated, who have no voice.

We believe that this aspect of mission is ours today as we fulfil the Great Commandment "to love our neighbour".

We understand that we cannot transform the world single handed, however through prayer, action and example we can make a positive difference.

Therefore, in this parish we will:

- Continue to support EDUKID by financial giving and publicity/education about this charity. This important because the parish has a direct personal link with the charity.
- Continue to support the Bishop Muhoro School for the Deaf in Kenya; here again we have long personal links with this charity.
- Support children generally through the Children's Society with our newly established Christingle Service, and locally, by working with St Andrew's School.
- Continue to support the Family Support Work. This is a faith-motivated charity that provides services to all kinds of families, of all faiths and none. In accordance with Christian values and in partnership with the Diocese of Chichester, we support those in need, rather than passing them by.
- Continue to support St Catherine's Hospice by donation.
- Support the Horsham Matters Food Bank by collecting food at St Andrew's and taking it to their site.

In addition, we will increase our PCC giving:

- to Local, National or International charities when there is an unforeseen need, e.g., EDF for disasters abroad.
- Occasional or seasonal gifts/collections additionally to those listed, e.g., the Bishop's Harvest Appeal.

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We appreciate that some aspects of transforming an individual's life falls within the remit of Pastoral care, which this parish takes very seriously, (see Tend).

Parishioners will be encouraged to give as generously as they are able and also urged to promote the work that we do so that others in the local community can volunteer/participate too. Hopefully this will enable those who have yet to come to God to see faith in action and will develop their understanding of God's Mission here on earth; that it is ongoing throughout this parish and the world.

TEND & TRANSFORM – Safeguarding

Protecting the vulnerable is at the very heart of the Christian faith. Our safeguarding work in church is an expression of God's kindness and compassion and of our commitment to the gospel. This chapter presents our parish with advice, information and resources that helps the parish understand how to achieve the best possible standards of safeguarding.

Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the incumbent

The PCC is the main decision maker of a parish. Its members are clergy, church wardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. The PCC and the incumbent have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community. In terms of safeguarding, the incumbent and the PCC will:

Adopt and implement:

- The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy 'Promoting a Safer Church'

Appoint:

- An appropriately experienced, named Parish Safeguarding Officer (Rob Petts) to work with the incumbent and the Parochial Church Council.

Safer recruitment, support and training:

- Have a policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders and ensure all those responsible for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults on behalf of the church are safely recruited.
- Ensure all church officers are aware of the safeguarding policy/guidance and are trained appropriately for their roles.
- Provide appropriate insurance to cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the Parochial Church Council which involve children, young people and adults.

Display:

- A formal statement of adoption of the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement'. This should be signed on behalf of the PCC.
- Ensure information is displayed about how to contact the DSA(s), Parish Safeguarding Officer and how to get help outside the church with child and adult safeguarding issues.
- Ensure that safeguarding arrangements are clearly visible on the front page of the parish website.

Respond:

- Have a procedure in place to deal promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse.
- Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations including those against church officers to the Parish Safeguarding Officer/ incumbent and the DSA.
- Ensure that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the DSA.
- Comply with all data protection legislation especially in regard to using (e.g. storing) information about any church officers and any safeguarding records.
- Ensure an 'activity risk assessment' is completed and reviewed regularly for each activity which is associated with either children or vulnerable adults and run in the name of the church.

Review and report progress:

- The PSO should regularly report on safeguarding in the parish. Safeguarding should be a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting. At the APCM the PCC should provide an annual reporting relation to safeguarding. In the PCC's annual report will be a statement which reports on progress and a statement as to whether or not the PCC has complied with the duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

During a clergy vacancy:

- The PCC must, working with the church wardens, ensure that all information about safeguarding matters is securely stored before passing the information on to the new incumbent. The departing incumbent must give the safeguarding information to the Parish Safeguarding Officer who can pass the information on to the new incumbent when he/she takes up his/her new role.

Key messages:

- The welfare of the child, young person and vulnerable adult is always paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) must be consulted whenever a safeguarding concern of any kind arises in your parish.
- Safeguarding is part of our core faith and an integral feature of Christian life in our parish churches.

TREASURE

Here in the Parish of Nuthurst and Mannings Heath we understand that good stewardship of this planet, God's creation, is of paramount importance in order for the whole planet to survive. We understand that it is our responsibility to set examples of how this can be achieved both at a church level and as individuals. We also believe it is our responsibility to educate and support those who find these changes a challenge to implement.

To this end, part of our MAP will focus on all matters relating to caring for God's earth, in all areas of our Church life. This work will address key areas of Church life. These are, Worship and Teaching; Management of Church Buildings; Management of Church Land; Community and Global Engagement and Lifestyle. In summary these will include the following:

Vision:

- We will strive to achieve our Bronze Eco Church Award through Eco Church A Rocha UK. This is a Christian charity committed to equip Christians and churches to bring care for the natural world into the heart of their communities.
- To develop an environmental policy for our Churches in this parish.

Worship and Teaching:

- Educate people on environmental issues and our role as stewards of creation. This will include for example: Special Sundays relating to caring for God's earth (e.g., Carbon Busters talk); hymns, teaching and prayers relating to God's world.
- Encourage small group studies on environmental matters (e.g., home groups)

Management of Church Buildings.

- Recognise the importance of environmental impacts and effect on the carbon footprint of the Church in consideration of all aspects of the care for the church buildings, recognising their ages and the implications and procedures involved. Such matters which are key to this process include, energy use and how it is consumed. Particular regard will be taken of initiatives and experiences of other churches and organisations.
- Whilst we treasure our building of St. Andrew's, Nuthurst, and we recognise its status as a listed building, we also recognise that it is not very user friendly by standards expected these days, having no accessible entry point for wheelchair users, no accessible toilet for anyone who is not very fit and mobile, no kitchen facilities or areas for meetings / small gatherings. We wish to address all of these matters in order to make our building more accessible and user friendly. When the time is right, we will seek opinions, guidance and advice from the congregation, PCC members, the diocese and Bishop. This process will not begin until a permanent incumbent is securely in place.

Management of Church Land.

- Continue to care for St Andrew's churchyard with its rich mix of flora, fauna and wildlife.
- Continue support for the careful mowing regimes, including retention of areas of wildflowers, hedgerows and woodland.
- Care for the public footpath which passes through the churchyard.

Community and Global Engagement:

- Maintain and extend the Church's involvement with local organisations and community projects.
- Continue supporting international activities which seek to support people and protect God's world, e.g., Water Aid, Bishops' Appeal, Christian Aid Week etc.

Lifestyle:

- Continue engaging with local community activities and organisations which are focusing on caring for God's world through such activities as recycling and the community allotment.

- Encourage church members to review their own lifestyles, to address such matters as ethically sourced products, locally grown food and generally their carbon footprint.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Parish of Nuthurst and Mannings Heath had been without an incumbent for almost five years and in this time much happened – many parishioners worked hard to keep the churches open and functioning as best they could, however, circumstances, including the Covid-19 pandemic led to an extensive period of closure and loss of many parishioners.

Post Covid, once the parish was given permission to reopen, the Church Wardens worked hard to maintain services by ‘bringing in’ clergy with Permission to Officiate (PTO) status to preside each Sunday. They, along with the Lay Reader, deserve much praise for their efforts in not allowing the church to die and for their persistence and resilience throughout those difficult times.

The parish now looks forward to a brighter, new future, filled with hope, vision and joy. This is reflected in the parish Mission Action Plan. The MAP belongs to the parish, was discussed by the parish and written by members of the parish who have either expertise or an avid interest their fields. Particular thanks therefore should go to the following, for their time, effort and input (in order of subheading) – Peter Swift, Geoff Smith, Annie Bryant, Bernice Middleton, Vivien Chaffin & Team, Mike Thompson, Rob Petts, Steve Cottingham, without whom, this document of hope and vision would not exist.

SM. 5.2.23

Agreed by the PCC at its meeting on 07/02/2023.