

THE PARISH OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST, BROUGHTON

Charity Number: 1134595

Jesus said, "I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last." John 15.16

We seek to make Jesus known in our community, through our joyful, loving service and worship

Parish Review 2018 – Ministry

'Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.' **Proverbs 16:3**

Sub-group: Mrs. Rachael Ainsworth (Chair), Mrs. Susan Cherry, Mrs. June Eccles, Mrs. Katy Hardy, Revd. Pauline Taylor

Context

The ministry group had the remit:

To ask: *How do we serve the parish? What are we doing for young people and children? What opportunities are we giving to older people to worship or simply enjoy fellowship? How do we encourage vocations to lay and ordained ministries?*

To review: *Jigsaw, GIFT, Youth Group, Little Fishes – the basis is there, but not enough people take advantage of the opportunities and there is a dearth of volunteers to keep them going. What needs to be done? Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals. Do these meet the needs of the community?*

To consider: *The parish's ministry for men as well as young people, families and older people.*

Data was to be taken from the Parish Survey (2018), discussion, research and observational assessment.

Our sub-group were keen to fully understand their role in shaping the future of the parish through this review and to ensure their role was clear, including what is meant by 'ministry'. The role of ministry within the church was discussed and a quote from Robert Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, which he stated about Church Schools, but was felt relevant for the church in its ministry was shared: *'Nourish those of the Faith; Encourage those of other faiths; Challenge those who have no faith.'*

Information Gathering

As part of the parish review the ministry sub-group carried out a 'SWOT' analysis in order to establish the many strengths of ministry within our parish and to begin to identify the areas in which developments need to be made to fulfil Vision 2026 *'Making Disciples, Being Witnesses, Growing Leaders.'*; our Parish Mission of *'We seek to make Jesus known in our community, through our joyful, loving service and worship.'* and in order to be a *'healthy church transforming communities'*.

To ask:

How do we serve the parish?

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>Variety of worship services on offer across all three worship centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eucharist (Traditional & Family) • All Age Worship • Morning Prayer • Evensong <p>Variety of service times Variety of activities on in the Parish Hall</p>	<p>Communication – website can be clunky and information not always available in ‘one click’</p> <p>Lack of information about ‘What’s on..’ at the Parish Hall</p>	<p>Non-Eucharistic services valued as a ‘way-in’ for people new to church</p> <p>Develop range of worship</p> <p>Matching parishioners with the style of worship in which they feel ‘comfortable’</p>	<p>Clergy stretched?</p> <p>Lack of clear communication?</p>

What are we doing for young people and children?

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>JIGSAW: 3yrs +</p> <p>Parents like the ‘passport’ nature of this, increasingly positive about role in all-age worship</p> <p>Little Fishes: Parents, Carers & toddlers</p> <p>Messy Church: Families</p> <p>Links to Church Schools: Weekly worship by Clergy, Class Eucharist etc.</p> <p>Uniformed Organisations</p> <p>Choir</p>	<p>Post-confirmation Group to enable young people to explore and develop their faith</p> <p>Girls singing and ‘music’ opportunities in general</p> <p>Why do we have oversubscribed schools and falling roles at JIGSAW and church generally?</p> <p>No electronic availability of information e.g. JIGSAW date list</p> <p>Information available but not accessible to all</p>	<p>Develop Youth Work</p> <p>Develop opportunities for worship through music</p> <p>Develop closer links with parish schools e.g. church corner on the newsletter – ‘what’s on in our parish?’</p> <p>How can the ‘register’ be used to engage families?</p>	<p>Lack of disciples to lead on this?</p> <p>Availability of the Hall?</p> <p>Loss of Holy Week School</p>

What opportunities are we giving to older people to worship or simply enjoy fellowship?

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Monthly Sunday Parish Lunch Friends, Food & Fellowship – community lunch Mothers Union Friday Service at St Martin's	What do we offer for men? Timings for working people? Cost? Location? Lack of information regarding what's available within the parish	Develop ministry for men and for younger couples? Develop links with the Parish Club – how can the church be more involved?	Lack of interest? e.g. Lenten Group for men Lack of disciples? Mentality of 'them & us' as opposed to joined up thinking

How do we encourage vocations to lay and ordained ministries?

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Raised profile of ordination due to Pauline, Rie & Mo Lots of opportunities within the parish to 'get involved' e.g. JIGSAW, Messy Church, Choir Links to Diocesan events and training	Lack of support for adults exploring their faith and calling Sharing the load – are some people doing too much inadvertently making others feel inadequate?	Study or discussion groups for adults e.g. The Alpha Course??	Who would run study groups? Where? When? Lack of disciples, perhaps due to feeling 'I'm not worthy' or 'unskilled' – making sure people know they are valued

To review:

JIGSAW (Audience: 2+ to 11; Term-time only)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Growing Inclusive Dedicated team Passportability	Sustainability Commitment of discipleship	Sharing information with others e.g. advertise JIGSAW dates at Little Fishes Share through word of mouth – good opportunities to be disciples and grow disciples	Attendance due to other commitments

Little Fishes (Audience: Parents/Carers 0 to 4; Term-time only)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Well-advertised Well attended Offered at pre-Baptism meeting	Too busy?	Give4 parents/carers at Little Fishes information about the other groups e.g. JIGSAW/Messy Church	Is it a victim of its own success – can busyness put parents off?

YOUTH GROUP

We couldn't fully explore a SWOT analysis for this as it isn't currently in existence however the group wondered whether there was an opportunity to liaise with Chaplain Joe at ATS (Archbishop Temple School) to reignite this. The group also felt that Bishop Philip may be keen to get involved.

GIFT - Growing in Faith Together

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Fellowship Thought provoking Accessible to all Runs all years and includes major festivals e.g. lent course Regular invitations offered Bible Study	Timing? Lack of information about what goes on/who it is aimed at	Open up to others as discussions which take place are lively and this may entice others to join in – definite kerb appeal!	Attendance due to other commitments

Baptisms

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Systematic approach Preparation allows parents to make the right choice for their families Accessibility of sessions Opportunities for feedback from parents Building of networks within the parish family Promotes Little Fishes & Messy Church Discipleship of the Baptism Team	Not all families continue to attend – how do we follow-up/engage those that don't?	Growth of parish family Annual celebration service of Baptism to invite families back to?	None identified

Weddings

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Lots of young families joining the parish because parents married at St John's People come back to marry –	Discussion was had over couples wanting the 'full choir' experience which	Annual celebration service of Marriage to invite couples/families	Weddings down in 2018 apparently due to

generational Popular venue choice Meetings and preparation for marriage including meeting others	sometimes can't be fulfilled	back to? Development of a Wedding Team, similar to the Baptism Team?	roadworks!
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<i>Funerals</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Support given to families in difficult circumstances Choices of services available to reflect the needs of individuals/families wishes Good relationships with Funeral Directors Family visits before and after the funeral Invitations to join with the parish in worship	Emotional (Mental) Health awareness, due to lack of trained bereavement visitors (disciples?)	Planning/Wish-sharing/Facilitating discussions with loved ones before the eventuality? Development of a Bereavement Team, similar to the Baptism Team?	None identified

The sub-group felt the range of support available to parishioners enables them to 'live life in its fullness' acknowledging the challenge will be sustainability.

To consider:

<i>The Parish's Ministry for Men</i>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Fraternity that exists within the choir; inter-generational and continues beyond the length of service	No identity/role/groups defined within the parish for men	Ask the men of the parish what they would like to see for/run by them Emulate other church's ideas e.g. Dads & lads; Men's Forum/Fellowship; Start a Pint & Ponder Group or Breakfast Fellowship Club; perhaps with a few at first and let it develop	Ideas should be done 'with' and not 'to' the men of the parish if they are to be successful Lack of interest? Lack of disciples?
<i>The group felt that that lots of time in the previous activities covered young people, families and older people however there was a gap specifically in the analysis of the parish's ministry for women.</i>			

The Parish's Ministry for Women

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Women's Fellowship Mother's Union Affiliated groups such as The Harmony Singers	Timings of groups for working women Lack of knowledge about who the groups are for, when they run etc. Limited opportunities for girls/women to express their worship in music and song	Succession planning for discipleship Open communications about the groups on offer to women Variety in worship styles/music – perhaps ladies choir when the choir are 'on their travels' or 'off duty' Provide music and song workshops for girls and women – links to Blackburn Cathedral?	Lack of interest? Lack of disciples? Mentality of 'them & us' as opposed to joined up thinking

The sub-group started by looking at how we minister to those in our parish and how we as a parish use our gifts and talents to minister to others; what was clear through the many weeks of work was that so many of our findings directly linked to the remits of the other sub-groups and so the continuing work of the steering group and its information sharing was vital.

Parish Survey

It was important after completing this information gathering to canvas directly the opinions of the parish through the survey and as our sub-group was keen to put into context what we were asking parishioners and so we considered the following definitions when we constructed our questions:

Ministry: activities by Christians to spread or express their faith, based on the example of Jesus

Fellowship: friendly feeling that exists between people who have a shared interest or are doing something as a group

Discipleship: people who believe in the ideas and principles of God and try to live the way Jesus taught us to through helping others in the church

This is a summary of what was said in response to the ministry questions (page 3) on the parish survey:

Question 16: My parish is friendly and welcoming

Out of 173 respondents 163 people answered with large majority stating that our parish is friendly and welcoming.

Question 17 I would invite my friends to worship in my parish

Out of 173 respondents 155 people answered with large majority stating that they would invite their friends to worship in our parish.

Question 18 Our parish provides opportunities for fellowship

Out of 173 respondents 158 people answered with large majority stating that our parish provides opportunities for fellowship.

Question 19 The ministry of the parish helps me grow spiritually

Out of 173 respondents 157 people answered with large majority stating that our parish helps them to grow spiritually.

Question 20 I know my spiritual gifts and how I can use them to build up my parish

Out of 173 respondents 151 people answered with large majority stating that they know their spiritual gifts and how they can use them to build up our parish.

Question 21 There are opportunities for me to serve (discipleship) within my parish

Out of 173 respondents 151 people answered with large majority stating that there are opportunities to serve or be disciples within our parish.

Question 22 I share my faith with friends and neighbours

Out of 173 respondents 115 people answered 'YES' that they share their faith with friends and neighbours.

Question 23 I am encouraged to volunteer for discipleship and ministry within the parish

Out of 173 respondents 90 people answered 'YES' that they are encouraged to volunteer for discipleship and ministry within our parish.

Question 24 Are you actively involved in a specific ministry of the parish? If so what? How? When?

Although 83 respondents skipped this question the majority of respondents (90) and gave the following examples of how they support ministry within the parish:

- Baptism preparation, Mothers Union, JIGSAW, Messy Church, Tea Duties, sides person, choir, guiding, scouts, reader, pastoral support, social events, magazine contributor, scouts, guiding and other more specific roles

Question 25 For your personal growth, what is the one area that you would like to see strengthened within our parish?

Although 100 respondents skipped this question the minority of respondents (73) gave the following examples of what areas they would like to see strengthened within our parish for their personal growth:

- More family orientated services, better scout/guiding links, Bible study groups, more groups for working women, home visits, silent or prayerful services, active music group, youth development and other more specific answers

Question 26 What gifts and talents do you have that you could share with our parish?

Although 116 respondents skipped this question the minority of respondents (57) gave the following examples of what gifts and talents they could share with our parish:

- Marketing, singing, leadership, flower arranging, music, fellowship and prayer, counselling, financial expertise including grant applications, outreach work, church cleaning, child orientated activities e.g. messy church and other more specific answers

Question 27 I am willing to get involved

Out of 173 respondents only 23 people answered 'YES' that they would get involved.

Conclusion

Our parish has much strength in ministry and the survey showed that what we provide is valued by the parishioners. It is also clear with the responses to our survey section that although the majority of parishioners feel their ministry needs are being met, they know our parish to be welcoming and know their gifts and talents they are able to share there is reluctance for this to translate into actual ministry growth.

'Faith without works is dead' James 2:14-26; There is a danger with the same few supporting ministry within the parish that what we do well will be unsustainable and what we need to develop to continue to be a church fulfilling Vision 2026 *'Making Disciples, Being Witnesses, Growing Leaders.'* in our ever-evolving parish profile will never even get off the ground!

It is testament to the thoroughness of this parish review that so many findings (as no doubt the recommendations will too) overlap into all the areas with a common theme coming through that (in the words of the Archbishop of York) that each parishioner will either need to be the change that want to see or support the PCC whole-heartedly to facilitate future growth.

Recommendations

Short-Term

- Parish Office to follow up Questions 26 & 27 using the information supplied to utilise the gifts and talents being offered by the parishioners to take part in the life and work of the parish
- Support the work of the Worship Sub-group in their recommendation of the service pattern review

Medium-Term

- Support the work of the Communication Sub-group in their recommendations over how we communicate all that is going on in the parish to people of the parish and the local community
- Support the work of the Music Sub-group to develop music provision for the women and girls of the parish; not in competition with the existing choir but rather to complement what we know works well
- Development of men's fellowship; across age groups such as men's groups and activities such as 'Dads & Lads'

Long-Term

- Funding of a Youth Worker to develop the gap in provision for the young people in our parish; whether this is independently or working with the local high school or Diocese part-funding a chaplain

Final Words

Thank you for the opportunity to be part of the parish review in order that our church continues to carry out our Christian ministry responsibilities, to:

- **Love God before self and others (Matthew 22:36-40)**
- **Preach the gospel to everyone in the world (Mark 16:15; parallel Matthew 28:18-20)**
- **Help a fellow believer get back on the right path (Galatians 6:1-3)**
- **Do what is good because of God's grace (Titus 3:1-7)**
- **Defend others in need (Proverbs 31:8-9)**

And truly live out its mission statement:

Jesus said, "I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last." John 15.16
We seek to make Jesus known in our community, through our joyful, loving service and worship

Rachael Ainsworth, Chair