

Mission Community of St Margaret's Church Topsham & St Luke's Church Countess Wear

MISSION ACTION PLAN

Update 2012

The Mission Community of St Margaret's Topsham and St Luke's Countess Wear was commissioned with a Mission Action Plan discussed and written through 2009 and finalised in January 2010. In 2012 we have reviewed the Plan and see there are many areas for thanksgiving for God's blessings and goodness to our churches. There are some areas where we have not achieved what we hoped for, or where our energies have been diverted to other needs and tasks.

The general aims of the Mission Community remain the same

Our aim is that in our Mission Community we will:

- **Build a community vision and common sense of calling** – we will foster a vision of community that is growing and developing in faith, in fellowship, in worship, in pastoral care and outreach.

In terms of outreach and the wider community, the Mission Action Plan says:

- We will aim to make people welcome by paying particular attention to special occasions (Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals) and the main festivals in the churches year (eg. Christmas, Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday).
- We will develop an effective system of pastoral care
- We will foster links with schools, community groups and caring organizations
- We will have a particular concern for visitors
- We will aim to use social events, concerts, festivals and other events in church as an opportunity to reach out to people who would not normally come into church.
- We will plan together to meet the challenge of welcoming and reaching out to the residents of the new housing development at the former Royal Navy stores depot

Particular aims for the next three years

Outreach and new housing development

The new housing development in the Rydons is moving forward steadily, with hundreds of houses built and many new families already in occupation. Trinity church (CofE) meets in the school premises at Clyst Heath each Sunday and is

attracting a growing congregation, including residents of the Rydons. Plans are now therefore going ahead for Trinity Church to be a parish in its own right to include the new houses in the Rydons and the pastoral care of this area will now mainly be their responsibility. Some residents will continue to be drawn to St Margaret's or St Luke's Church and while it is important that we maintain links with Trinity Church and work with them wherever possible, our main aim in outreach and pastoral care should be directed at other areas of our parishes, especially the existing housing estate in Countess Wear.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is fundamental to our Christian faith and the duty of us all but we have identified a number of particular groups:

1. Newcomers and visitors
2. Those who are sick, housebound and those who care for them.
3. The bereaved
4. Children and families
5. Those preparing for marriage
6. Those bringing children for baptism

Initially we aim to set up a coordinator and a team in each church to care for newcomers and visitors and members of the congregation in particular need or unable to attend church.

We would in time also like to establish teams or identify individuals to care for the bereaved, for children and families and those preparing for baptism and marriage.

Social Activities

There is a lot going on in both parishes and it may be that Church members do not need the church to provide their social activities. However if we as a church are to grow in care and knowledge of each other then we need events at which we can begin to make connections with each other beyond what happens on a Sunday. We aim to establish or maintain a steady programme of social activities in both parishes, some but not all connected with fund-raising events.

Nurture

We aim to promote Bible study and Christian education and nurture courses, during Lent and at other times in the year, both for those enquiring into the Christian faith and those willing to deepen their understanding and grow in faith

Communication

We recognise the importance of communicating the Gospel message both through personal witness and through publicising the events and activities of the Church community

We will aim to make all means of communication up-to-date and effective. This includes the noticeboards and web-site and the various publications, namely at St Luke's: the monthly St Luke's Magazine and at St Margaret's: Estuary magazine, the monthly St Margaret's Newsletter and the weekly news sheet.

We will aim to ensure coming events are well-planned and publicised in good time.