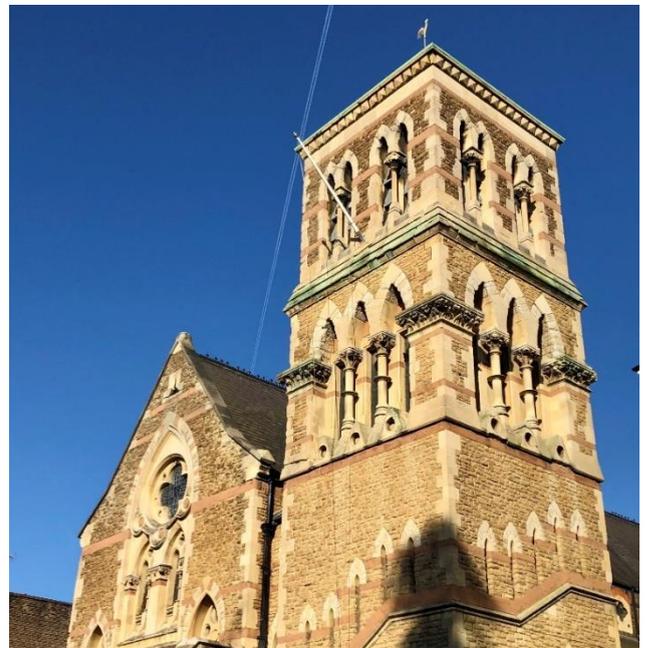
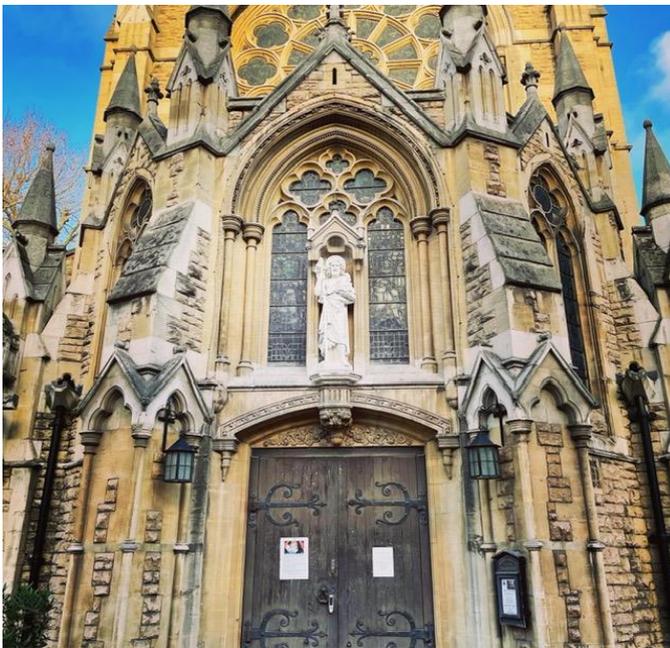




United Benefice of Holland Park



Mission Action Plan 2022-2025



VICAR'S FOREWORD

As our Mission Action Plan (MAP) 2016-2020 was drawing to a conclusion, we started work on our new 2025 MAP. That was until Covid events took us, along with the rest of the country and world, in an unexpectedly different direction!

We had to immediately adapt to the crisis. It was unprecedented that churches which had remained open over the centuries, through the bubonic plague and two world wars, would be shut for public worship.

We had to respond quickly to the challenging and regularly changing circumstances. We did this by:

- Starting daily online services using zoom with morning, evening and night prayer on offer
- Starting a daily email with details of daily services and events.
- Setting up both churches with high quality streaming provision
- Starting other online provision: Poetry and coffee morning; Bible study; young professionals group
- Furloughing our Office Manager
- Reducing St John's Common Fund payment by negotiation with the Diocese
- Using money from our reserves meant for a rainy day

Meeting more regularly for daily prayer has helped foster a growing and supportive sense of community between us.

I am particularly grateful for the generosity of the congregation, for the many who increased their regular contribution, and who enabled the set up entailed in re-opening the churches (hand sanitisers units, Covid-related banners and posters).

This is the context in which we began in September to return to our Mission Action Plan. We have undertaken extensive research in drawing up this MAP. This has included a survey that was sent to the congregations of both churches along with a variety of resident groups. We received some very helpful comments and ideas, including some from those without religious faith and those from other faith communities.

During these discussions, we had a strong sense for the need to focus on four particular areas:

1. Growing in spiritual depth
2. Growing in service
3. Growing younger
4. Growing in resources

We were reminded that vision without action is simply daydreaming! So as I commend this MAP to you, please prayerfully consider playing your part in making it a reality.

Fr James Heard



I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.' John 10.10

MISSION STATEMENT

We seek to be a place of worship, grounded in the love of God, in which all can find sanctuary, hope and the freedom to encounter God, radiating the light of the Gospel in service to the broader community.

The United Benefice's values...

- Non-judgemental
- Welcoming
- Exploring
- Sanctuary
- Connecting to God
- Gentle
- Community/ hospitality
- Generous

Our MAP builds on these values.



1. Growing in spiritual depth

Growing in spiritual depth is not so easy to quantify or measure. However, our plans will provide life-long opportunities for learning and deepening our faith throughout the year.

Our plan will include a variety of weekly and seasonal study courses, as well as retreats and pilgrimages.

We value...

It was noted that we already undertake:

- Two to three Exploring Faith courses per year
- Monthly All Age Eucharist at St George's
- Weekly bible study
- A weekly pattern of prayer using Morning Prayer and Compline
- Weekly meditation
- A weekly poetry and coffee session
- A yearly retreat
- Preparation of children for First Communion from age 6
- Preparation of children and adults for confirmation
- Taking an active part in the Deanery and Diocese, along with the ecumenical Kensington Council of Churches

We wish to develop...

- A minimum of four guest speakers per year at both churches
- A course/retreat exploring the Enneagram
- Continue with the *Why Me?* talks during Lent at St John's
- Explore speakers from outside agencies such as A Rocha
- A pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2023
- Reinstate the monthly sacrament of healing at the Sunday service and start a monthly healing eucharist at the 12noon Wednesday Eucharist at St George's
- Deepening the sense of spirituality in our Sunday morning worship at St George's by budgeting for additional trained voices in our choir.

2. Service: growing in impact

We want to see the United Benefice reaching out practically into our local communities in Campden Hill, Holland Park, and in the wider world, making a real difference to people's lives.

We value...

- To continue with charitable fundraising, including through the Harvest Supper, Christian Aid Week, and Quiz Evening.
- Our activities in the community, but that this could be done in a more focussed way.
- Our regular Pastoral Care, including the sharing of responsibility of regular calls and visits by the Pastoral Care team and others in the congregation.
- Our quiet 'ministry of being' to the vulnerable at St John's, particularly those with mental health challenges was affirmed.
- The Christmas Collection for the elderly.



We wish to develop...

- The Lunch Club (or its successor) is a priority. The Second Half Club and the K&C Volunteer Bureau were suggested as useful resources. The inclusion of schools (Covid restrictions permitting) in this work is important and should be maintained.
- Starting a weekly coffee morning at St John's.
- Hosting a concert/event at least once every two months.
- Hosting a major art exhibition or installation at St John's once a year
- To explore joining a support programme for refugees.
- Joining the annual Glass Door Sleep Out in October.

This will mean that within two years, 30% of our congregation will be involved in active service (could be one phone call a month to someone in the community), included but not limited to engagement with the elderly and the young, and connecting service to the young and vulnerable.

3. Growing younger

It was noted that in most churches in the UK post-COVID had experienced a significant drop in attendance by families and children. This has included a changing, less frequent (monthly) pattern of attendance and fewer volunteers. Weekly Sunday School is therefore not practical at present. However, we actively want to see our congregations growing younger.

We value...

- The monthly All Age services at St George's with specific invitations to families to participate in the services.
- The regular youth group work in conjunction with neighbouring churches.
- The introduction of a young adults weekly group lead by Revd Dana.



We wish to develop...

- A proactive welcome to newcomers to church, inviting them to participate in the life of the Parish in a variety of ways
- Maintaining and improving connections with families who have brought children for baptism. To set up a comprehensive United Benefice database by 2023 to facilitate easier communication.
- To deepen links with Hawksdown House School, and to explore possible contact with the new Senior Management Teams at Fox School and Holland Park School. To continue to work with Cardinal Vaughan School as appropriate.
- To grow our music opportunities at both churches and explore the possibility of starting a more formalised mini-orchestra and choir with a specialist amateur/conductor. Marina Abel Smith to advise further.

Within three years, our ministry among children, youth and young adults will grow by 10 per cent.



4. Resourcing

4.a Growing in resources – Attendance

We aim to grow in attendance by 10 per cent over the next three years.

We value...

- It was noted that whilst St George's has remained stable post Covid, St John's has seen encouraging growth.
- The sense of welcoming communities at both churches.

We would like to develop...

- Consolidating and improving our social media profile and policy – Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.
- Be better at promoting our services.

4.b Growing in resources – finance

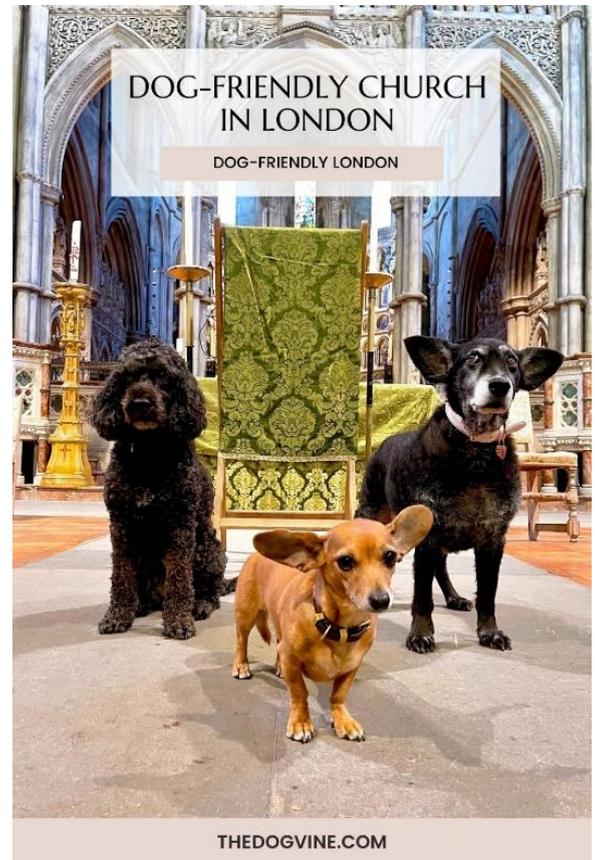
Strengthening finances, building up reserves.

We value...

- St George's finances are stable, but because of Covid, has used reserves.
- St John's has major challenges for heating and organ funding, but great opportunities for the future.

We would like to develop...

- Making the Associate Vicar's position sustainable in the medium term.
- Publicise the St John's Holland Road Trust.
- Organise a system whereby donors are thanked both for on-going stewardship and one-off gifts.
- To ensure that, through out Stewardship programme, we meet the Diocesan Common Fund commitment.



4.c Growing in resources – Fabric/buildings

To ensure our buildings are welcoming, warm and accessible to all.

We value...

- The configuration of St George's worship space alongside the community space that is used seven days a week by community groups.
- The new entrance and community facilities at St John's.

We would like to develop...

- For both churches, to implement a plan toward gaining full eco-church status, including bronze status by 2023.
- St George's – To complete the interior redecoration, energy-efficient LED lighting scheme, and new St George's Chapel furniture by 2023.
- St John's – complete the restoration of the Calvary Cross by 2024; sort the drainage problems on the north (crypt) side of the church by 2023; begin plans to apply for funding to install eco-friendly heating by 2025; start plans to restore the organ within the next five years.
- For all of the above, a fundraising strategy that supports the implementation of the restoration programme. Appealing for:
 - Public funds
 - Trusts and foundations
 - Charitable donations



'...whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.'
Philippians 4.8

Services in the United Benefice

St George on Sunday

8am Holy Eucharist (BCP)

10am All Age Eucharist

St George on Wednesday

12 noon BCP Holy Communion

St John the Baptist on Sunday

6.30pm Sung Mass

Weekday services

9.15am Morning Prayer – Monday to Friday on zoom

9.30pm Compline – Tuesday and Thursday on zoom

6pm Mondays – Christian Meditation at St George's and on Zoom.

7.30pm Every other Tuesday – Young Adults' Group on Zoom.

Contact Revd Dana for details.

1.30pm Wednesday Bible Study on Zoom.

11am Thursdays – Poetry and Coffee at St John's and on Zoom.

Contact Fr Neil for details.

Parish Office

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