

St Martin's and St. Stephen's Epsom and Langley Vale

Vision and Strategy for 2013

Where we are now...

St.Martin's is a town church with a tradition of excellence in liturgical worship, and a strong civic role.

It has the key support of a dedicated band of volunteers. However the church experiences difficulties in addressing the needs of younger families and children, and of young people.

The strong liturgical tradition will only be sustainable by attracting new members, probably from groups in the community that are currently under-represented in the congregation.

Financially, we also need an infusion of new and younger members.

In addition, many current church members feel the need for deeper engagement (in a number of different ways) and a clearer direction for the church.

Addressing these issues will require us to be ready to change.

Our values

Our values are rooted in our Christian faith

- **Faith**
 - trusting and growing a relationship with God.
- **Fellowship**
 - We are united by our faith and committed to caring for each other
- **Welcoming**
 - We are inclusive and value diversity, we invite all to join us
- **Ecumenical**
 - We strive to work in partnership with other churches
- **Engaging**
 - We are outward looking and aim to be involved with people and organisations in the wider community
- **Well-being**
 - We seek to enjoy a life characterised by love, peace, celebration and service
- **Tradition and innovation**
 - We value continuity alongside innovation and aim to do everything to the best of our ability

Our vision for 2013

- V1. Larger and growing congregations that reflect more closely the census profiles of St Martin's parish and Langley Vale village
- V2. Congregations that are more welcoming and supportive
- V3. A variety of worship that reflects both our traditional liturgical excellence and innovation
- V4. Increased engagement in the wider community
- V5. Stronger ecumenical and inter-faith relationships
- V6. A stronger appeal across the breadth of Christian spirituality

Specifically,

How will we achieve our
visions.....

V1. Larger and growing congregations that reflect more closely the census profiles of St Martin's parish and Langley Vale village

- Identify target groups and give clearer & stronger support to activities relating to them [young families, young people, 30's – 50's, men, enquirers]
- Develop at least one worship service every Sunday designed to appeal to children & young families [including a crèche for services or church events, and other targeted activities]
- Address the culture & needs of young people & young adults through a regular worship or teaching event [e.g. Fresh Expressions]

Continued....

- Make it easier for people to come to church by improving physical access and overcoming their barriers about coming to 'church'
- Maintain an open-church policy & encourage greater use of church buildings by church and community groups
- Maximise our existing relationships:
 - particularly with those groups using Church House at St Martin's
 - Seek more involvement with the church schools
- Improve our communications (more details later)

V2. Congregations that are more welcoming and supportive

- Promote greater House Group activity for nurturing, growth, and mission
- Develop more ways to offer pastoral care and support to those who need it
- Strengthen our social activities, lunches, etc
- Develop the ministry of road representatives
- Improve our communications (more details later)

V3. A variety of worship that reflects both our traditional liturgical excellence and innovation

- Maintain and improve the high standards of our formal liturgies
- Improve our worship service every Sunday for children & young families
- Provide a regular worship event that addresses the culture & needs of young people & young adults
- Offer specific prayers & services for healing
- Continue to offer opportunities for silent or contemplative prayer.

V4. Increased engagement in the wider community

- Develop a mission strategy [building on our strengths, e.g., support of people who are mentally ill or have learning disabilities, contemplative prayer, etc...]
- Maintain and enhance our civic role, offering a home for civic, community, and arts events and services that are consistent with our vision

V5. Stronger ecumenical and inter-faith relationships

- Promote a closer partnership and sharing between St Martin's & St Stephen's
- Build closer links with other members of the Epsom Group Ministry, and other Christian denominations in Epsom (CTiE)
- With CTiE, explore and develop relationships with other faith groups

V6. A stronger appeal across the breadth of Christian spirituality

- Continue to offer a choice of worship styles and liturgies
- Maintain and strengthen our services for:
 - Quiet prayer and meditation
 - Healing
- Be hospitable to people of different Christian traditions

Based on

- **1.** Deeper engagement with the sources of our faith (worship, teaching, fellowship, prayer)
- **2.** A more focused understanding and practice of our Christian mission in Epsom and beyond
- **3.** Stronger internal and external communications over a wider range of media
- **4.** Improved finances
- **5.** A more effective deployment of paid staff and voluntary workers

Deeper engagement with the roots of our faith:

- Encourage the growth of home groups for nurture, teaching, support and mission
- Ensure there is regular teaching focused on the Christian foundations of key elements of our strategy (both in the liturgy and through occasional sessions):
hospitality; all-member ministry, mission and outreach; giving; and communication.

A more focused understanding and practice of mission

- Develop a more focused understanding and practice of our Christian mission in Epsom and beyond - a strategy for mission.
- This will involve among other things:
- Identifying our strengths, e.g., support of people who are mentally ill or have learning disabilities, contemplative prayer, tea & chat, etc...
- Reflection on our role in God's mission today in Epsom and beyond

Improved communications

- Develop a communications strategy

In the short term,

- Improve the church web-site
- Improve internal and external communications through:
 - Better external signing
 - Clearer use of notice-boards in churches and church house
 - Production of a church manual
- Encourage development of the churchyard as a public expression of our values
- Review our committee structures to ensure they support our vision and promote a joined-up approach

Enhanced finance

- Provide better communication of the financial position and obligations of the churches
- Ensure that appreciation of the need for an appropriate financial commitment is part of our social contract with the existing and new congregation
- Encourage regular giving by the most suitable method

More effective use of human resources

- More home-grown accredited ministries (target 2 Licensed Lay Ministers, 2 Pastoral Assistants and 1 LLM in training)
- Greater use of lay ministers and pastoral assistants
- Encouragement of all-member ministry
- Recruit more Readers

Decisions

- Decide on the vision priorities?
- Decide on the responsibility for each vision, an existing group or new group?
- Groups determine the resources required
- Groups allocate timing and action plan to implement
- Communicate Priority/Responsibility/Plan