

## Parish Profile – The Parish of Bishopston and St Andrews Bristol

### The Parish



*“To share the Gospel in word and deed with each other and each person  
in the parish of Bishopston and St Andrews”*

The team ministry of Bishopston & St Andrews was formed in 1998 comprising the original parish of Bishopston (St Michael & All Angels and The Church of the Good Shepherd) together with the parish of St Andrew with St Bartholomew, resulting in one parish with three worship centres.

The Parish vision is “To share the Gospel in word and deed with each other and each person in the parish of Bishopston and St Andrews”. There are many areas that we share together across the parish, particularly healing ministry and our work with young people. However, each Church has its own character and ethos and has developed its own ‘Strategy for Growth’, and these are attached for information.

Opportunities abound for growing the gifts and talents of the church and for inspiring and enabling the members of the congregations to be more open in our fellowship and more bold and confident in our outreach. There is a perceived need for good, applied teaching which is connected with the strategies for growth. As we explore the role of a future incumbent we look forward to the gifts and ideas that the person God is calling to work with us will bring.

This parish profile is structured to reflect both the unity of the parish and the distinctiveness of each of the Churches.

The parish is situated less than two miles north of the city centre straddling the A38 Gloucester Road (see below). The biggest area of the parish is formed of the leafy Victorian suburbs of St Andrews and Bishopston.

St Michael and All Angels was built to serve the Victorian suburb of Bishopston and is situated on the main Gloucester Road (described in The Times as one of the last traditional High Streets left in England). The Gloucester Road includes about a mile of mostly independent shops, pubs, take-aways, and restaurants.

The Church of the Good Shepherd was constructed in 1928 to serve areas of new housing in the north-west part of the parish. A new building replaced the original one in 1958.

St Bartholomew's is adjacent to the very popular St Andrew's Park.

Much has been achieved in the development of the church buildings and halls of all three churches and there are many in the community who use these facilities.

Because of its proximity to the universities and the city centre, with excellent transport links, and some of the best performing primary schools in Bristol, the parish is very popular with professionals, with a high number of teachers, lecturers, and those in the legal profession, for example. The cost of housing reflects this and this has been emphasised by the construction of a new secondary school which, although not in our parish, does serve one part of it. There are also a high number of student lets and some 'half-way' housing or hostels as well as some social housing.

Whilst there is some sheltered housing there is no elderly persons' home as such. Bristol prison lies within the parish (just) but has its own chaplaincy.

### **Parish services**

When there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month we have a United Parish Service rotating between the 3 churches – attended by about 150 adults and children. United Parish services are all age and follow no standard pattern, so the degree of formality is dependent on the nature of the service. The United Parish Service is usually a Communion service.

There is a parish wide healing ministry and bi-monthly there is an opportunity to receive healing with the laying on of hands within the Sunday morning Communion Service at each church.

Details of other church services are included in the individual church descriptions later in this document.

### **Other members of the team**

There are two paid staff that hold office in the parish: The Priest in Charge and the Team Vicar.

There are seven licensed Lay Ministers (Lay Readers).

There is one Ordained Local Minister attached to the team.

We have a placement youth worker from South West Youth Ministries who works in the parish 20-25 hours per week alongside his studies.

We also receive help from three retired clergy and one Hospital Chaplain (ordained) who gives us some help being a member of St Bartholomew's.

A lot of the work of the parish is carried forward by a large number of lay volunteers.

### **Parish wide organisations and activities**

There is a weekly Sunday evening group for younger teenagers (Create) and one for older teens (Excite), led by the youth worker and other adults. A new Open Youth Club (VIBE) has just started on Friday evenings at 4.30-7.00, and is very popular with secondary-aged youngsters.

We run a summer Holiday Club for both the primary and secondary school age children in separate groups of about 40 and the youth have an annual week-end away together, attended by about 35 teenagers.

Every 2-3 years we have a parish weekend away, the last of which was in 2007.

### **Work with other parishes**

It is diocesan policy for parishes to form clusters and we are part of a cluster with three neighbouring parishes. However, in practical terms there is very little shared ministry apart from a regular (monthly) meeting of staff members and a joint service on Ascension Day.

### **Ecumenical links**

We have good relationships with other Christian Churches in the area. The 'Bishopston InterChurch Group' (B.I.G.) is a loosely formed group where B.I.G. is more of an umbrella logo rather than an organisation. Ministers meet regularly about every six weeks. The other churches usually represented at Ministers' Meetings are: Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Society of Friends, and the Fellowship of the King (independent).

Once a week the staff join in with Morning Office at the local Roman Catholic Church. At present we are sharing some of our youth work with the local Baptist Church.

The Parish, in liaison with Bristol Vineyard, organises the annual 'Carols in the Park' service, which takes place in St Andrew's Park and was attended in 2008 by 2500 people (fewer in 2009 due to extreme weather), many of whom do not attend church regularly.

### **Church descriptions**

The following provides overviews of each of our three church centres. Copies of our fuller 'strategies for growth' are also attached for information.

#### ***St Michael and All Angels***

##### ***Strategy focus***

We are a friendly, open, welcoming and family-based church fellowship. There is great energy to achieve our various projects and many able people are involved in a highly committed way both within St Michaels and in parish-wide activities. Various worship styles are used and there is a willingness to change and grow our church life and service.

We have 2 main areas of 'Strategy for Growth', and these are:

- a. Children's and families work
- b. Youth work

There is a recognised desire for improving the quality of our teaching in sermons, which the worship leadership group is trying to address.

##### ***Church and buildings***

St Michael's has one main meeting hall, which is a modern development of an old church hall. The style is simple: white walls, with plenty of light. The chair arrangement is very flexible, and is rearranged each week to meet the needs of the church service and also of the

community groups that use the space. A large balcony enables over 180 people to be seated. Below it there is a small choir vestry and priest's vestry and toilet, and a raised stage area to the opposite end of the hall.

This leads through to the kitchen via serving hatch or door, with a large link room and a front hall which is being redecorated, but is a traditional old stone building.

In the basement there are 3 small meeting rooms, and one large and two small storage rooms. There are 2 toilets in the basement, and 2 toilets and a disabled toilet/baby-changing room on the main level. All the buildings are set around a central courtyard, which is brick-paved and provides disabled parking and a loading space when needed.

### ***Church services***

The main weekly service is Sunday at 10.00am. Average attendance in 2009 is 51 adults, with 16 youngsters under 16. The type of service varies:

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday is a non-liturgical "Worship Together" which makes use of more contemporary music, visual aids, PowerPoint etc.

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday are Holy Communion Common Worship Order One, using our own printed 12 page booklet. Every 2 months includes specific prayers for healing in the communion.

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday is also CW, Morning Worship. Every 2 months has a mission focus (AIM, etc)

Children's groups happen during all services except the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday.

Our worship style is informal.

Music: Mixture of modern contemporary and traditional hymns, using Mission Praise, accompanied by piano, organ and sometimes guitar-drums-and music group or amplified vocals.

There are also:

- 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday "Early Birds" at 9.00am services for parents and children under 7 years. Attendance on average is 35 (20 adults and 15 children)
- 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 8.30am: CW Communion, attended by about 7 people.

Weekdays: Wednesday 8.30 a.m. CW Morning Prayer.

### ***Church groups and organizations***

Home Groups meet during the week in individuals' homes, and there is a group for adults with disabilities. Predominantly these groups are Bible-based.

A group of families regularly go camping together, another group do longer walks; we have church meals/picnics together 4 or 5 times a year; and home groups usually have a BBQ together annually. A number of the church members go to Spring Harvest each year.

An over-subscribed toddlers group called Piglets meets on 3 mornings a week where up to 30 parents and toddlers play together.

There is a Ladies group once a month, and every fortnight a Seniors group in which films are shown.

We have an active missions group, and some from the church have visited a Christian charity in India involved with child-care and education called TREAD.

The peculiar history of the church building has meant that we have a recognised responsibility for our church to also be a "community hall" and so we rent out our premises to all sorts of groups connected or not connected with the church family so that all in Bishopston can feel the buildings are there for their use. Hirers include: stained glass

making, children's parties, Pilates, community groups, musical concerts, art groups etc. Many of these use the facilities on a regular weekly or monthly basis.

### ***Church of the Good Shepherd***

#### ***Strategy focus***

We want to be/continue to be a church which is:

- Clearly energised by faith in Christ, with a deep, attractive, nourishing integrity
- Encompassing all ages
- Caring with an on-going welcome and a concern for the wider community
- A Eucharist centred church in our worship through the word and sacrament.

Priorities for 2010/11 (still to be approved by the DCC on 12<sup>th</sup> October) are :

- Building on existing opportunities with e.g. hall users
- Widening the scope of the Pastoral Committee
- The buildings and grounds in term of welcome and use.

#### ***Church and buildings***

In 2008 we celebrated 80 years since the Good Shepherd Church was founded (the original building was of wooden construction) and 50 years since the present building was dedicated. We were originally a daughter church to St. Michael's and all Angels with a priest in charge.

Our hall has excellent facilities, including a car park and is adjacent to the church. It is in use every day by both church organisations and other occasions such as lent lunches, November Fayre etc, and outside lets.

Both our church and hall buildings are regularly maintained and are in good condition. Both have disabled access and facilities.

#### ***Church services***

There is an average Sunday attendance of 55 adults and 8 young people under the age of 16 years. The services outlined below reflect the regular weekly format, but on occasions such as Harvest and Good Friday there is an opportunity to worship and join together for a meal. There are children's workshops held in the hall at Easter and Christmas which include an act of worship in the church. There is an annual Christingle service on Christmas Eve.

#### **Sunday**

08.00 Holy Communion

09.30 Holy Communion.

Young people attend group activities in the church hall during part of this service except on the second Sunday when there is an All Age Communion Service. The church operates a policy of Communion before Confirmation in accordance with diocesan guidelines.

There is an adult robed choir at the 09.30 Holy Communion service and Evening Prayer. A mixture of both traditional hymns and mission praise are used. There are five services a year that have a mission focus and extra appeals are made when the need arises. (There is also ongoing support for the Julian Trust, which is a night shelter for homeless men for which non-perishable food and other items are collected and the young people sponsor a child in Hebron).

Coffee is served after this service in the hall.

16.00 (winter) and 18.30 (summer) Evening Prayer.

Bi-monthly there is a Ministry of Healing service at these times.

### **Tuesday**

19.15 Prayers for healing in the Lady Chapel

### **Thursday**

10.30 Holy Communion (Traditional)

### **Church groups and organisations**

*Ticky Tacky Club* A bible-based arts and crafts club for pre-school children (2-4 years), accompanied by their parents/carers, weekly on a Friday morning during term times.

*Streetwise* is an after school bible based activity club for children in school years reception to yr.6 and their parents/carers, meeting on the second Friday of each month

*Ladies Group* who meet monthly on the first Monday evening with guest speakers and activities.

*Mothers Union* who meet on the second Wednesday afternoon of every month

*Tuesday Night Club* meets every Tuesday evening from September until Easter with entertainment and guest speakers.

*Lunch Club* meets on a Friday where a meal is provided for people over the age of 60 who live alone.

### **St Bartholomew's Church**

#### **Strategy focus**

Our goal is to be:

- a Christian community aspiring to be built on the unconditional love of God and of one another; and
- an important part of the community in St Andrews - and the community is an important concern to the Church.

Our goals are reflected in the life of the Church through our prayer; teaching; worship; pastoral care; healing ministry; youth; political and social justice and outreach to the local community.

#### **Church and buildings**

St Bartholomew's Church was consecrated in 1894 and stands on a corner facing a splendid, much used park. The church is built of pennant stone and has a tower with a clock: the planned spire was never added. Over the years two other congregations, first St Andrews

and later David Thomas Memorial URC, joined St Bartholomew's when these churches closed.

The church is in good repair and over the last ten years has been gradually adapted to meet the needs of the twenty first century, most recently by the addition of a ramp providing level access to the main door. Inside this large church there are a variety of spaces that can be utilized in flexible ways. The nave has the original pews: some have been shortened to generate space for wheelchairs, buggies etc and others removed to enlarge the worship space beside the organ at the front. There are a crèche area and a prayer corner to the rear of the nave. Either side of the nave the pews have been removed: to the north is St Andrew's Chapel, while the south aisle is the venue for meetings, activities or after church refreshments. Its sofas provide a comfortable place to talk or rest and think.

Except for the chancel the church is carpeted and accessible to wheelchairs etc. The lighting needs to be updated but this will be a large project that needs planning in line with any future major development plans.

There are clergy and choir vestries to the south of the chancel. We have a much admired pipe organ. At present we are in the process of much needed refurbishment works, funded through individual donations and fund raising events.

Our hall is a popular venue with the community for groups and social functions. Church groups also meet there and it is the 'theatre' for an annual pantomime. It predates the church and is on two levels, both of which have equal access from the outside but inside access to the lower hall and the toilets is down a stone stairway. There is an annual major work focus on the hall when cleaning, decorating, floor resealing and other jobs are carried out. At present we are trying to make the Hall more compliant with Disability Discrimination Act requirements.

### **Church services**

The main Sunday service is at 10am, following Common Worship rite, but actual services vary over a month.

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of month – Holy Communion – average attendance 45

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – Early Bird service at 9am, followed by Morning worship at 10am, and Taizé style service at 6.30pm – average attendance over the day 105

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – Holy Communion, with prayer for healing once every quarter – average attendance 52. Monthly sermon discussion follows 10am service.

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Early Bird service followed by Morning Worship – average attendance 85 (NB totals include adults and children.)

Communion services are generally formal in character with musical accompaniment being by organ or clavino, as appropriate to hymn/song, and led by a robed choir.

Morning Worship tends to be more flexible. St Bartholomew's aims to be inclusive and accessible to people both to regular church goers and those who are unfamiliar with church routine. For that reason baptisms normally take place at these services.

Early Birds is an informal family service and clergy dress reflects this.

Five 10am services a year have a mission focus. Extra appeals are made in Lent & Advent. Non-perishable food and other items are collected weekly for The Sisters of the Church; their work is also supported through the Harvest and Advent Gift Services.

Five Sundays a year are All Age Parade Services when we are joined by the local uniformed organisations.

Children's groups are provided for all regular services, based on the following pattern: - Livewires withdrawal group during 10am service on first Sunday and during Early Birds on the second and fourth Sunday; Livewires Sunday Club 9.50-11am third Sunday.

Midweek service: Wednesday at 10am – Communion service alternating between Common Worship and BCP – average attendance 5 to 6 communicants.

We incorporate a variety of musical styles in worship. The main hymn book used is Mission Praise. Hymns and songs, old and new, from other sources, are printed in the weekly leaflet. There is a junior choir some of whom sing at Early Birds, which joins the adult choir at one service a month. The choirs also sing at weddings and funerals if requested, and at combined Parish services.

### ***Church groups and organisations***

St Bartholomew's has a variety of fellowships and clubs, some of which have a membership from the congregation, for example, house groups, a men's group, and others which have a wider membership from the local community, for example the toddler group 'Bart's Babies', and the Bartholomites drama group. There are links with thriving uniformed organisations whose church parades are some of our 10am services.

There are strong community links through the Church being used as a venue for the annual North Bristol Artists' Trail and the biennial ParkArt event in the adjacent park. The adjacent church halls are utilized by many community groups.

### **Parish Admin support**

The PCC has agreed the need for paid admin support for the team and we are in the process of exploring the best way of funding and implementing this. At present several administrative tasks e.g. producing weekly leaflets are carried out by church members. Staff expenses are met in full by the PCC.

### **Electoral Role and Population**

There are 294 on the 2010 electoral role, in a population of roughly 17000 people.

### **The rectory/vicarage**

A newly re-furbished large vicarage in the parish is available for the incumbent.

### **Appendices**

1. St Michael and All Angels Growth Strategy
2. Church of the Good Shepherd Growth Plan (proposed)
3. St Bartholomew's Church Strategy for Growth

## APPENDIX 1

### **Growth Strategy for St Michael & All Angels, Bishopston**

April 2008

At St Michael's, we have been seeking ways to enable our church to grow, and to reach out more effectively to the local community. Since we finished a major refurbishment of our church centre in 2001, we have found ourselves wondering "Where do we go from here?" With the help of congregational meetings and the guidance of a consultant, we came to a decision in autumn 2007 to focus our strategy for growth on three areas : **Children and Families** - to launch a new Sunday service specifically for young children and young families : **Coffee Shop** - to expand the role of our Saturday morning Coffee Shop : **Youth** - to build up our youth work with the large number of young people at St Michael's and throughout the parish.

#### **Children and Families**

As we do not currently have many young families and young children in our congregation, we felt we wanted to reach out to this part of the community, particularly to the parent/carer and toddler groups ('Piglets') meeting in the building three times a week and led by our church members. So it was decided to start an Early Bird Service once a month. This is aimed specifically at young families with children aged 0 to approximately 7 years old. It will be held on the first Sunday of every month, beginning in May, and will be a short half-hour service starting at 9am, an early start which we hope will meet the needs of lively early risers and their parents. We will have singing, crafts, prayers, stories and a 'birthday of the month' birthday cake. A small team of people have volunteered to run this service, and we are hoping that this will provide a real opportunity to draw parents and children into our church family, and later into our weekly services which provide special groups for children.

#### **Coffee shop**

The Saturday morning coffee shop at St Michael's opened nine years ago with the aim of providing a warm welcome, refreshment, friendship and a listening ear to the local community. In identifying coffee shop as a potential area for growth the congregation and council recognise the opportunity to build relationships with people from inside and outside church, and to raise the local profile of the church, church centre, and services and events within the parish. A working group has been meeting regularly to support the practical management and longer term planning for growth. A detailed strategy document has been drawn up covering the next five years, which looks to

- increase the number of visitors,
- introduce a mid-week opening linking to the Piglets toddler group,
- support "way-in" events which can provide an introduction to the Christian faith and to church fellowship.

Coffee shop aims to be a place where all visitors including the young and not so young, families, single people and those with specific needs feel comfortable. Recently the provision of play equipment in the front hall has resulted in an increase in the number of families with small children visiting. The forthcoming redecoration of the serving area will provide a more welcoming environment. Plans for coffee shop will need to be integrated with those for our family and children's work and involve groups such as Piglets, Wednesday Fellowship, and other hall users.

## **Youth work**

Youth work has been designated as the third area of St Michael's growth strategy, and has indeed been identified as a key area for action in the parish strategy. An action plan has been developed to take this forward which aligns with the overall parish mission statement 'To share the Gospel in word and deed with each other and each person in the Parish of Bishopston and St. Andrew's'. The vision for the youth work is to 'Bring youth to a personal relationship with Christ and enable them to grow into maturity'. A three stepped approach to the strategy has been agreed - to consolidate the faith of the core youth group, to reach out to fringe of the present youth known to the churches, followed by growing the youth group beyond the present known youth.

St Michael's already has a team of committed youth leaders. As we move forward with the strategy it is important that more people come forward to give their time to the youth work and to build relationships with the youth, sharing experiences and helping them find and grow in their faith and in all aspects of their lives. Attendance at the Bristol youth forum has helped us establish a network with other youth workers and understand what material is available to guide us in the work. We are in the process of looking for a youth worker to help expand our youth activities. During the past year we have had a full programme of youth activities and have set up prayer times for the leaders to give our youth work to God to guide us and lead us in the work.

The future plans are to develop good relationships with the youth and put together a programme of activities to cover their spiritual, physical and social wellbeing. We aim to provide more for the 11-14 age range and material is being looked at to take this forward if leaders can be found. It would be good to identify strong youth in Christian maturity who can join in taking key leadership roles in the youth work. It is important that the congregations in the parish dedicate plenty of time to praying for this work, and that people dedicate quality time, for it to be fruitful into the future.

## **Update**

April 2010

**Children and Families** The monthly Early Bird service has continued to flourish, so much so that it is now being held twice a month, from the beginning of 2010.

**Coffee Shop** St Michael's felt that it was the right course of action, at the end of 2009, to discontinue the Saturday morning Coffee Shop ; this was mainly due to low numbers and the need for more volunteers.

**Youth Work** September 2009 saw the appointment of a youthworker; we now have several thriving groups for young people including a new 6th form housegroup and the community-based Vibe youth group run in conjunction with other local churches, which has been successfully underway since September 2009.

## APPENDIX 2

# Church of the Good Shepherd

## PROPOSED GROWTH PLAN

*Agreed at the DCC on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009*

### **BACKGROUND**

The DCC asked the Focus group to formulate a growth Plan using the responses and comments arising from the growth Strategy review meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

### **RECAP**

Early in 2006, the church produced a growth Strategy

In brief, the basic strategy was that we want to be/continue to be a church which is:

- Clearly energised by faith in Christ, with a deep, attractive, nourishing integrity
- Encompassing all ages
- Caring with an on-going welcome and a concern for the wider community

To achieve this we recognised that amongst other things we needed to:

- Build on existing opportunities with for example, hall users
- Recognise the importance and widen the scope of the Pastoral Committee
- Recognise the importance of the buildings and grounds in terms of welcome and use

Since then it was recognised that if this was to be effective then:

- We need to integrate the growth strategy into existing structures
- We need to measure all of church life by the strategy
- We need to engage with the community rather than expect them to come to us

### ***STRATEGY REVIEW***

At the meeting the basic strategy was accepted but was suggested that it needed filling out.

We are a Eucharist centred church in our worship through the word and sacrament. *(This has been affirmed with the main Sunday service being a communion, including All-Age Communion and the policy of Communion before Confirmation)*

The product we advertise must be the one experienced. In all our advertising and selling of ourselves we must make sure that is what people experience when they come into contact with the church community, be it on a Sunday or other times.

### ***PROPOSED GROWTH PLAN – 2010/2011***

Continue to recognise the ongoing importance of

- Building on existing opportunities with e.g. hall users
- Widening the scope of the Pastoral Committee

- The buildings and grounds in term of welcome and use.

### Buildings

It is proposed that we carry out a feasibility study following the suggestion by Mike Stanley regarding the re-ordering of the church so that it could be more available for community use.

The implications and practicalities would have to be carefully thought through – perhaps the best way forward being forming a small group say 3. It was suggested that the advice of D.A.C. should be sought at an early stage to gain from their experience of how this has been done by other parishes – visiting some of these parishes. It would be important that the group has a clear understanding of why we wish to do this.

The study will probably take a time (aim for early 2011) and in the meantime we should be alert to make our building friendly and accessible for services.

### Services

Aim to participate in Back to Church Sunday in 2010

Seek to explore ways of having informal/different services to attract newcomers.

### Outreach

Explore how we can be more pro-active in our advertising including the importance of telling people and inviting them to events.

Continue to encourage and enable our personal witness –we should be more free in speaking about our faith.

**We recognise that the appointment of the new Priest in Charge may have an influence on these plans.**

## APPENDIX 3

### Parish of Bishopston and St Andrews St Bartholomew's Church Strategy for Growth

#### Our Goals for 2010

**We are a Christian community aspiring to be built on the unconditional love of God and of one another, that strives:**

- for a life and a Church filled with prayer;
- for a positive and meaningful experience of Christ, through our worship and our actions;
- to teach, learn and challenge so that we each have an opportunity to be changed through Christ;
- to provide a safe place where we can be vulnerable, ask questions and doubt;
- for fellowship where we support, trust and encourage each other;
- to grow, to nurture and develop our spirituality; and
- to become the people and Church that God wants us to be.

**We are an important part of the community in St Andrews and the community is an important concern to the Church:**

- we reach out to serve, meeting the needs of the young and old, providing friendship, fun and pastoral care;
- we welcome people of all ages and all life experiences, helping them to feel at home;
- we inform people what Christianity is really about, sharing the message that God loves us and can set us free from the sin that messes up our lives; and
- we are politically and socially active, we speak out against and work to stop poverty, violence and injustice at home and throughout the world.

**Our goals will be reflected in the life of the Church in the following ways ....**

#### Prayer

***We show that communication with God is crucial***

Regular personal prayer is encouraged and people are able to ask for prayer for themselves and other situations, confident then that others in the Church will be praying for them. The church is open for prayer at times outside services and provides a well-appointed space for quiet prayer.

## **Teaching**

### ***We show that personal growth and discipleship is important in the life of Christians***

We help all members of the Church grow in their faith by providing: a range of books and other materials; 'preparation classes' prior to baptisms, confirmation and weddings; opportunities to meet in small groups (house groups); courses; and group visits to interesting events. Prayer life is enhanced through teaching on the many ways to pray.

## **Worship**

### ***Giving to God all that we can***

The style of church services reflects St Bartholomew's mixed congregation so that each person is helped to worship God. Seating, choice of music and its delivery, readings, sermon themes, facilities and furnishings: all are chosen to enable the congregation in this aim. Each person, young or old, is made to feel welcome.

## **Pastoral care**

### ***Loving God through loving our neighbour***

With a pastoral care policy in place, we make sure that everybody who needs help or special care receives it, while nobody is forgotten or ignored. In partnership with specialist counselling and advice group we seek to run 'surgeries' in the Church to extend our care to the whole community. Families are linked together for mutual support, as are individuals. We notice when people have not been in Church for a while and visit them to check they are alright. Baptism families are offered pre- and post-Baptism visits, and invited to an annual event. Funerals are followed up with invitations to lunch clubs and a personal contact. Lunch Club is broadened to include more people. A men's fellowship is established. The Toddlers' Group continues its good work and young families find a special welcome at Early Bird services.

## **Healing ministry**

### ***Providing a channel for God's healing love***

Healing services are held to support people by prayer with and for them, respecting their needs and not rushing them. Other times for healing prayer are offered in the church, which is also open for private prayer. Urgent requests for healing are responded to individually.

## **Youth**

### ***Enabling children and young people to play a full part in the church's life and grow in faith***

Young people have a voice in the Church that is heard and responded to. They have access to a range of social and spiritual opportunities that are fun and do not patronise. We support the whole parish youth strategy and parish youth worker. Young people can play an active part in planning and leading both their

own events and other Church activities. We make sure that every child and young person in our parish has access to a Bible relevant for their age.

### **Social and political justice**

#### ***Speaking out against and working to stop poverty, violence and injustice at home and throughout the world***

We focus on specific issues through sermons, intercessions and special collections, to raise awareness and encourage the congregation to respond. A display in the church reflects ongoing concerns, which are raised as prayer topics in the leaflet and in services. Young people are invited to choose an issue and lead a Sunday service around it. We pursue a Fairtrade policy and strive to reduce our 'carbon footprint'. The Church becomes a focus in the community for activity on specific social and political justice issues.

### **Outreach to the local community**

#### ***Providing opportunities for fellowship and events to attract people to the church community***

Events are held regularly to provide entertainment and interest to those in the church and outside it, such as quizzes, dancing, concerts, meals with a speaker. The church participates in community events, like the Arts Trail and Music in the Park. A church fete is organised in the park.

### **Action Plan**

#### **2008**

We will:

- establish a worship group to co-ordinate all aspects of worship, e.g. readings, sermons, music etc.
- encourage more people to participate in the musical life of the Church.
- develop and agree a Pastoral Care Policy by September 2008 to better co-ordinate the work that we do and extend it to all those who need and want support.
- organise a youth club for children aged 10-13 years to start in September 2008 and review what is available for this age group on Sunday mornings.
- incorporate issues of social justice at home and across the world into our worship.
- look for volunteers to form a Social Committee and to lead a Men's fellowship group.

#### **2009**

We will:

- create a worship space that supports a sense of coming together in worship and provide facilities for regular use of projection and other visual aids.

- invite two young people (13-15 years) to attend the worship group to input their ideas and help with service planning.
- encourage more people to come to the Sunday Lunch Club, broadening the scope without changing the ethos of the group.
- develop a Healing Surgery on a Saturday, when the Church would be open for personal prayer and to be prayed for.
- establish a group to lead on raising awareness of climate change from a Christian perspective and reducing our carbon footprint, both individually and as a Church.

## **2010**

We will:

- make it possible to open the Church for quiet prayer at regular points during the week.
- organise and promote a study group that meets in the Church and is open to all on a 'drop in' basis.
- encourage the congregation not to rush in and rush out again: provide a space where they want to stay for prayer, fellowship, finding out about events, campaigns etc.
- open the Church to the community for meeting community needs.