

Reading Deanery asked all churches to put together a document on 'The Church of the Future'.

This is the response from St Nicolas.

Please have a look, we do so much, and are planning to do more to serve our church and community

Copies can be found on our website
or from the Parish Office



Parish : **St Nicolas, Earley**

Synod reps: **Miriam Barlow, Anne Barnes, John Davies, Margaret Jeal, Peter Jeal**

Respondents: **St Nicolas PCC, Group Leaders**

Submission date: **16 September 2015**

Please would you provide information on missional activity in your context. Where possible, please would you record the information within the area of *Living Faith* it *primarily* relates to. Classify as 'Other' if this is not possible:

- Column 1 asks you to identify what's working well. Please could you describe a short description of what you're doing and who you're doing it for/with. It may also be helpful to summarise any lessons learnt which others might benefit from.
- Column 2 asks you to identify your plans for the future.
- Column 3 ask you to list the challenges of past and present activity, and also to identify anything which is hindering your future aspirations.

This information will help us to:

- Provide visibility across the deanery about what's happening as a basis for sharing good news stories and good practice;
- Inform the development of the deanery plan; and,
- Identify areas of common need or aspiration which the deanery could offer help with.

Many thanks for your help.

Stephen Pullin

(Area Dean)

What has been life giving? What has been accomplished?	What are your aspirations?	What challenges have you faced? What obstacles need to be overcome?
Sustaining the sacred centre		
<p>It is a St Nicolas core value that “We are God centred” and, two of our mission priorities that “We are rooted in God through worship and prayer” and “We are aware of God’s presence in the whole of life”. We believe that God is part of every bit of life, 7 days a week, work, rest and play. Wanting to be God-centred, we are genuine in all we do, whether it is when we meet at church for services or in our everyday life. At the heart of our worship is the Eucharist and we know this to be the source of our mission and our life</p>		
<p>Home Groups</p> <p>We currently have 7 vibrant Home Groups, each led by members of the St Nicolas community. They study the bible, explore faith and provide mutual support for each other</p> <p>Lessons learnt. Group dynamics are essential to ensure that they are inclusive and afford personal growth</p>	<p>To continue to grow in both quantity and quality so that more people can benefit from the groups</p> <p>Personal development of individuals to deepen both knowledge of the bible and spirituality</p> <p>Set up a mentoring scheme to identify, develop and sustain leaders</p>	<p>Identifying leaders to enable expansion of the scheme</p> <p>Convincing those who are not yet sure what the value of group activity is and/or finding other small group settings that can allow people to grow as disciples i.e. teaching sessions in church</p> <p>Time commitment</p>
<p>Encouraging Prayer</p> <p>Prayer is increasingly a normal thing we do at St Nicolas, its natural. Rather than say “I’ll pray for you” more people are saying “can we pray about that now?”</p> <p><u>Prayer Chain</u>. Operates for the benefit of anyone who needs others to pray for them on a regular basis. A small team of people operate a confidential prayer service. The main lesson is that confidentiality is key</p>	<p>To encourage more people who may be called for this form of ministry but who do not yet have the confidence to engage.</p>	<p>Self-doubt amongst potential participants</p>

<p>We have a prayer line number where people can leave a message</p> <p><u>Prayer Champions</u>. This is a group of volunteers who are aware of the issues facing the PCC and who pray specifically for the PCC. The main lesson is that communication and trust are key.</p> <p><u>Prayer Ministry</u>. Each Sunday after the main service and during specific services, a team of volunteers are available to pray with and for anyone who has a need for prayer. Lesson learnt is that the team have to develop listening skills</p> <p><u>Prayer Wall</u>. We have introduced a prayer wall in the church where people can 'post' their prayer requests. Those prayer needs are actively met during formal services and also by people who take advantage of the prayer corner on an ad hoc basis</p>		<p>Training to ensure that members are not only prayerful but to ensure that they respond appropriately to the needs of people.</p>
<p>Retreats</p> <p><u>Spiritual Retreats</u>. Our Clergy and a very small number of the congregants take advantage of retreats to recharge their spiritual batteries and to reconnect with God</p> <p><u>Open Door Retreats</u>. Recognising that time can be an issue in a busy world we have run several successful 'Open Door Retreats' adapting the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius – this helped move many people St Nicolas to go deeper in faith and moving from a more institutional faith to a personal one</p>	<p>We want to encourage others to use this as a means of taking time specifically to be at one with God</p> <p>We aim to run further sessions of the 'Open Door Retreat' early in 2016</p>	<p>Lack of understanding of the value of retreats</p> <p>Time constraints</p> <p>Identifying and training potential leaders</p>

<p>Special Services</p> <p>Special services either themed (e.g. Healing Service) or run by specific teams/groups help to bring everyday life into the sacred space that is St Nicolas</p>		<p>Ensuring that the service is appropriate and that it adds value in both widening and deepening spirituality whilst not losing our Eucharist centric service.</p>
<p>This Time Tomorrow</p> <p>This initiative allows a member of the church or an invited guest to talk about themselves, their lives, their work and their beliefs and explain where God will be in their life ‘this time tomorrow’; i.e. when they are at work or in the home environment rather than at church.</p> <p>The successes are that we have run this initiative with Bishops, members of Parliament and members of the church which has given a greater understanding of ourselves. We have also included leaders of other faiths which has increased our understanding of our community</p> <p>The lesson learnt is that we are becoming more aware of where we can find God in our everyday life</p>	<p>To actively encourage people to recognise and <u>acknowledge</u> Gods presence in everyday life and that we are the church and disciples 24/7 work, rest and play</p> <p>We aim to break down the false boundary between church and life...we avoid the use of the term secular when applied to society.</p>	<p>Helping people to overcome an embarrassment about professing their faith in public.</p>
<p>Alternative forms of Service</p> <p>The following has resulted from initiatives by our LLM – Emma Major</p> <p><u>People, Prayer and Potatoes (PPP)</u>. PPP is a form of messy church where people who are new to church or not comfortable in our more formal Eucharist centric services can</p>	<p>Use of social media to grow church and community with the X and Y generation</p>	<p>As people who come to PPP etc want to grow in faith, how do we help them? Mentoring could be key here.</p>

<p>explore their faith in in a relaxed setting. Families engage in crafts followed by a short service and then a family shared meal. The lesson learnt is that this is a gentle introduction into faith which allows people to develop and deepen their faith.</p> <p><u>Noah's Ark</u>. Noah's Ark is a lively combination of prayers, songs, craft and playtime; the service is open to everyone but caters primarily for parents and carers with pre-school children</p> <p><u>Oakwood Forest Church</u>. OFC is for those who find it easier to be with God when they're in the natural world. Initiated by Emma, it is led by a group of Christians from the Reading area</p>		<p>People brought into the 'fresh expressions' movement requires a big gear change if they choose to encounter the culture and worship of our more formal services. Our challenge is to encourage them and ensure that they feel comfortable at other services if they choose to access them</p> <p>If they choose to move towards a more formal form of service, helping them make that transition</p> <p>Maturing mutuality and community across the growing and diverse congregations at St Nicolas continues to be key.</p>
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Making a difference in the world

It is one of our core values that **“We are seeking justice for all”**

We recognise that Jesus had a particular connection with people who were living in poverty, outcast or marginalised. We aim to follow his example by working directly in our local community and with charities and communities globally for a fairer world. Our Justice, Peace and Environment Group and our Pastoral Care Group are key to us achieving our aims

Justice, Peace and Environment Group (JPEG)

JPEG meets regularly to look at social justice and environmental issues on behalf of the whole church, but of course many of our people are involved with other organisations individually. JPEG either takes the lead or actively encourages all of the initiatives outlined in this section

Social Policy. The PCC and JPEG are responsible for raising the awareness and involvement of church members in issues of social justice, peace and the environment. We campaign by lobbying our local politician or the PM (as appropriate).

Carbon Footprint.

- Green Energy. We have transferred to green energy providers. There is a cost associated with this but we consider it to be money well spent
- Recycling. We encourage our congregants to recycle as a matter of course but we also provide a

Our future aim is to broaden our activity and to ensure that we stay abreast of current issues.

We want to be more engaged locally and personally in justice issues

We are looking at whether solar power could reduce our carbon footprint further

For many, these activities take people outside their comfort zone
Conflicting views in our community requires us to be considerate, tolerant and sometimes selective about which initiatives we follow

Costs

<p>collection point for those items that are collected by charities to generate revenue</p> <p><u>Living Wage</u>. We value our employees and ensure that we are, at least, a living wage employer.</p>		
<p>Partnership in World Mission</p> <p><u>Jubilee Centre (JC), Ndola, Zambia</u>. Our relationship with JC has grown since 2010. Groups go to Zambia biennially to work with the churches and in the community. Additionally, Rev Neil aims to visit Zambia annually to follow up. Jubilee Centre staff have visited us too. These visits have been life changing and we have learned a lot about what being open to the community means through seeing the work of Jubilee Centre and its partner churches.</p> <p><u>Christian Kings Church (CK), Zambia</u>. We have developed a particular link with Christian Kings Church in Ndola. We pray for each other and mutually support each other in a number of ways with a view to exploring our faith together and growing our churches. This is an equal partnership</p> <p><u>Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)</u>. A member of our congregation joined EAPPI and was seconded to Israel for 6 months as an Ecumenical Accompanier. During that time she received prayerful support from the church. Her family have since returned to</p>	<p>We aim to build closer relationship We will continue to take a group biennially. We also intend to support Rev Neil in the alternate years by selected persons joining him on that trip We aim to use this initiative to encourage the Diocesan PiWM committee See challenges. We aim to ensure that we can fund or partially fund people who want to but can't afford to go to Zambia</p> <p>As we build mutual group dynamics we are also seeking to foster individual relationships particularly with our young people</p>	<p>Cost of travel to Zambia can be prohibitive. Fundraising will be harder</p> <p>Supporting from a distance (other than in prayer) can be challenging</p>

take part in building programmes		
<p>Pastoral Care</p> <p>We seek to support people in the good times and when life is challenging</p> <p><u>Home Communion.</u> We provide home communion to those who are unable to come to church and also provide a communion service in a local care home.</p> <p><u>Home Visits.</u> We visit people in the community who need support because of illness, bereavement etc</p> <p><u>Link Line.</u> We set up telephone communication with people who need regular support because of illness, loneliness, depression etc. The team are trained to be sensitive listeners</p>	<p>To have sufficient people to extend our limited capability and serve more people who need our help</p> <p>We are about to commission a lay, trained bereavement visitor to follow up on all funerals for non-church families</p>	<p>Identifying people with the right soft skills</p> <p>Ensuring that we comply with our safeguarding policies in relation to vulnerable adults</p> <p>Finding and delivering appropriate training</p>
<p>Meeting the needs of others (Local and Global)</p> <p><u>Food Poverty.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Harvest we donate non-perishable food (about 2 van loads!) to Churches in Reading Drop In Centre (CIRDIC) for people who are homeless and/or in need and Churches in Reading Women's Centre (CIRWC) who provide a local support network for women of all ages regardless of age, ethnicity or faith. • We operate a collection for Woodley Foodbank. 		

<p><u>Fairtrade</u>. St Nicolas is a FT church. We use FT goods at all of our social events and encourage our congregants to use them in their homes too. Our local FT rep regularly runs a stall after church to sell goods to the church members.</p> <p><u>Zambia</u>. We support JC financially as one of our designated charities but, because of our partnership our community are inspired to do more. By hosting African evenings at church and making special appeals, we have funded a chicken farm; that not only raises funds for the community but has enabled an HIV worker to support herself and her family. We have also resourced maths departments by providing books to several schools</p>	<p>To continue providing support based on their need</p>	<p>The real challenge here is to manage aspirations. Our church has developed a strong bond which we encourage but the support that we give to Zambia must be appropriate and sustainable</p>
<p>Support for Charities</p> <p><u>Dedicated Support</u>. We support 3 charities that have been proposed by JPEG after consultation with our congregants; one International and one local each for 3 years and a further local charity for 1 year. We dedicate 10% of our committed giving from the previous year</p> <p><u>Ad Hoc Support</u>. Notwithstanding our dedicated giving, we also support ad hoc requests for money or goods; e.g. DEC campaigns for Nepal and Syria.</p> <p><u>Christian Aid</u>. We support Christian Aid campaigns throughout the year, encouraging people to engage with issues such as tax justice. During Christian Aid Week we</p>	<p>To increase the %</p> <p>To increase congregants' involvement with and identification with local charities</p>	<p>Fund raising is becoming more difficult. Available funds are diminishing and demographics are changing Conflicting priorities on cash distribution as many of our congregants support several charities outside of the church environment</p>

<p>organise door to door collections and have a cake sale. We use Christian Aid's prayers frequently in our services</p> <p><u>Specific Support.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clothes for Iraq.• Recycling <p><u>Other Charities.</u> Other charities using our facilities for fundraising do so for free</p>		
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Creating vibrant Christian communities

It is a core value that we are “**Open and friendly**”. We believe God loves and welcomes everyone and we try to do the same

Welcoming Church

Everyone is welcome at St Nicolas. We are informal in how we look but we take our faith seriously. People from very different church traditions are equally at home in our church

We have a team of volunteers who welcome people to our services. They particularly welcome newcomers and ensure that they are comfortable in our church. The PCC and the congregation also work hard to ensure newcomers can enjoy their time with us.

Inclusiveness. We aim to be inclusive and recognise that we need to make our space available for all who want to use it.

We recognise that we can improve ‘inclusiveness’. We need to understand the many ways and reasons that people may feel excluded from church and take positive steps to reverse that feeling.

We plan to run specific services for persons suffering from dementia and, their carers. These services start in November 15.

We also plan to hold awareness sessions for Autism. We anticipate this being the beginning of a journey that helps us to understand and respond to the many and varied needs of people.

Training
Having sufficient volunteers

Funding

Training for leaders of special services
Safeguarding, health and well being of participants.

Involving the community in church

<p>activities</p> <p><u>Craft and Chat.</u> Craft and chat is led by church attendees, but is open to all. The initiative came from members of the PPP and builds on the success of that service. It provides an informal setting where attendees can discuss any issues they like whilst engaging in craft activities. The leaders, where appropriate, take the opportunity to discuss faith.</p> <p><u>Over 50s Club.</u> The Over 50s club meet regularly. They are open to the community irrespective of gender, ethnicity or faith. They have speakers, play board games, go on outings and generally have a great time</p> <p><u>Fayre.</u> Our annual fayre has just moved from the autumn to a summer fun day – it was really well attended and many more people from the community came – it was also a great fundraiser.</p>	<p>Making this into a truly community event</p>	<p>Identifying leaders with the necessary craft skills.</p> <p>Time Volunteers</p>
<p>Sharing food and hospitality with the community</p> <p><u>Events.</u> Everyone is welcome at our events: each year we share a Lent Lunch, Harvest Brunch and Summer BBQ. We run additional events on an ad hoc basis</p> <p><u>Food.</u> Outside of the events, we also meet socially for food. Both of these social meetings are open to anyone who wishes to join us whether they are church attendees or not:</p>	<p>We should aim to run more social events</p>	<p>It is usually the same volunteers who plan, prepare and deliver these events. The challenge is to get more people involved</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men's Curry Club • Ladies Pub Night 		
<p>Involving the community in Church celebrations</p> <p><u>Reciprocation.</u> We invite other local Christians to join us in our services and, of course, we reciprocate by attending one of their services. Our respective clergy work together to deliver a service that crosses procedural divides and concentrates on glorifying God</p> <p><u>Services.</u> People who are not usually church goers are particularly welcomed at the main festivals, nativity and Remembrance Service. This is an opportunity to enable them to engage with God. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We put invites into every book bag in the local primary schools • Mothering Sunday and Father's Day we invite all baptism families from the last year 	<p>Aim for a future Remembrance Service to be multi-faith in recognition of the different faiths who gave their lives for freedom and peace</p>	
<p>Community Use of our Facilities</p> <p>Our Church and Church Hall buildings are used by many community groups. We actively encourage use by groups engaged in faith related activities by providing the facilities free of charge</p>		

Sharing confident, collaborative leadership

It is a mission priority to “**Be sustainable in resources and models of ministry**”. We recognise that this requires, amongst other things, that we ensure teams are in place to run the ministries of the church and that we need to identify, train and give opportunities to all those called by god into leadership.

Recognising skills and gifts

Stewardship. Our stewardship team and the PCC are continuously reviewing the skills that are needed and looking for people that either show or have the potential to develop those skills.

When we spot those skills we attempt to positively recruit people to use those skills. Lesson learnt was to make sure that the right person approaches the individual so that they can talk with confidence and authority

Existing Helpers. It is not just about looking for new talent. It is important that we look at existing helpers to see if they have the potential for taking the next step; leading teams. All of our existing leaders look within their groups for evidence of that potential

The skills are not always evident in the short time we spend together.

Building self-confidence in those with potential

Using skills and gifts

As a general point, we seek to find and use skills outside of the PCC. The advantages of this are that it gives more people a sense of ownership and belonging, it emphasises the very tenets of discipleship and it removes an

Ensuring appropriate oversight by the PCC to meet their legal and moral obligations

<p>over-reliance on PCC to do everything.</p> <p><u>Right Fit.</u> The clergy, PCC and group leaders ensure that the volunteers either have the right skills or have the potential to develop those skills before engaging. It is essential that, once people are given responsibility, we both enable and empower them to complete the task.</p> <p><u>Projects.</u> We recognised that leading projects can be quite daunting so we have developed a process flow that guides them and helps with decision making. Additionally, each project coordinator has a PCC member with whom he can consult throughout the project.</p>	<p>We aim to use more members of the St Nicolas community from outside the PCC in leading projects</p>	<p>Finding people with the right skill sets who have both the time and desire to take on the project</p>
<p>Involving people in leadership</p> <p><u>Leading Groups.</u> All of our groups with the exception of the clergy mission group are led by members of our congregation. We have provided terms of reference for each of the groups so that they know the bounds of their roles and responsibilities. The advantages are that church members have ownership and are therefore more engaged, reliance on the vicar reduces so that he can concentrate on mission and, because of the way that the Groups report back, the PCC has full control to meet its legal obligations</p>	<p>In terms of leadership styles, we have gone through the period of ‘transforming’ and are firmly in the ‘servant leadership’ spectrum. We need to move to the next stage where our leaders are ‘inspiring’.</p> <p>We also need to grow different kinds of leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visionary leaders who can see where we need to go as a church • Strategic leaders to identify the route to that visionary goal • Managerial leaders to manage the resources and activities whilst on that route 	<p>Often it is the same group of people that have to fulfil all functions of leadership</p> <p>Training</p>

<p><u>Leading church activities.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Church Services.</u> Members of the congregation have far greater involvement on leading church services under the watchful eye of the clergy. Our 'Everyone Together' service is coordinated and delivered (up to the Eucharist) by members of the congregation. They have also provided the sermon • <u>Church Events.</u> All of our church events are led by members of the St Nicolas community • <u>Consultation.</u> Consultation is an important part of leadership as it achieves buy-in for church initiatives. We have found that during this process we also uncover potential leaders. <p>In all of the above, it serves the double purpose of informing the clergy of the skills around them and also freeing their time for mission planning</p>		
<p>Nurturing young people for leadership</p> <p><u>Youth Wardens.</u> Some years ago we introduced Youth Wardens who are the senior members of our youth, chosen by our youth to represent them at PCC. They can attend occasional PCC meetings to discuss youth issues but, their real value is in liaison with Youth leaders. This not only gives them a voice, it prepares our young people for future leadership.</p>		<p>Potential challenge relates to the future if we were in a position where available people did not have the ability, will or maturity for the responsibility</p>

<p><u>Assisting in groups.</u> Some of our older young people also assist in the planning and running of church groups.</p> <p><u>World Mission.</u> We have actively encouraged young people on our mission to Zambia. They do not attend just to watch; they lead activities and are fully involved in all that we do from the original planning right through to execution. Lessons learnt: we have to ensure that the young people have the maturity. To join us unaccompanied, young people must be A level students or older although we allow young persons over 16 to join us if accompanied by their parent.</p>		<p>Ensuring we comply with safeguarding rules.</p> <p>Ensuring that they have the maturity to cope with the experience they will have in Zambia; seeing poverty, illness etc). This is one of the reasons that we set the age bar so high</p>
<p>Developing and maintaining skills</p> <p><u>Off Sites.</u> The PCC tries to hold an off-site each year where we can take time off from the routine, concentrate on strategic issues and leadership and, develop skills. We have, in the past, engaged an independent consultant to act as facilitator so that we could gain maximum benefit from our time together. We learnt very early that the day only put the foundations in place and that the real value added is what we do with the lessons learnt. We also learnt that this was a great way for the PCC to come together and decide on a common purpose. We used the off-site as a means of determining our 'Big Agenda'; those big issues that should be the priority of the PCC in the following months and years. The lesson we learnt is that this big agenda needs to be regularly reviewed</p>		<p>The challenge is twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting the right venue is essential to make the day a success • Getting as many of the PCC as possible present so that the event adds value to the team

<p>and reassessed</p> <p><u>Leadership Courses.</u> We ensure that the church is represented on courses whether run by the Diocese (Leading your Church in Growth) or by independent courses such as those provided by CPAS (Mentoring). The PCC actively considers courses and, where necessary, would fund them but we encourage self-funding by those who attend. We have the CPAS ‘Growing Leaders’ course materials as a resource to use</p> <p><u>Support.</u> We ensure that we provide the necessary support (both physical and financial) to enable the continued development of people. Although this is a soft skill, we have found that this is essential to encourage the development of people</p> <p><u>Mentoring and/or coaching leaders.</u> We do this at the moment in an ad hoc way. For example the clergy mentor curates and ensure their development. Within the PCC we have an informal mentoring to help people through a transition period eg old/new church wardens working together, helping new people in groups etc.</p>	<p>As part of our strategic plan, we are looking at available courses that will make our PCC more dynamic</p> <p>We aim to have some PCC members trained as link persons/mentors for this course</p> <p>We intend to mentor and coach potential leaders as they develop those particular skills.</p>	<p>Time / availability Selection of the right people to attend. Costs</p> <p>This tends to come from a minority; e.g. vicar, church wardens and a few leaders who are employed in a management / leadership role. It is a skill that we have to help others develop.</p> <p>Mentoring is a particular skill. See ‘Making Disciples’ where we cover this in more detail</p>
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Making disciples

This is the core of our vision, mission, values and mission priorities. This is who we are. We strive to be good disciples but recognise that we need help as we journey along the way. The doing what we do, the being who we are where we are – is how we carry forward Jesus’ work in our church, our community and wider.

Our Adult Discipleship Group is key in identifying or developing and delivering the means to grow disciples

Developing the Faith of Adults (Activities to encourage and then deepen faith)

‘Open’ Course. The open course is aimed at newcomers and people early in their journey to Christ. It is designed to give them the basic knowledge to pursue their faith and then nurtures and supports them on their journey

‘Enter’. This Group takes people on the next stage of their journey

Gospel in an Evening. We have run evenings where we read and explore a Gospel in one evening. This allows people to have a better understanding of a book of the bible rather than hearing and trying to contextualise short passages. It enables us to concentrate on the words and the meaning of the writer in a deeper, more meaningful way. It is read in ‘bite size’ chunks to allow space for reflection

Lent / Advent Evenings. Evenings when we

Getting the right leaders with time and capacity to run the courses
Getting sufficient people to commit to take the course

Targeting the right people at the right time

- Those new to faith or
- Those already committed Christians who need nurturing

The challenge of the evening sessions is to recognise the different maturities in the audience and ensuring that there is something for everyone to help them on their journey to Christ

<p>concentrate on deepening our understanding of the major festivals and the importance they have to us as Christians.</p> <p><u>Confirmation</u> – we’ve prepared many adults and young people in the last six years – usually using Emmaus and Open courses.</p> <p><u>Frontline</u>. We’ve run Frontline in Home Groups to encourage and empower people to be disciples where they find themselves each day</p>		
<p>Developing the Faith of Young People</p> <p><u>Sunday Activities – Groups</u>. We have a vibrant youth community covering 3 age groups; 4-10, 10-13, 14-18. Each of the groups cover the same service subject matter as the adults except that it is put in the context of their age groups. A highlight is that they join the adults in the service and explain what they have done and what it means. Lesson learnt: They are often our most challenging and discerning audience and we (adults) can learn from them.</p> <p><u>Youth Alpha</u>. The youth Alpha course gave our 14-18 year olds the opportunity to explore how everyday life can be interwoven with the Christian faith. The course enabled them to discuss, ask questions and work through their own ideas of Christian faith and how this affects them in a small group and to feed back to the church what their views were.</p> <p><u>Participation in the Eucharist</u>. Our children</p>	<p>To run further courses with our young people to nurture their discipleship and equip them to be Christians in the world</p> <p>To encourage young people to assist with</p>	<p>Finding volunteers (particularly for session planning) is a real issue which we have to actively pursue.</p> <p>Finding suitable leaders and adults willing to share life experiences</p>

<p>can receive communion. They have a training session where the act is explained</p> <p><u>Out of Church Activities – Social.</u> Our two oldest groups (10-18) join together for church socials; on-site and off-site. Not all of the activities are church related but are designed to develop and strengthen their sense of community</p> <p><u>Trips Away.</u> We have a biennial trip away for a long weekend which is a mixture of developing faith and non-church activities. The costs are underwritten by the church but, in reality, are usually self-financing</p> <p><u>RE Inspired.</u> This is not a St Nicolas enterprise but is independent organisation that has offices in our church building and is coordinated by a member of our PCC. It exists to build relationships between churches and schools. With an ecumenical team, including lots of volunteers from St Nicolas, REinspired delivers the Christian part of the RE curriculum to local schools</p>	<p>the distribution of the sacraments.</p>	<p>Health and safety – ensuring venues are properly equipped to safeguard our young people</p>
<p>Mentoring Christians/people</p> <p>Mentoring is an aspiration under consideration by Adult Discipleship Group.</p> <p>The vicar and one of the PCC have attended the CPAS course ‘Mentoring Matters’.</p>	<p>The aim is to coordinate and host a ‘Mentoring Matters’ course at St Nicolas which will provide opportunity for other churches to develop this capability</p> <p>We will develop our own mentoring network to nurture disciples and grow leaders. Particular attention will be paid to those joining us through services such as PPP</p>	<p>Ensuring sufficient take up to make the course viable.</p>

<p>Attending Christian Festivals</p> <p>Festivals bring a new dimension to our congregation. We have run a number of trips that allow different groups in our church community to experience the power of shared communion with God. For other festivals, our people have travelled independently. Our community have attended: Prom Praise, New Wine, Greenbelt, Soul Survivor</p>	<p>We have a new group of young people coming to an age where they can partake so we will need to re-examine options for church run events in 2016</p>	<p>Cost and location</p>
<p>Faith in the Workplace</p>	<p>This is an aspiration to help people take their faith into the workplace</p>	<p>This is one activity that does take people out of their comfort zone</p>
<p>Faith through literature</p> <p>During the major church festivals – Lent / Advent – we run a book stall which provides materials for all age groups. The books are carefully chosen to help explain the festivals and develop discipleship</p>		<p>Finding books that are insightful that people want to read</p>
<p>Faith based Groups</p> <p><u>Mothers Union</u>. We have a branch of the MU at St Nicolas. The MU vision of a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful and flourishing relationships has been flourishing at St Nicolas for 60 years. It is a worldwide organisation and St Nicolas has linked with a group in Zambia as a direct result of the Chair going to work with the Jubilee Centre in 2014.</p>		<p>Challenge in maintaining membership</p>

Other

In compiling this report we recognise that many of our activities fulfil several purposes in our mission. Some of the examples follow but the list is not exhaustive

Alternative forms of Service. We placed this in 'Sustaining the Sacred Centre'. However, it is clear that our services do much more. By way of example, we will use PPP.

Some of the PPP community were new to church. However, we have seen them:

- Come to and grow in faith - Making Disciples
 - Their faith has deepened as evidenced by the recent 'Messy Church' confirmation
- Demonstrate the way to develop a Christian community by identifying the need for and initiating the craft and chat group
- Assume leadership roles within the fresh expressions services.

Home Groups. Home groups similarly provide an important way of disciplining people and encouraging them in their journey in life and faith. They are also the fora which help us to identify potential leaders.