

Mission Action Plans

Summaries from Fincham and Feltwell Deanery

February 2010

FINCHAM AND FELTWELL

Barton Bendish

Beachamwell with Shingham

As part of our Mission Action Plan and as an ongoing project to mark the 900 Anniversary of the Diocese of Ely the PCC decided to start a "Drop in for Afternoon Tea" one afternoon a month in our Village Hall. This was prompted by the fact that the Post Office has now closed and the pub has now been revamped to be more like a restaurant and lounge so there was nowhere that villagers, especially the elderly and young mums could just meet for a casual chat in comfort during the day. The PCC and others scoured local markets and charity shops for china teapots and small jugs so that we could offer people a pot of tea with a piece of home-made cake.

Our first "Afternoon" was in May when 19 people came and now between 35 and 40 join us each month. We are delighted that several elderly people who have had to move away from the village are being brought back to see their old friends and also some Mums and children are joining us when they return from school. Our age range is now 10 weeks to 96 years.

Our other MAP projects include a joint Sunday School with Barton Bendish and discussions between a member of each PCC are being planned. Plans to start a joint Youth Group with Barton Bendish have been put on hold as there are now not enough young people in either village to make this practical. This will be reviewed regularly.

Another project is to introduce a system to help people in the village in emergency situations and the PCC have been asked to consider how this can be implemented and bring ideas to our next meeting in January."

Bexwell

Boughton

Crimplesham

Developments in the 'Ely 900' year of 2009 ...

- 1) We have undertaken a review of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, including a new and revitalised Order of Service booklet.
- 2) Under the leadership of two PCC members, we co-ordinated a project to produce a Village History booklet. This was launched at the Church Open Afternoon and sold out completely, with a waiting list for more.
- 3) We held a very successful (first) Church Open afternoon, welcoming villagers present and past and visitors from surrounding communities (around 200+ in the course of the afternoon), with a new approach to Harvest Festival which drew a congregation double that of the previous year.

- 4) We have engaged positively with the issues relating to the formation of the Deanery Plan.

Denver

1. Open Air Services. The first open air service was held at Denver Mill on Sunday 13th September. Despite rather poor weather, there was a lively congregation and the mill is to be congratulated in that they provided us with a canvas covered area to protect us and a free cup of coffee after the service! Further services are planned for 2010 although dates have not yet been set.
2. Baptism Follow up and Sunday School. A Sunday Club has been started in the Village Hall and whilst numbers are still low, volunteers are working with dedication and enthusiasm. At present Baptism families receive cards on the anniversary of the Baptism. We are seeking members of the congregation who will follow up baptisms more immediately.
3. Contact with the Diocese of Vellore. Currently we have had little opportunity to explore this avenue but it will be examined during the winter.
4. Web site. A member of the congregation has taken on the web site as a project. He has found one route we might take but at a considerable cost. Bearing in mind our responsibility to pay as much as possible of our parish share, he is looking for a less expensive option.
5. Other areas of progress. Under the headings of “What we are good at” and “What could we do” we have extended our hosting and welcoming activities. The other things we have done are listed below:
 - a. Link Church We now have regular exchange visits with our link church – Christ the Redeemer in Cambridge.
 - b. Notice Boards. Our main notice board has been repaired and a variety of notices are being displayed both inside and outside the church.
 - c. Meetings for Friendship and Support. Weekly meetings are held on Wednesday mornings with coffee and informal discussion. The Friendship Group meets once a month. The Benefice is holding an Alpha Course. We are setting up two house groups and we are looking ahead to next year and a series of Lent Courses.
 - d. Trekkers. The Trekkers summer activities for children have continued in 2009 with considerable success with the resulting “Prayer Tree” and paper decorations gracing the church for a number of weeks in August.

Downham Market

Developments in the ‘Ely 900’ year of 2009 ...

- 1 Working away at items on our Parish Vision initiative, formulated in October 2007.
- 2 Working to consolidate *The Ark* toddler group, established in 2008
- 3 Had the courage to discontinue the Family Service, which after 3 years had made no advances.
- 4 Working to consolidate the growth of daily Mass congregations.
- 5 Working to consolidate the re-introduction of Sunday Evening Prayer and Benediction.
- 6 Planned St Edmund’s first full *weekend* pilgrimage to Walsingham, 16 -18 October 2009.
- 7 After many years of transferring to a Sunday, planning a special celebration for St Edmund’s Day with a visiting choir singing Tallis and Bruckner and guest preacher (20 November)

8 Working to consolidate the Pastoral Network scheme (designated lay people act as what we call 'pastoral stewards', points of first contact and pastoral co-ordination for around 10-12 church members each, to try to stop people inadvertently 'slipping through the net'.)

9 Brought to a successful conclusion after 5+years' negotiation, one substantial aspect of the Borough Council's responsibility towards the closed Churchyard. (Though more aspects outstanding).

10 Spent much time and effort, so far unsuccessfully, in applications to English Heritage towards phase one of a two-phase roof repair project (total estimate £300k).

11 Continued to make [slow] progress in getting the congregation to understand the need for developing the building for Accessibility (due 2005) and mission/outreach/greater community use. This included planning a field trip to another Church. (A further complication was the architect with whom we have been working for 3 years leaving his old firm and setting up a new practice. Hopefully now back on track).

12 Began planning "St Edmund's Needs a £Million" Appeal for (10) and (11) above and other repairs.

13 Began planning for new altar paraments.

14 Started to establish and 'extended use' agenda:

i A keynote evening on Church Buildings and Mission, 'Saving the English Country Church', with a leading speaker, Sir Roy Strong, for which the Church was packed, with people from a very wide area. May 2009.

ii Collaborating with the DM Heritage Society to stage a very well-attended History Fair at St Edmund's, as part of the national *Heritage Open Days* initiative. September 2009.

iii Acting as a venue for a concert of the West Norfolk Music Festival, September 2009.

iv Acting as a venue for a lecture of the DM Lecture Society. December 2009.

Feltwell (Grimshoe Benefice)

1 Go you are sent

- International focus of 'gifts and mission in preaching and at Benefice council and PCC meetings. Planning for a benefice weekend in 2010, which will incorporate a 'motivational gifts' seminar with priorities being set and pastoral teams established.

- Outreach in the community via parish magazines, community groups and All Souls Services with recently bereaved families being visited by the priest or member of the pastoral teams and personally invited to the service. This initiative was very well received in the villages.

2 Outreach to Children, Youth and Families

- Cross Benefice Children's and Youth Ministry Team established and working cohesively.

- Funding has been received via a bequest for resource and personnel training with a lay coordinator for the group to be established in 2010.

- Messy Church activities for Harvest and Halloween were well organised, advertised and attended with children and parents quite enthusiastic and looking forward to regular Messy Church events.

- Intentional ministry with Baptism families – quality preparation with baptisms talking place within the main Sunday service. Child receives a 'Baptism Bear' and invitations to Messy Church services. Baptism Bear 'reunions' are planned for 2010. Baptism families were invited by members of the ministry team to the Back to Church Sunday services with a pleasing response.

- Contact with schools and community groups has begun with in-church activities for 'beavers' and school harvest festival in the churches as first step.
- 3 Quality of welcome, fabric and church layout
- Back to Church Sunday well advertised, individual invitations were personally delivered with 'accessible' liturgy and refreshments afterwards. These services were well attended.
 - Fabric projects ongoing – faculty application in for Methwold.

Fincham

Co-operation with the other churches in the Group during the interregnum has continued. This was particularly noticeable when the first interview was arranged – involving chauffeured visits to eight churches and the Rectory, as well as the interview itself. Two services are being maintained each month, with increased attendances since the interregnum began. Similarly, other churches have been supported at their services. Newcomers to services have been made welcome. The repairs to the walls have been ordered, but not yet carried out. Necessary expenditure has been met in general, although the Parish Share is in some doubt. The urgent requirements arising from the 2009 Quinquennial Inspection have been carried out.

Hilgay

Hockwold (see Feltwell (Grimshoe Benefice))

Marham

Methwold (see Feltwell (Grimshoe Benefice))

Nordelph

Northwold (see Feltwell (Grimshoe Benefice))

Runcton Holme

Every home in the five villages is visited in rotation.
 All new people into the villages given a welcome pack.
 Six meetings with each Baptism families.
 Family Worship with uniformed organisations throughout the year.
 Three schools in the villages with weekly visits and teaching RE and Parents Coffee Morning.
 Letters and Services printed in two village magazines which go to every home.
 Church magazine and its outreach to the five villages.
 Services in Village Hall for over 60s.
 Visiting to Tapping House Hospice
 All villagers visited in hospital.
 Contact with villages through and fundraising for charity.
 Holy Baptism always within Family Worship
 Termly visits to the Pre-schools of the villages.

Ryston with Roxham

Shouldham

Shouldham Thorpe

Southery

Stow Bardolph

Fairtrade Church

Twining with the Parish of Farcet Hampton: Reciprocal visits of a busy new town congregation and a small rural parish, we found these visits enormously encouraging and happy occasions.

Passion Sunday Service: We made small crosses from different materials. These were then taken to the Good Friday and Easter Services at other churches in the group.

Rogation Service: Open air service with blessing of the crops. Special prayers were offered while we stood in a field of spring wheat.

Lammas Service: The theme of the service was Bread. A bowl of freshly harvested wheat was placed on the altar. The wheat was taken to the group Harvest Festival on the following Sunday.

Stow Bridge

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Stradsett

Developments in the 'Ely 900' year of 2009 ...

- 1 The Churchwardens attended the archdeacon's Visitation
- 2 A massive summer Charity event was held at Stradsett, including the involvement of the Church. This raised around £50,000 for local and national charities. July 2009.
- 3 We have begun to consider the Church building for Accessibility and Mission (appropriate extended use).
- 4 Review of Liturgy – whilst remaining loyal to the BCP and KJV, we have begun a consideration of more user-friendly service booklets.
- 5 We again held our Harvest Festival 'outreach' Service with the Church barely having sufficient room for all who attended. October 2009.
- 6 We have engaged positively with the issues relating to the formulation of the Deanery Plan.

Ten Mile Bank

Tottenham (See Runcton Holme)

Watlington (See Runcion Holme)

Weeting (see Feltwell (Grimshoe Benefice))

Wereham

West Dereham

Notice Board

The old one now has new glazing and has had a paint job. Due to pressure of other work in the church this item will not be replaced until next year. At least church service times are visible and contact names and numbers available.

Toilets

We are still without a toilet, we have looked at composting toilets and found that while they work and can be economic. They need to be housed sympathetically in or around the church and as we are a grade one listed structure an outside building will cost a very serious amount of money and therefore a standard flush toilet in a insulated cubicle looks like being our solution. We now have a plan by our Architect and have had quotes from contractors. However due to the amazing fact that we have a second grant from English Heritage for other works we have had to put this work to one side.

Weekday Services

We still do not have week day services, but we do now have a weekly coffee morning (It's called Yompers for some reason) in the tower. We hope to extend this into a service followed by coffee – however other problems have prevented the leader bringing this forward.

Electoral Roll Prayer list

We now feature parts of the village each week in our intercession prayers using a published rota and we look for items and people to pray for in this part of Worship. This expands our normal prayer list and brings the church nearer to our community.

Whittington

The redecoration has been completed and the whole church has been spring-cleaned.

The kitchenette and the disabled WC is still ongoing and we hope to see these completed by the end of Autumn if everything goes to plan but certainly by the end of the year if not!

Wimbotsham

- 1 To keep our Church Door Open 24/7/365
St Mary's is open every day of the year, every hour of the day for pilgrims to enjoy the peace, light a candle and pray if they wish, or just sit and reflect. We have already been able to serve locals, visitors, those tending graves and two tramps. God bless us in our quest for his kingdom to be known by everyone who graces our threshold.
- 2 A bookmark of the church community is still planned, for guests to take away with them. It has been PCC agreed and we await a suitable design.
- 3 'Food and Fellowship' is our social outreach to people of the village who do not attend church. We already have 45 to 50 people meeting each month for Sausage and Mash with a Quiz evening or Fish & Chips suppers with a Beetle Drive evening. For Christmas we have planned a Pudding evening with Christmas carols. This gives the whole of our Church the chance to serve our community.
- 4 "Crazy Church" is our brand new childrens' church activity event. At the moment we meet every month in the Village Hall. 12 -15, 5-11 year olds have met three times. We play games, paint pictures and do craft activities and have a Bible story which

becomes our theme for that meeting. Three members of St Mary's completed the Core Skills programme run by Julia Chamberlin, the Diocesan Children's Advisor; without this foundation the three say that they would not have had the courage to start the activity. Crazy Church is our most challenging mission and the one which we hope will have the greatest long term effect on our community. We ask for your prayers for this vital project.

NB All this has been achieved whilst we have been in a vacancy, without a Priest for the past 6 years. We have achieved it by the prayerful guidance of the Holy Spirit, the direction of a retired Priest, the determination of a willing PCC and, of course, with God's help.

Wormegay (See Runcton Holme)

Wretton and Stoke Ferry

Community Contact

Drop In: The plans to create a Drop In Centre/Event is now coming to fruition. Our first Drop In will be in the Stoke Ferry Community Centre on 24th November, with plans for them to continue on a monthly basis. The idea is to invite anyone and everyone to come in for tea, coffee, biscuits, etc, any age, and to chat, hear talks, see displays, whatever is interesting.

Christmas Events: We are repeating, but hopefully even better now that we have some experience, the new events introduced last Christmas – in particular Posada, where we want even more people to get involved and the Christmas Tree Festival, where again we want more and better decorating.

Newsletter: The Newsletter "Three in One" – combining reference to the Trinity (for those who recognise it) with the drawing together of the three villages which make up the two parishes in the one benefice - has been a great success and we plan to maintain and, indeed, improve that.

Holiday Clubs: These clubs for children during the holidays have been very successful during the past year. They are not explicitly evangelical, but take place in the Church School in Stoke Ferry and are run by members of the Church and friends. There is quite deliberate use of Christian idioms and Biblical stories etc and we hope that this will make up for the losses of explicit Christian teaching in our schools. Previous users of the Clubs are now coming back to help to run them!

Church

Alpha: We are joining with a neighbouring benefice (The Denver Group) in their Alpha course this winter and are encouraging members of our congregation and friends to come and see what it is all about.

Congregation: We continue to be encouraged by the effect of our outreach into our villages. We have a real increase in the numbers of people coming to Church and, as importantly, in the numbers of people who are interested in the Church as part of village life. This was well evidenced by Back to Church Sunday, where we had a roughly speaking 20% (3 extra for a normal congregation of less than 15) increase in congregation and expect at least one of them to be a continuing attender.