



## **Tas Valley Team Ministry Benefice Overview January 2017**

This paper aims to overview strategy for the benefice and summarise the things we do together and hope to do together as a benefice. (It will be supplemented by individual plans for each church agreed by each PCC) This was distributed as a discussion document to PCCS in Oct 2016 and then updated with wardens in Jan 2017. Re

### **THINGS TO CELEBRATE (ALREADY HAPPENING)**

#### **Growing in discipleship (depth)**

- Prayer has a high profile - Morning prayer open to all takes place Mondays (Newton), Wednesdays (Tasburgh) and Fridays (Newton) in our churches, Staff prayer is on Tuesdays at Saxlingham Rectory. Local houses of prayer and 24-7 Prayer Event Most villages have weekly worship in church encouraging a greater number of people to engage in worship every Sunday
- Alpha course, confirmation and adult baptism preparation at least annually
- 12 small groups across the benefice which engage in deeper bible study and prayer - of these 10 cells also engage in mutual accountability and shared mission and service
- There is weekly discipleship provision for children, in at least one church in the benefice every Sunday of the year.
- JAM (weekly cell) engages in growing disciples with 20 teenagers
- There is regular discipleship capacity for people with Special Needs in our benefice
- Regular Worship in both our Care Homes
- Strong lay leadership - Authorised worship assistants & Cell leaders
- A good number of people are giving regularly and proportionately
- Discipleship materials available on website.
- Monthly Benefice Praise Service

#### **Growing in Service (love, justice, peace)**

- Pastoral Visiting
- Bereavement ministry including "Remembering loved ones service"
- Charity support including Operation Christmas Child Boxes. Food Bank Initiative spread across benefice through Wardens Meeting.
- Initiatives in particular parishes - community lunch, Monday Mardle, carehome ministry
- Serving by praying for blessing on people, parishes and the wider world
- Strong involvement with all three church primary schools

#### **Growing in Numbers (contacts and church attendance)**

- Where cell and parish church work together both tend to grow in numbers. e.g.. Two cafe churches
- We are good at food all over the benefice which makes for a warm welcome.
- Benefice Website has improved our visibility in the community.
- Annual Children's Holiday Club
- 3 stage child christening services and visits to develop a real relationship between the family and congregation.
- Open the Book in 3 schools
- Tas Valley Families Facebook Page
- Rural Evangelism Project
- Good links with uniformed youth organisations

#### **Communication**

- Website and Facebook presence
- Ministry meals and wardens' meetings, sharing good practice

## **FUTURE DIRECTION**

### **GROWING IN DISCIPLESHIP**

- Helping more people to find faith
- Learning to see Christ more clearly, love Him more dearly and follow Him more nearly.

How do we feel God is calling us to grow in this area?

- To offer really good opportunities for families with children to engage in discipleship with weekly provision in Newton Flotman and Tasburgh, and shared weekly provision in Saxlingham/Shotesham. (This needs revising to indicate our true aspiration with regard to offering discipleship opportunities for families with children who live in any part of the benefice)
- To help people who have become church friends through church service initiatives and projects such as Newton Cafe Church, Tasburgh Freedom Cafe and Messy Finders Seekers to find ways to grow into deeper discipleship
- Continued growth of lay leadership especially among younger adults and teens.
- Growth of numbers involved in missional cell groups.

### **GROWING IN SERVICE**

- Responding to human need
- Caring for God's creation
- Transforming unjust structures in society

How do we feel God is calling us to grow in this area?

- Develop older adult ministry with good links across the benefice and relating appropriately to agencies who give care
- To serve more effectively through online and social media services to the local community - e.g. our Facebook page is used by other organisations to promote their activities.
- To become churches devoted to prayer for our area
- Use the learning from the Rural Evangelism Project, which has enabled more service of the community in Newton Flotman to begin similar schemes in other parishes if and when funding is available.

### **GROWING IN NUMBERS**

- Getting to know more people in our villages
- Helping people to join our congregations and/or fresh expressions of church

How do we feel God is calling us to grow in this area?

- Take opportunities to reach out in particular parts of the benefice as they arise e.g. new housing in Tharston and through Newton's vending shop project.
- Use cell / congregation collaboration to enable growth of initiatives such as Freedom cafe and Newton cafe church
- People who do not (yet) attend church to be fully involved in serving alongside church people in church service in the community (eg Mardle, community lunch, vending shop)

### **COMMUNICATION**

How do we feel God is calling us to grow in this area?

- Employ benefice administrator
- People in each village and church posting on our website and Facebook page.

## **SPECIAL CHALLENGES IN 2017**

- Jenny and David have recently moved on. Martin will move by July 2017 so will be 3 clergy down.
- Some of our younger members have moved or need to reduce time given because of family or work pressures while some of our older members are becoming less physically able to serve.
- Parish with largest population and new housing coming soon (Tharston) has the smallest congregation with which to reach out to their community

## **SPECIAL ACTIONS FOR 2017**

1. Engage deeply with prayer especially through Benefice Prayer 24/7 week "Thy Kingdom Come 28 May-4 June at Tasburgh
2. Get families with young families together for a lunch/ breakfast event and to discuss how we can better support their growing in discipleship through the activities within the benefice. Listen and respond.
3. We have reallocated clergy time to differently defined areas to better use our strengths and giftings and respond to missional and pastoral needs.
4. Deploy AWAs more widely across the benefice and try out new services with a view to deciding new monthly service pattern in July 2017, taking better account of new pattern of worship leader availability.
5. Begin to develop benefice team to help with outreach and welcoming newcomers in Tharston.
6. Advertise Away Day (Discipleship and Prayer) organised by Cell Church to whole benefice
7. Discuss in staff team the opportunity to engage in quality training of lay and ordained together through the Germinate Leadership Programme (which has been especially developed for rural multi church benefices) **TBC**
8. Seek to share skills and good practice across benefice identifying potential synergy through wardens meetings e.g. to help vending shop project.
9. Train up more people to post on our website and offer a Social Media Training Workshop