

St Mary's, Newton Flotman

Growing for the Future

Table Talk



The ideas in this document were mainly gathered at a series of meetings of people coming together to discern the way forward for Newton Flotman church. Some have also been included at the request of individuals who put them forward to Sally at other times. The purpose of the exercise was to get out as many ideas as possible without weighing them up at this stage. Therefore you will notice that not all the ideas are mutually compatible.

The weighing up of the ideas will begin at the Growing for the Future morning on May 18th 9am-12 noon at Newton Flotman Church and will also be the work of the Parochial Church Council. Some ideas would need further work - for example, to see if a particular service is needed or wanted.

You can keep on adding to the list of ideas by emailing Sally at sally@tasvalley.org up until 15th May when this document (with the additional ideas added) will be circulated to all those intending to take part on 18th May. If you would like to come to the morning on 18th May, we would love you to take part. Sign up on the list at the back of church or email sally@tasvalley.org

Please keep praying, keep loving and listening to each other and sharing your hopes as we seek to follow God's way into Growing for the Future.

WELCOME, HOSPITALITY AND SERVING

1. How can we improve our personal welcome and hospitality when people come to church?

Church entrance

Welcome sign inside church "We are pleased to see you"

Glass door

Revolving door

Keep notice boards up to date

Welcoming in person

Church door open before the service

Smile

Thank people and make them feel more valued

Avoid forming a crowd/ congestion around welcomers at back of church

Subtle welcome

Do not distract welcomers/ sides people

Separate designated welcomer as well as hymn book distributor

Sash/ hat? Something to designate sides people "Welcome"

Sidesperson and spare person needed

Secondary helpers

Pass/ introduce new people to someone to welcome/help them

Be observant of everyone in the church and chat to them whether you know them or not

Dont just sit with people you know. Make an effort to mix.

Chat with new people in pews

Its everyone's responsibility

Dont assume everyone is staying for coffee and that you can talk with them then

If you find it hard to talk to people, have a prop to help you - Like offer them a sweet!

Sit with new people

Extra effort at Christenings

There is no substitute for a warm welcome (like going to a restaurant for the first time)

Balcony in tower

Lift to tower

Box seats

Music

Music playing confidently as people arrive for services - not practicing or sorting out the sound system

Welcoming children

Give them flags in the songs

Wait for people to come and then go into Special Agents Together

Sit in a circle and welcome at Special Agents

Introduce children to others

Adults to speak to and get to know children

In the service

To be able to sit where you want

It is difficult to make a service feel warm and friendly when there are lots of empty pews at the front.

Regulars could sit near the front so newcomers can have the security of sitting behind people who know what they are doing without having to sit at the very back

Welcome to newcomers- spoken at start

Turn to each other in pews to chat at start

Provide food at beginning/end

Warmth

Heat - it's freezing in there esp in the choir stalls
Raise the temperature of the church to make it more comfortable in winter
Draught-proofing
Insulation

Seating and Space

Get rid of the pews
New carpet
Make more of an open space
With chairs, we can put out just the number needed so there is not the feel-bad factor of empty pews.
Cushioned chairs
Comfortable seating
More chairs
Make a wheelchair available

2. What would make it easier to invite people into the life of the church?

Building relationships

Form a Welcome Team
Form a Pastoral Visiting Team
Doing things to serve the village - e.g. litter pick - people like to join in
Vicar to visit villagers in a pastoral capacity, inviting people to join us
Lay members to do more organisational/ communication tasks to release clergy to do more visiting
Pastoral assistant in village to advise who may need a home visit/ communion
Welcome pack for people new to the village- watch out for houses near you changing hands
Invite new people to a meal - especially singles new to village - they may not know anyone/ be lonely.

Services

Bring pets
Offer events & services at different times
Special events need to be more diverse
Invite a friend to SPAG or a special service
Different times
Evening service
Services at alternative venues eg school in cafe style
More services at the school to appeal to younger generation and families like Christingle

Space for wheelchair users without having to be in the aisle

Wider use of church building

Open the church more during the week
More comfortable space for community events
More pew-free space is needed for Church Mice activities. Not enough space in Church Room.

Welcome on the Web?Information

JAM/ Youth Section
Christian Gaming
Church Blog
Facebook
Twitter
Advertising & Leaflets
Keep notice boards up to date

Inviting people to the church building

Broader use of church-building - People may come to other events to start with.
Sort out the heating
Improve catering facilities
Market place
Turn church room into a welcoming cafe-style environment
Turn church into a community space - eg youth ages etc
Knock the church down
Some people would be more open to the life of the church if it did not involve meeting in and maintaining an old and sometimes uncomfortable building
Make the church more relevant to younger generation.

Special events (not necessarily in the church building)

More area choir events
Exhibitions - permanent and special
Film nights - adults not xxx
Craft events for children
Curry night
Lunch club for older residents
Pick ups when required
Newton Flotman Friends Bake-Off Event

3. What should we do as Christians in Newton Flotman to meet the needs of our community? What are we already doing that is good

What we are already doing that is good

Church Mice
Coffee Stop
Children - "Coffee stop - especially the flapjacks and cake and scones and sausage rolls".
Give & Take
Community services, gardening, litter pick etc
Film Fun Friday
Open the Book
Jessie
Church Services
Visiting Olive House (David Sochon)
JAM
Sponsored bike ride
Support school
Exhibitions

Future possibilities for church/ church room

After school club
Host village shop
Open in the week for coffee/refreshments - eg before and after school
Book club/exchange
Voluntary shop - an alternative to Give & Take
Music Club - Like band practice
Chess and drafts games club
Youth cafe/ homework club
Lunches for elderly people
Travelling post office - but PC have already tried
Lent lunches

Support surgery

Pick up for Doctors Appts
Good Neighbour scheme
Homestart
Support village hall

Community Events/Fundraiding

Raise money for charity
Carwash
Marathon /Bike rides

Litterpick
Fete
coffee mornings/ afternoons
coffee after school run
Antiques roadshow Gardeners Q Time
Community Choir
Art club
Pudding Party
Music Nights
Arts and Flower Festival

Families, Children & Teens

Young single mums
Giving breakfast prior to school
Set up a contact centre for estranged fathers to meet
Teen Cafe/ drop in/ cooking club
U 18s pub eve/ non alcoholic cocktail bar

Older people

Pick up service for services and events
Need to do something for older adults and lonely people in the village
Lunch Club OAPs
Support Olive House
Day trips
Visiting, reading, talking
Survey round village for suggestions

Possible venues

Use empty mobile at school
Use rooms at surgery
Church room/church

Transport/Help with shopping

Use school minibus for a supermarket run twice a week
Community car service
Do we need transport for non-drivers

Volunteers

Encourage non-church people to get more involved in volunteering for community style events

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

1. What sort of church services would you (and your family) like?!

Service Styles

Whole family - be together
Creative, flexible, short snappy things, cafe / moving around (4)
More of the table based informal type of services and praise services with more singing and activities.(4)
We would like to see more of the school friendly type services with familiarities from school. eg signing the Lord's prayer, actions to the grace, OTB and songs which the children sing at school with actions.(4)
Less traditional hymns(4)
Short ones (2)
Informal and relaxed
More modern
Breakfast Church (6)
Cafe church (2)
Lunch Services
Ones with lots of food (7)
Reflective with Music(6)
Traditional sedentary (2)
Mixture - contemplative and modern
Well-planned family services and communion services
Mixture (6)
Balance! Traditional & Contemporary (5)
enjoy both the traditional and child friendly services.

Music

Anyone who can play should have a go(7)
Lots of singing (6)
More band recruiting
Lots of music, singing, good old mix of hymns and worship songs (Hymns need to be well known, not chosen with obscure reference to sermon)
We would like a extended period of worship at the beginning of the service, rather than hymn sandwich with other bits in between
Organist

Prayer & Liturgy

Open prayer time when anyone can pray aloud (4)
Meditation
Slower with the prayers
Get rid of jargon in services "catholic", "apostolic"
We like signing but cant do it

Bible /Teaching

Do we have enough in depth bible teaching?
Bible teaching could be midweek, not necessarily only in Sunday services (4)
Longer sermons (30 mins) (1)
Shorter Sermons (10 mins max) (2)
Interactive Sermons (3)
Reflect on Sermon during week (3)
Light-hearted sermon
Age appropriate sermons

Other features

Time to chat at the start of the service and then something to help us focus before the service begins
Debating
Use outdoors more
Less asking for money
Reverence and Awe
Longer Services
Vary locations
Family commitments - families who also include non-attenders
More streamers

Children's requests..

Special Agents
Activities for children
Children enjoy food and would like more food at more services
Children enjoy helping
Children want to read in church
Children want to be the vicars assistant
Toys in the pews
More craft activities

Adults/ teen comments about children

Child or young people could lead all or part of a service (8)

A candle burning for the children in their absence from the service whilst at SPAG/FROG

Include children from Newton Flotman primary e.g.. Style of Service like Open the Book at School

Hard for parents of young children to worship with their little ones

Flags etc help to occupy them

Some people find it off-putting when children are running up and down in church

We would like services which are inclusive to children, for them to have jobs like the adults, so they can feel part of the church. Like the carol service, but in the school as well as the church. Let them choose a song, let them help with a reading, let a toddler bang a drum to the music, let them write or say a prayer, let them be involved it's their church too!

Special Services

Like Special Services (6) eg. Carol, Easter, Christingle, Remembering Loved Ones

Pet Service

Bug Hunt

Treasure Hunt

Benefice Services

Bring-a-friend

Hobby Themes

Healing Service

Teenage take-over service

Videochurch

Evening Services

Praise Services

Praise and Traditional with tea in village hall to attract older adults.

Invite-a-friend service

Service for all led by Special Me Group

Children's/ young people's service (marketed as such) where the children/ young people choose the topic, participate in the drama. They participate in the marketing eg. invite their grandparents etc. Pester power!

More special services at the school like Christingle, Easter, Mothers day. So when children who would not usually come to church are familiar with these things and can join in and will want to come again

2. How could we improve our pattern of church services across the month?

Same type of service every week (1)

Lots of different kinds of services (3)

Services on different days

Earlier starts

All start at 11am or 10.30 since YPs cant get out of bed for 9 (2)

Evenings

More joining with a single church i.e. Newton Flotman and Swainsthorpe

Cafe church every week (5)

Communion in cafe church (6)

Occasional use of school e.g.. once a month (7)

Child led service at the school once a month with tables, OTB, school songs, children helpers etc.

A for all service at the church once a month.

A praise service will lots of singing including requests.

A more traditional service type, but only once a month.

We like that there is a 9 - 9:30 service, because it gives us an option to go out for the day.

We would prefer if there were more services at this time.

Breakfast every week: pancakes & bacon (6)

3. How could we improve our church building?

Heating & Lighting

Make it warmer (14)
Heated better
Improve heating (5)
Under floor?
Along pews?
Heated seats?
Footlevel radiators (7)
Move the heaters closer to the people.
Less draughty (6)
Less damp (6)
Better insulation (6)
Better lighting

Tower

Climbing frame in the tower
Lift to tower/able to up tower (6 YPs)
Meeting room for FROG

Front door

Change handle on main door
Revolving glass door (6 YPs)

Seating in main church

Remove pews (11)
Comfortable seats (5)
Nice chairs (6)
Flexibility of seating (5)
More cushions (6)
Keep pews (3)
Make pews moveable
Neutral about pews in church (2)
Create some space at the back by removing some pews (4)
Comfortable Pew runners
Better seating for extra people (5)
There is pew on the back row where you sit awkward as there is a shelf/table of wood where your back should rest.
In many seats there is a glare from the sun and you cannot see.

Other suggestions for main church layout

Move font to create space at the back (1)
Keep the chancel formal (5)
Create a quiet space for prayer where the organ is (2)

Create a meeting room for FROG
Remove screen obscuring altar
Permanent screen for projection (3)
No permanent screen for projection (2)
Like current idea of screen which is easily removed and put up as needed
Better carpet/flooring (3)
Better lighting (7)
Knock the church building down

Church Room

Cafe-style environment for church room (7)
Remove pews in church room
Cooker in church room (13)
Fridge (12)
Upgrade food facilities eg oven to serve hot food - but if you have an oven, you have to have two sinks?
Make it easier to serve food
Beanbags
Wi-fi (5)
Smaller tables in church room

Other features

Burglar alarm
Organ could be replaced with modern one which takes less space - free up space for meeting place for teens in more traditional services or a quiet more private space for prayer
Sound System to be used properly
Make sure the speaker can be heard from the very back.
Stick on colour for plain windows
Board for Special Agents work to be shown
Changing table fixed to the wall so not changing baby on dirty floor (6)
Free vending machines (6 YPs)
Solar panels
A candlestand for anyone to light one in memory or prayer in their own time
Prevent eating in church
Ideas board/ graffiti corner
Prayer wall 24/7
CD player for church room

LEARNING, GROWING AND BELONGING

1a) If you could ask any Christian faith related question, what would you ask?

Where is heaven?

What does it look like?

What is the mass of God?

Why suffering - God allows it?

Why some suffer and others don't

Why do innocent people suffer (5)

Why do peoples beliefs allow them to hurt others?

Why do horrible things happen?

Why does evil triumph over good on the world stage?

Why does God allow suffering and why aren't more healed?

How do we know our faith is in the right one? (4)

How do we positively engage with people of other faiths?

Heaven open to all - wishful thinking?

Are we all children of God regardless of faith?

How can the church serve?

What would you like me to do?

If I am a Christian, is my husband saved?

If the Christian faith is so wonderful, why is everyone not a Christian?

Why doesn't God bring more people into church?

Second coming

Book of Revelations

Miracles

Science vFaith

Appeal to the secular world

Working with old and young

1b How would you hope to find out your answer?

God

Prayer

Pray - illumination or resolution

Ask, seek, knock ie God through prayer

Open discussions on above questions

Discuss with others

Exploration with others eg Alpha groups, cells

Listen to preaching and teaching

Sermons should address popular questions (5)

Google, wikipedia

The bible

Books eg Nicky Gumble

Ask an ordained person

Ask your church "oracle"

Accept not knowing but still believing

2. Research shows that a lot of people find small groups helpful for learning and growing. Do you? If so, what sort of small group would you go along to?

Yes 5/5 working in a small group. Good if supportive but negative if exclusive

Yes another group 5/5

Yes another group (4/4)

Ability to ask questions

Chance to explore faith and issues

Food and hospitality - Install cooker (3/5)

JAM

Cell (3 groups)

Sunday Cell

Church Mice

Special Agents

Alpha

Man Cell

Bible study (4/5 & 2/4)

Post service (ad hoc)

Husbands and wives (5/5) - that do and dont share faith

Gender

Planning services (2/5)

Prayer group 3/5

Horses for courses (5/5)

Informal prayer meeting

No another group (3/5)

Need for spiritual nourishment - prefer teaching from pulpit - someone who knows more eg 8am.

After years of small groups, prefer more individual approach such as downloading on iPhone

3. Retaining children and youth is critical for the future of the church. What can we as a church do about this?

Community Events (Teens' answer)

Shop in Church Room (Teens' answer)

After School Snack Thing (Teens' answer)

Invite people to church (Teens' answer)

Update the church (Teens' answer)

Young people more involved- catering, service, band, hot food (Teens' answer)

Ask and involve youngsters

Young to run church

Young to have more responsibility

Youth lead

Children to have jobs of responsibility

Participation by youth in practical aspects of services

Listen to the young people

Listen (4)

Prepare to compromise

Special provision and inclusive

Different things for different ages

Church to become real family - interaction between young and old (5/5)

All involved with young

Youth groups to be fully inclusive of all abilities

Made welcome. Not told to be quiet.

Suitable services around benefice every week

Take church to youth and young people

Family services where other jobs dont interfere

Familiarity with school and church (Same songs, Open the Book etc)

Church in School

Music

Modern songs (4)

Social Media

We do this well 5/5

Sunday School 5/5

Music Group 5/5

Coffee Stop 5/5

More food.

Offer youth cafe - safe environment - non-judgemental 5/5

Youth cafe

More activities

Activities in church premises

Acting Church

Film Night (4)

Hobby church (4)

TV Church

Sporty Church (4)

IT church

Young group for children at school 5/5

Sometimes play with friends instead of formal SPAG

Growing for the Future

Sunday 18th May 9-12



9am - Breakfast and Welcome

Questionnaire with questions to provide the PCC with people's views and commitments with regards to various issues coming out of the "table talk" in previous weeks:

- Heating
- Creating space
- Who Cares/ Pastoral Visiting
- Alpha
- Welcome Team
- Service Times

9.30 A short prayer followed by an Interactive Exercise to find out the strength of support for some of the different ideas for outreach in our community. Four main categories:-

- Outreach with Young
- Outreach with Older Generations
- Community Wide Events and Service
- Prayer

Space for other ideas to be responded to

10.45 Worship

11.15 Tea/ Refreshments and a chance to sign up for task groups

11.45 Final song & prayer

After May 18th, the task groups will meet to work on their ideas and then report to PCC before acting. The PCC will make decisions on these and on the issues covered by the questionnaire, so that the mission and care of the church can be carried forward.