

St Luke`s Church Parkstone Poole

A response to the questions posed by Bishop Nicholas in his "Let Us Talk" presentation.

We welcome the opportunity to engage, think and articulate our priorities which as a church we are regularly encouraged to do whether at PCC level, in our various groups or individually. The questions posed were raised at the PCC meeting in January 2013 and discussed in March 2013. This paper incorporates responses made at the PCC and drawn together by Maureen Honeyman, Churchwarden and Chris Strain, Vicar.

1. What is the "Personality and Character" of your local church?

We are a lively outward looking church situated in a seemingly affluent area of suburban Poole, predominantly middle class with 2/3rds on the electoral roll from outside the parish. The church is in good heart and well attended. At the end of 2012 we gave thanks for our growing youth ministry, new people joining church, the Jubilee Street party, 10 Connect Groups (Homegroups), Sunday Services, "Godspell", Women's "Eat-Pray-Love," the successful "Olympics" Holiday Club, CAMEO (Senior Citizens holiday week), visits from our mission partners with OMF home from Japan, New Wine, an excellent CPAS "Growing Leaders Course", an outstanding Pre-School, engagement with local schools, a successful Parents and Toddlers Group, excellently maintained buildings (Church and Hall), and much more.

2. What are the priorities of your local church?

In all we do it is important for us to continue to remind ourselves of our mission as we put in our Mission Statement, **"Together as a Family of God we aim: to know and love the Lord, to grow His church and kingdom, to go and make disciples"**. Our seven development priorities are:-

1. **Sunday Worship** – Coming together weekly for Worship, Prayer and Bible based discipleship teaching.
2. **Connect Groups** – All members are encouraged to join a midweek group, currently there are 12.
3. **Personal Spirituality** – To develop a rule of life and grow in faith through spiritual disciplines
4. **Church Life** – Our fellowship to reflect the peace of God, to show commitment to our mission and values.
5. **Leadership** – Raising and equipping of new leaders for all aspects of ministry.
6. **Mission and Outreach** – Our main task is to live and proclaim the Gospel.
7. **Tradition & Change** – We value the past but must continue to welcome change and development.

3. Is there one thing you would like to take on in the coming year (recognizing that may mean you may need to stop doing something else)?

To encourage more commitment and engagement

- a) **Committed to the renewal of individuals** and to be able to tell our stories naturally in more relaxed settings.
- b) **Committed as disciples to the renewal of the church.** To reconsider the kind of church we should become rather than "Should I go to church?"
- c) **Committed to the renewal of communities** – we also liked "the Imagine project" from LICC which encourages the making of whole life disciples who can live an ordinary life in a robustly Christian way.

4. Are there ways in which we can work together with neighbouring churches to achieve more?

- o Increased attendance and enthusiasm for Deanery Synod, owned more as an active coming together of local churches rather than another meeting to attend, being more accountable to and supportive of each other.
- o Sharing of courses and training opportunities across the Deanery as we are doing
- o More cooperation and sharing of activities and worship with local churches. Some churches are situated on busy high streets that provide for more visible presence.
- o We liked the idea of a big Diocesan Festival of Thanksgiving with coach parties and picnics on the green.

5. How can we best measure the quality and impact of church life?

- o Growth of church numerically in terms of homegroups rather than Sundays only.
- o Seeing the lives of church members transformed.
- o Assessing the numbers and quality of our ministries and programmes in fulfilling our Mission Statement with an increase in leadership from pre-retired people.

We are thankful for this initiative and trust the responses will assist in assessing where we are at present and journeying to where the Lord wishes to take us.

St Luke's Parkstone March 2013