



## **Mission Action Plan – Review of progress and roll forward to 2013/14**

Five workshops with parishioners were held in the autumn/winter of 2011 and assessed St Mary's against the seven marks of a healthy church. The Groups looked at what we might do to improve. It was noted at the time that the UCC already had a number of initiatives underway which were in line with some of the ideas that came forward.

Based on the workshop findings St Mary's Mission Action Plan (MAP) setting out our vision, our priorities and our goals for 2012/13 was agreed in April 2012.

### **Our Vision is:**

1. To be a spiritual, prayerful and dynamic Church;
2. To be a welcoming, inclusive and joyful Church;
3. To be a Church serving the whole community.

Our priorities were based on the three stands of the bishop of St Albans 'Living God's Love' initiative.

### **Our Priorities are:**

1. Going Deeper into God: To encourage each person to develop and grow in their relationship with God.
2. Transforming Communities: To become more involved, as a Church, in the community.
3. Making new Disciples: To explore the whole area of welcoming and nurturing and growing all of our Church family.

### **Review of our Goals for 2012/13**

We set ourselves five specific goals for 2012/13. The UCC on January 14<sup>th</sup> reviewed progress against each of the five goals and agreed the goals for 2013/14

#### **Goal 1. Establish a Credit Union Collection Centre.**

A Credit Union collection centre has been established. It opens on a weekly basis and although the numbers using it are small they have increased during the year. A trained group of volunteers man the collection centre. Although maintaining the service and promoting its use remain as on-going actions **the UCC consider that this goal has been achieved.**

#### **Goal 2. Review and seek to improve the welcome we offer to everyone.**

An all day workshop looking at welcome in its broadest sense has been held and a further workshop/follow up meeting is planned. The workshop that was held came up with a number of ideas and suggestions. The notes are being written up and once the second workshop has been held a plan of action will be developed and agreed.

However in advance of an agreed action plan the following has happened in the context of welcome:

- A new welcome pack has been finalised and is available at the back of church and in the church centre foyer as well

- Coffee after church has been improved by the introduction of F air Trade filter coffee
- Charging for coffee after church has been replaced for a request for donations to cover costs with any surplus being donated to Toy Box a charity which works with street children in South America
- Reducing the number of leaflets given out for 'big occasion' services
- New notice boards both outside and in the church and also in the church centre, with those in the church centre being reorganised
- A greater range of leaflets being made available in the church centre coupled with regular review and replenishment
- It has been agreed that the local branch of NADFAS should develop a Church Trail for 8-12 year olds

**The UCC felt that a good start has been made but more remains to be done so this Goal should be rolled forward to 2013/14**

**Goal 3. Form a new Social Committee, to plan an active programme of events throughout the year.**

A small team has filled the vacuum left following the demise of the former Social Committee but a new Committee has yet to be formed. The usual social events such as the annual summer meal, the quiz, the Gramble, the patronal/harvest supper and the Pantomime have continued largely due to the efforts of those who have traditionally organised them and in particular due to the efforts of Anne and Rob Kay. No annual programme of events has been planned as envisaged by this goal. **The UCC agreed to change the name of the Social Committee to 'Events Committee' to make clear that its role was one of oversight and co-ordination and to differentiate it from the former Social Committee which had taken responsibility for organising most social activities. The UCC agreed that his goal has not been achieved and should be carried forward to 2013/14 subject to the change of name to Events Committee.**

**Goal 4. Compile a comprehensive database of our personal skills, and our links with the local community.**

Although work has been undertaken following the stewardship service last year focusing on time and talents and as a result some people have engaged in new activities this is not what was envisaged by this goal. John Shaw has agreed to lead on taking this goal forward but to achieve it will require the co-operation of every member of St Mary's community. **The UCC acknowledge that this goal has not been achieved and agreed to roll it forward to 2013/14**

**Goal 5. Develop stronger links with St Mary's School.**

A discussion has taken place between St Mary's Head Teacher, her deputy, the Chair of Governors and the former Chair of Governors and Deborah on this goal at which a number of ideas were discussed including holding an afternoon service (creative communion) for parents, children and some members of St Mary's congregation and exploring the idea of holding regular tea/coffee events in the nursery rooms after school. It has been agreed that school display boards will be placed in the Church from time to time to illustrate their work. Also Link receives regular reports from Meera Chauhan, a member of staff, and Heather Allum delivers copies of Link to the school for staff and parents to see.

Despite this meeting the UCC acknowledged that the school, by its actions, did not appear to see this as a two way relationship. For instance they did not publicise their Family Fireworks event in any way through the church, nor have they thought to share news of their iPhone/smart phone app with the church community although an article on it was published in 'My Ricky News'. The article even reported the school council as being keen to do whatever they could to raise the school's profile. Sadly they do not seem to see communicating with St Mary's Church and its

congregation as a way of doing this. Whilst the school appears content for St Mary's to do things for them and provide funding they do not appear to see the relationship as reciprocal. The achievement of this goal depends on working in an active partnership with the school and requires commitment from both parties. **The UCC recognised that this goal had not been achieved and that there is little prospect of any significant progress being made since without commitment from both parties progress is unlikely.**

In conclusion there is work outstanding on four of our five goals for 2012/13. We never anticipated that we would achieve all of our five goals in a year and work on the one we did achieve had commenced prior to it being identified as a goal.

## **Roll forward to 2013/14**

We did not have a specific goal for the going Deeper into God priority 'To encourage each person to develop and grow in their relationship with God' so it has essentially been business as usual. **The UCC agreed that for 2013/14 we should have a goal which relates to this priority and that this be establishing a teaching course on prayer and/or offering a course on Leadership of small groups**

In relation to our second priority under the theme Transforming Communities: To become more involved, as a Church, in the community whilst we had goals relating to aspects of becoming more involved in the community specifically establishing A Credit Union Collection Centre, the database and developing stronger links with St Mary's School we have achieved much in other ways:

- We had a banner made with our new strapline 'serving the whole community'
- For the first time we had a stall at the Bury Fete
- We hosted the community Jubilee Picnic and plan to repeat a similar event this year
- For the first time we had a stall at the Rickmansworth Society's Autumn Market
- For the first time we had a stall at the Starlight Evening and actively promoted our Christmas services
- We sang Carols around the Town
- The church was full to overflowing for the Candlelit Christmas Carol Service
- We delivered newsletters on three occasions during the year

Through these activities we have become a much more visible, aided by our new St Mary's banner, and active presence in the community.

Since we wish to continue and build upon these activities during 2013/14 and in view of the difficulties encountered in developing stronger links with St Mary's School **the UCC agreed that our fifth goal be amended to 'Continue and where possible increase the Church's involvement and visibility in the community including St Mary's School'.**

**So Our Goals for 2013/14 are**

- 1 Establishing a teaching course on prayer and/or offering a course on Leadership of small groups.**
- 2 Review, and seek to improve the welcome we offer to everyone.**
- 3 Form a new Events Committee, to plan an active programme of events throughout the year.**
- 4 Compile a comprehensive data base of our personal skills, and our links with the local community.**
- 5 Continue and where possible increase the Church's involvement and visibility in the community including St Mary's School.**

**Gill Gowing**  
**29.1.13**