

Glasgow and Galloway Mission Action Plan



Name of Charge/s : St Bartholomew's, Gourock...

Name of Facilitator : Maureen Russell

MAP Completed: October 2013

Strategic intent is growth

Stage 1: Why are we going for Growth?

<p>Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>your Church as God would see it</i> - <i>where God has been, and is, at work in the community and in church</i> - <i>what needs to be retained or relinquished</i> 	<p>St Bartholomew's is a small, faithful community with a tremendous heart and spirit. Its people vary in age and many have attended for years. In 2010, as a community, it embraced change eagerly and enthusiastically in the form of a major restoration of the church building. This entailed being out of the building for a year and included the ongoing frustration of working with builders and the solving of snagging issues a number of which are still to be resolved. Upon returning to a most beautiful and restored church the reality of fewer numbers and consequent greater responsibility has taken its toll. The congregation are showing great determination and courage to keep going, and their faith is strong in the presence and guidance of God and the Holy Spirit in their community life.</p> <p>When considering the Mission Action Plan the congregation felt excited, energised and welcomed it as an initiative. They see it as an important way for the Diocese to support small congregations such as themselves and they recognise the need to engage with the community at large, to encourage others to come, and make new disciples for Christ.</p>
<p>Check: <i>understanding of each strand</i></p>	<p>Whilst the congregation were worshipping at St John's Church, Greenock, there was a sermon series based on the six strands. Each strand was taken weekly and explained, with an opportunity for the people to engage with the content and express their opinions. This was generally done in written feedback slips the questions of which were open-ended and allowed a variety of responses. The six strands were also featured in the bi-monthly magazine and there was also a display at the back of the church which grew as each strand was introduced. The prayer for the Strategy was said at every service and growth and mission was an intention in the intercessions. These different ways of communication ensured that as many of the congregation as possible were able to familiarise themselves with the strands and the Mission Strategy.</p>



**Appraise, affirm
and celebrate:**

*with regard to each
strand of the strategy,
we exhibit the
following strengths ...*

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

Prayer is an active part of the life of St Bartholomew's. A few of the congregation pray the Daily Office in conjunction with the clergy and following the same intentions and intercession concerns. The laity are involved in the Intercessions during the Eucharist and the team have received in-service training. At St John's there is a Contemplative Meditation group which is open to all. Many of the congregation attend a fellowship lunch and discussion group where spiritual issues are discussed; these have included spirituality of the books of the Bible, Benedictine spirituality, the prayers and theology of the Eucharist. There is an atmosphere of sharing and exploration at these meetings and it is a place where fears and doubts as well as joys can be aired. It is a place where individual spirituality can deepen. The sacrament is taken to the housebound of our parish; and pastoral visits are undertaken by many of the members of the church. All the churches in Gourock have very close ecumenical relationships, and St Bartholomew's is an enthusiastic supporter of such a venture. Members faithfully attend the ecumenical groups and services which are held each year.

LEARNING AND DISCIPLESHIP

The congregation of St Bartholomew's continues to be open to learning – learning to do things differently, to see things differently, to 'be' differently. New hymns and music have been accepted, and a freedom was gained when compulsorily separated from their mother building and the sharing of resources with St John's has brought great benefits. The congregation have availed themselves of the opportunity to attend Regional Pilgrimages and the Quiet Days in Glasgow. The congregation felt they were quite confident in being open in their workplace and social circle about being Christian, and felt they tried hard to put their faith into practice, being a disciple of Christ every day and not just on Sundays!

MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

At the heart of Missional Leadership is the realisation by the whole community that mission is the remit and responsibility and indeed joy of each and every person of the community. As St Bartholomew's is such a small community this reality is present in all its activities and ethos: when an event is planned there is an awareness that everyone is needed to make things work. Gourock is also a close community and there is an awareness to look out for one's neighbour and notice their absence immediately. The restoration of the Church was an extremely brave missional stance for such a small church. The decision was taken with prayer and faith and has resulted in a beautiful space for newcomers and faithful as well as the community as a whole. The missional potential of the building has still to be fully realised.

WELCOME AND INTEGRATION

St Bartholomew's congregation are warm and genuinely welcoming. They recognise that finding out the gifts and talents of people and utilising these in the church community is key to retaining individuals. They also recognise the importance of building up each other in the church.



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

There are only a few children and young people in St Bart's at the moment, but those who do attend are welcomed and fully integrated in the life and worship of the church. Everything is in place should more children come along and need the provision of a Sunday School. As a congregation there is a very tolerant and patient attitude towards the needs and necessary disruption which accompany the presence of children, and more youngsters would be actively welcomed by all. We occasionally get baptisms, maybe one a year, sometimes less. As an active member of Gourock Schools and Churches Together, St Bart's take part in the annual schools visitation in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and welcome 140 children through the door. The clergy also organise the annual Ecumenical Christmas Carol Service, even although it is held in another, larger venue.

IMAGINATIVE OUTREACH INTO THE COMMUNITY

We have three community events per year: our Strawberry Tea, our Soup and Sandwich lunch and our Christmas Mince Pie Coffee Morning. These are very well supported by members of other churches in the town. We now have good facilities, which we hope to advertise and offer as a facility in the town.

PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

Although we have two clergy, there is a traditional expectation from many of those receiving Home Communion and Pastoral visits that this has to be done only by the clergy team. The demand is too great to be workable, and although we have willing people to share the load, the expectation still remains. It is sometimes disappointing to see the low uptake of service attendance and groups such as the Thursday lunchtime discussion group.

LEARNING AND DISCIPLESHIP

Being few in numbers the onus is on most of the congregation to turn up at all services, to help at all services and to participate in all occasions. The responsibility is huge and there is little respite or opportunity to share the load.

MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

There is a lack of knowledge about how to market St Bart's facilities successfully how to attract young people and families. It is difficult to keep positive when there are so few in the congregation.

WELCOME AND INTEGRATION

We believe we are a welcoming church; but due to our small numbers it may be difficult for people to come along and remain anonymous, if that is what they wished. We need more ideas as to how attract, welcome and retain new people.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

It is difficult to 'appeal' to young people. The language of faith is alien to most youngsters who have grown up in a home where faith does not feature. Again, we would welcome new ideas as to how to appeal to younger people.

Glasgow and Galloway MAP pro forma October 2011

Assess:

with regard to each strand of the strategy, we suffer from the following weaknesses...



<p>Investigate: <i>with regard to each strand of the strategy, we detect the following opportunities...</i></p>	<p>IMAGINATIVE OUTREACH INTO THE COMMUNITY Due to lack of numbers it is difficult to engage in imaginative outreach. The few who attend, already do so much for the church. Collectively we lack ideas. Perhaps if we had some help to think creatively out of the box we might feel inspired to offer ourselves in this area of the church's life and work.</p> <p>PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY A lot has been achieved in the last few years in St Bartholomew's. The church building is restored and fit for purpose, the liturgy is accessible and there is a sensitivity to the needs of a small congregation. The opportunity is now to utilise all we have to inform and advertise what we have to offer.</p> <p>LEARNING AND DISCIPLESHIP There is great opportunity to join with other churches to put on courses and do joint ventures. The support from other Gourock churches is very good. There might be the opportunity to change some of our more traditional patterns eg. Starting a Saturday Evening service instead of Sunday morning.</p> <p>MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP The restoration of the church was a big step. Now the challenge is to build on what has been achieved. We have to see the commercial value of our building as a venue for the people of the community. We need someone to market our premises.</p> <p>WELCOME AND INTEGRATION There is a great opportunity to learn from past 'mistakes' and learning how to do things better. Because we are a small congregation then it is easier to get to know people, to become friends with people, to make more meaningful relationships with them. We must remember the power of the invitation to invite people to our beautiful church.</p> <p>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE We recently had a baptism in church, but the family held the after baptism party elsewhere. We must maximise every opportunity to promote the Ark as a space for such parties.</p> <p>IMAGINATIVE OUTREACH INTO THE COMMUNITY There is a willingness to put our buildings at the disposal of the community.</p>
<p>Communicate: <i>How has everything so far been communicated?</i></p>	<p>As mentioned, the congregation learned about the strands and the Strategy through sermons, magazine articles, displays, and discussion. There have been two congregational meetings where Stage 1 was written. The Vestry then had an opportunity to review Stage 1 information at a Vestry meeting to ensure that it reflected accurately where we are as a church and community. There is an article concerning the Diocesan Intention for Growth in every bi-monthly magazine.</p>



Stage 2: What will our Growth Strategy involve?

<p>God's call to growth.</p> <p><i>Having thought about the challenges for each strand, discern your overall strategic response.</i></p> <p><i>(i) what is your vision of the way of life God is calling you to?</i></p> <p><i>(ii) what values do you need to have for this growth to happen?</i></p>	<p>We, at St Bartholomew's, want to live out the love of Jesus Christ not only within our faith community but within our locale. We wish to be effective witnesses in Gourock to the Gospel values of unconditional love, acceptance, forgiveness and hope. We believe that because God values and loves each and every person equally we are being called to do the same. This motivates us to welcome all to our church in order to accompany them in their faith journey and deepen their relationship with God. It also motivates us to reach out to those outside our own walls, to help those in need and to share the gift of our faith which we own. As a community we wish to provide a place of comfort, help and peace within a very uncertain and changing world.</p>
<p>Our prioritised response</p> <p><i>To work towards responding to that call, and expressing our values, we will focus upon the following strand (or strands) of the strategy because...</i></p>	<p>In response to that call we wish to focus on the strand of Welcome, Integration and Numerical Growth and also Imaginative Outreach into the Community.</p> <p>We have chosen these because we wish passionately for the church to grow. We want to share the blessings that we have received and share our faith with those whom we live. We want the Gospel to stay alive and to embrace our community with the Gospel as our basis.</p> <p>We recognise that Welcome, and Integration are core values and skills which need to be effective for any community to grow and believe that from this strand the others can build in the future.</p> <p>As a very small congregation we realise that our opportunity for making huge differences in the community may be limited, but our Christian faith impels us to reach out and do what we can. We also recognise the need for us to get to know our locale, and to identify the people and needs of those around us.</p>



<p>Goals</p> <p><i>We will address the following by means of...</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring Welcome Strategies with the congregation 2. Displaying “Church Open” Sign 3. Revisiting website to ensure it is an effective vehicle for publicity and telling the story of the church 4. Ensuring events are publicised effectively 5. Designing Welcome leaflet 6. Engaging in a Community Audit 7. Ensuring Ark is advertised and its potential utilised 8. Organising a Mystery worshipper 9. Inviting Development Team for Creative Outreach to come in and advise about utilising the Ark
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Stage 3: How will we encourage Growth?

Plans, processes, people and resources

*Remember: SMART – plans must be **S**pecific and documented, You must be able to **M**easure the difference you are making; so change or re-visit the Goals if necessary.*

*Your proposals must be **A**chievable; do not try to meet impossible goals.*

*Actions must be able to be **R**esourced, by people, buildings, and funding.*

*To enable proper review, your actions must be **T**ime bounded.*

Actions: small achievable steps which gradually build into something bigger		Who	When
1.	Exploring Welcome Strategies with the congregation Because the congregation is so small it was decided that a designated Welcoming Team was inappropriate. However it is recognised that welcome is the responsibility of each member of the congregation and thus welcoming strategies would be relevant to everyone.	Rev Drew Sheridan Rev Liz O’Ryan	Before Christmas
2.	Having “Church Open” Sign It has been noticed that people in the Community often show an interest in what the interior of the Church looks like. It is not possible to open the Church daily for passing visitors so it has been decided to have a “Church Open” sign which could be put outside during discussion groups and services.	Angela McClean Charlotte Wilson	Before Easter
3.	Revisiting the website to ensure it is an effective vehicle for publicity and telling the story of the church The website is a recent addition to our welcome. It was decided to revisit what has been achieved so far and review it in line with Welcome and Outreach strategies.	Robert Wilson Rev Liz O’Ryan	Before Easter
4.	Ensuring events are publicised effectively Publicity is at the moment falls mainly on the shoulders of one person. It is recognised that a wider distribution of responsibility would be helpful. We also need to increase our profile with the local media.	Elsie Smith A.N.Other	2013-2014
5	Designing a Welcome leaflet/booklet A welcome leaflet would be a resource which can be given to visitors and enquirers. The brief nature of a thin booklet would give a flavour of the church and details of contacts and how to become more involved if desired, without being overwhelming.	Charlotte Wilson Angela McClean	2013-2014



6..	Engaging in a Community Audit The nature of our local community remains a mystery or is clouded in blanket stereotypes. It would be useful to get an up-to-date researched view of the community in which we live and work.	Rev Liz O’Ryan Donald McColl	A.S.A.P
7.	Ensuring the Ark is advertised and its potential utilised The Ark and its management needs to be reviewed and tightened. Publicity is key to its usage by the Community.	Alan Jubber Iris Jubber	
8.	Organising a Mystery worshipper The congregation are open to reflection and critique. They would welcome comments made by a mystery worshipper, and would use it to improve their welcome.	Rev Drew Sheridan Rev Liz O’Ryan	2013-14
9.	Inviting the Development Team for Creative Outreach to come in and advise about utilising the Ark The congregation would welcome the input of the Team for Imaginative Outreach and would take on board their opinions and advise about becoming involved with the community.	Rev Drew Sheridan Rev Liz O’Ryan	2014



Stage 4 Outputs: keeping the MAP alive

*We will endeavour to **address these plans in action, ongoing consultation and prayer**, and will regularly **affirm and celebrate God's gifts and blessings and our responses**, culminating in our annual MAP review. We will communicate widely what we have attempted, so that others may learn from our experience.*

We have already identified the "resilience" required to keep the MAP alive. The following factors will not discourage us in our task:

- *Our smallness in numbers*
- *Our limited resources*

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Date of MAP Review with Bishop/Dean

MAP signed by

Rector/clergypersonDate.....

Secretary of the VestryDate.....

(5 copies are signed, being for the cleric, the Vestry, Bishop Gregor, the Convenor of the Regional Council and the Facilitator.)

I will keep in contact with the charge throughout this coming year as they work for growth

FacilitatorDate.....

Agreed frequency of ongoing Facilitator contact

*Spirit of our Loving God,
in your mercy and compassion
inspire, encourage and empower us
to live and work together
as a Diocese,
to allow your mission for us
to take flesh
through Jesus Christ
our Living and Eternal Lord. Amen*

