

Outreach Group Report for APCM on 29th April 2018

Members

Chair - Roger Sudbury

Ex officio PCC members –Phil Smith, Rosemary Thomson, Peter Rixson

PCC Members – Margaret Fox, Sheila Coovrey

Other members – Revd Derek Hinge, Steve Dale, Gary Jones, Gailie Anderson, Gill Dean, Lynn Graseman

According to our Terms of Reference, the function of the Outreach Group is to focus the Church's attention on its vision to be a welcoming and transforming community of people and its mission to widen our service of God through greater outreach, compassion, care and contact for those outside the Church, in particular -

- By ensuring that the message the Church projects is positive and welcoming;
- By encouraging Church people to find ways of communicating the gospel of love and grace and service into the communities in which they live and work;
- By communicating internally and externally the function and activities of the Church, and
- By being the contact point for links to external Christian and other organisations.

Over the last year, Clair Sarles resigned from the Group, and we thank her for her contribution to its work over the years, and Lynn Graseman has just joined the Group. The Group has dealt with or been involved in the following matters over the last year.

Welcomers Rota and Badges – We continue to operate the Welcomers rota with a team of volunteers and we thank them very much for their service. As we say every year, it is everyone's responsibility to keep a look out for visitors and newcomers and to make them feel welcome. We have also provided badges for all those in other public welcoming roles (Sidesmen, Baptism helpers, Junior Church leaders etc.)

Literature – We maintain the existing range of welcome literature – the 'Walk Round' guides in several languages (Polish being the latest version added), leaflets about different activities within St Michael's, the Welcome Card, and leaflets about aspects of Christian faith and life. We have also contributed to the design of a leaflet aimed at those coming to live in Stortford North (the main outreach effort is being managed directly by the PCC and by a separate group which is being established).

Website and Social Media –Steve Dale works hard to maintain the Church website, and others such as Lynn Graseman, Katharine Stanley, Richard Carr and Robert Stokely contribute to their respective areas. The site is lively and attractive and has an average of 1700 'views' per month. Aside from the building itself, it is our chief public face. We would like to remind members of the church not to forget it when they want to publicise something.

Church Management Systems – After extensive investigations we have selected a preferred supplier for the new system. We are hoping for final approval of the project from the PCC. The system will provide us with an updated website and is intended to assist us in the administration of the church and in being more effective in outreach and in integrating new members into our church. As part of the preparations we are working on a new Privacy Policy for the Church and on compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Email Newsletter – Katharine in the Parish Office continues to send out a copy of the newsletter by email to a distribution list of church members. If you would like to be added to the distribution please let Katharine have your email address.

Sermons – We continue the practice of recording Sunday morning sermons and posting these in audio format on the website so that people who may have missed hearing them or want to hear them again can listen to them at home.

Noticeboards and Signage – We try to keep the various noticeboards and display boards up to date with information about church activities. The noticeboards in the Charnley Hall are currently being used to display information from the Charities Support Group and from St Michaels School. The Churchwardens have been working with the Town Council on proposed signage for the WCC and Monastery Field.

Elmhurst – A small group led by Margaret Fox visits Elmhurst on a roughly monthly basis to meet residents and to lead a short sing song with hymns.

Roger Sudbury – 21 March 2018