



**ALL SAINTS**  
HIGH WYCOMBE



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MISSION AND EVANGELISM

report compiled in

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by

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# MISSION AND EVANGELISM

Thank you for taking time to read this report regarding Mission and Evangelism in All Saints Church, High Wycombe.

*'Mission is at the heart of what it is to be a church.'*



Evangelism is intrinsically linked to mission. Mission is at the very heart of what it is to be a church. All aspects of church are Missional from; evangelism, discipleship, pastoral care, worship, fabric, communications, and it is the framework with which finance is planned and budgets made.

## **What is mission?**

Our mission is to be a locally rooted community of hospitality and care. We point to and help build the Kingdom of God in High Wycombe. Mission is at the very heart of what it is to be a church and a disciple of Christ. The vision statement for the church at present is to be “a place for our whole community to encounter God.”

Mission is not a bolt-on, or an addition, or indeed something assigned to a particular person to lead. Mission is not what a church does as part of its lived experience. Mission is everything a church does. Mission is the way the church engages with the world and makes new disciples. Our mission is not ours, its Gods mission.

## **What then is the mission of God?**

The mission of God is shown in the mission of Christ:

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth
- To respond to human need by loving service

# Mission

## Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom



### Proclamation

This aspect of mission is handled through our **preaching** on a Sunday, the subsequent **podcasts** and **facebook** videos. The detail on this will be presented elsewhere by Derek Lancaster and for the sake of duplication will not be repeated in this report.

This aspect of mission is also lived out in our **communications** both online and inside and around the church. The detail on this will be presented elsewhere by Lis Burns and for the sake of duplication will not be repeated in this report.

This is also seen through the work that goes on within the **schools** that Robyn will report on and for the sake of duplication (again) will not be repeated in this report.

## To teach, baptise and nurture new believers



### Teach

There is a vacancy currently for someone to join the team as lead for **discipleship**. So, if you feel called to this work please do let the team know.

This past year as I understand it there has been no courses or teaching of the faith primarily due to the restrictions of the pandemic. However, during lent two courses had a good uptake. The first was a course on creation care run by David Knights titled "For such a time as this". The second was a course on the "Fruits of the Spirit" which proved extremely popular and two separate groups formed following this course.

### **Baptise**

In October 2020 Brianna Vasilas was baptised. No other baptisms have taken place during the last year. Currently two baptisms are booked in for 2021 which include Arthur Vockins and Phoebe Morley. Jackie Lock has responsibility for supporting the families of those to be baptised and **baptism preparation**.

### **Nurture**

This aspect of mission is lived out in the **pastoral care** and support given to the congregation in general as well as the families of baptismal candidates (if a child) and the candidates themselves (if an adult). The detail on this will be presented elsewhere by Jackie Lock and for the sake of duplication will not be repeated in this report.

## **To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation**



### **Unjust structures**

In the last year Hugh together with other churches showed support to challenging unjust institutional racism in our society. This was an important step taken ecumenically. Hugh will be able to report on this further.

## **Challenge violence, pursue peace**

I will talk later in the project about the sanctuary project and the churchyard project later in the report that specifically look at ways we can help pursue peace and at the same time use this project to speak out about violence in the town centre.

## **To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth**



### **Safeguard, sustain and renew creation**

A churchyard project is underway that I will talk about a bit later in the report. As part of this project is our care for creation going to be demonstrated by reviewing and looking for ways to enhance the biodiversity in the churchyard.

### **What can we do better?**

Serious consideration needs to be given to ensuring our energy sources are not causing harm to the environment with a long-term plan to be drawn up around looking at renewable energy that can be harnessed.

## **To respond to human need by loving service**



This is what most people consider to be mission but is only a part of the whole. The question raised by this statement is what is human need? Specifically, what is the need of people in High Wycombe? As a guide to this I use Maslow's hierarchy of need which you may well be familiar with. It has its failings but is a good tool to begin to think about what exactly human need is.



Starting at the bottom and working to the top of the pyramid is a way that Maslow describes someone being 'the most that one can be'. He was writing as a secular psychologist, so in a church context this pinnacle of the pyramid we would describe as being 'a reconciliation with God and the freedom that this brings'.

### 1. How are we currently as a church meeting peoples physiological needs?



The **café** in the church provides refreshments to people fulfilling the need for water. Although during the time of the pandemic the café has only been able to open for a little time. The hope is that the café will be able to reopen again shortly.

#### What can we do better?

I will be looking when the **café** reopens at the prospect of advertising 'free water' refills of water bottles for people in the town.

### 2. How are we currently as a church meeting peoples safety needs?





The primary way this is being met at present is through our **pastoral care** and through our healing service '**led by the spirit**'. The former is documented separately by Jackie Lock and the latter will be documented by Derek Lancaster.

### **What can we do better?**

The **churchyard** is an area that is relatively high in crime and anti-social behaviour. Since January 2021 we have had in the churchyard; one Robbery, two thefts, one violent crime and three instances of public disorder. There has also been numerous breaches of coronavirus restrictions and anti-social behaviour such as street drinking and drug misuse. As a closed churchyard the health and safety of the churchyard is the responsibility of the council. As is the maintenance of the churchyard. I am working with the council to ask that changes are made to try and improve the churchyard to try and improve people's personal security.

The **sanctuary** project is a project to try and serve the community by tackling violent crime and sexual assault by opening the doors of the church on a Friday and Saturday night to provide a place of safety, healing, peace and prayer. The vision is that it will be a place where those who find themselves vulnerable to find safety and security. A place where those who are injured can get medical attention saving unnecessary trips to A+E or Minor Injuries units. A place where people can escape the hubbub of the nightlife and find peace. A place of prayer calling people to the Christian life. This planning is going on with the Police and Ambulance Service.

### **Ideas not yet developed**

Employment – this will be a concern as we emerge from lockdown as many have lost their jobs. How can we as a church serve the community by helping people find employment?

Health – the NHS has huge waiting lists and a backlog of work. Would a surgery/midwife like to run a clinic from the church when the café is open? Can we offer our space to them?

### 3. How are we currently as a church meeting peoples need for love and belonging?



This is achieved through **our welcome** to new people. Somewhat impacted during the coronavirus but with a desire to reinvigorate our welcome and invitation to others when restrictions permit more to attend church.

One way we get people coming into the church without any effort on our part is through **life events**. Life events include baptisms, weddings, and funerals. One thing we have done recently is rewrite the life events page to provide some more information, links, and a way to request a life event directly through the new iKnow computer software (<http://www.allsaintshighwycombe.org/lifeevents.html>). We also held a virtual wedding open day in March in partnership with Wycombe Museum. This is to be opening, inviting, loving and making it so that people feel they can belong.

**Arts & spirituality** is headed by Thistle. There has been this year some installations around the church and some help with poster designs for the churchyard. The Christmas tree festival was online and was a success, despite not being in its usual format.

The **mustard club** is headed by Sheila Doig. The group did not meet this last year and there is an intention to try and restart this group once lockdown restrictions allow.

The **craft club** is headed by Helen Cousins. The group did meet once in person and a few times on zoom. Supplies were also given by Helen to the group.

The **café** was open for a limited amount and there is an intention to reopen it once restrictions allow.

Other groups that would fall into this category would be the **choir, bellringers, serving team**, etc. Separate reports cover how these groups are doing and fulfilling their missional purpose of creating love and belonging.

The **inclusivity** of the church for people of diverse backgrounds is also key to our welcome and to make people feel loved and connected to the community and ultimately to God. An initiative has been proposed by Robyn and Derek for the church to be more **intergenerational** to make it more inclusive to younger people.

#### **What can we do better?**

More can be done around life events with plans to work with the museum on arranging a wedding fair in September, if not next march/April. There are also plans to hold another 'grave talk' and other events.

Work is underway to repair, restore and use the south porch to be more welcoming and inviting. This project is underway and will be reported on by the **Fabric** committee.

#### **4. How are we currently as a church helping build the esteem of people and in particular building confidence in faith?**



Some of this is achieved through our **pastoral care** and in the **sacramental life** of the church such as the '**led by the spirit**' services as already mentioned. Additionally, teaching and building confidence in faith is achieved through some of the **lent courses** we have done and the **preaching** on Sundays.

#### **What can we do better?**

The need to recruit someone to manage a discipleship program and for us as a church to be intentional in our discipleship making, perhaps by adopting personal discipleship plans?

An initiative has been proposed by Robyn and Derek for the church to be more **intergenerational** to open the leadership of the church to younger people.

### **Ideas not yet developed**

There is also a query as to whether parenting classes could be run in the church to help meet a need for parents? Especially with the closure of a lot of children's centres and a diminishing resource from the council for young parents.

Linked with employment concerns could there be a way we can help developing peoples skills? The greenhouse project in the deanery which is a way of training up leaders within the church may be a way we can do this.

### **5. How are we currently as a church helping people be god-actualized?**

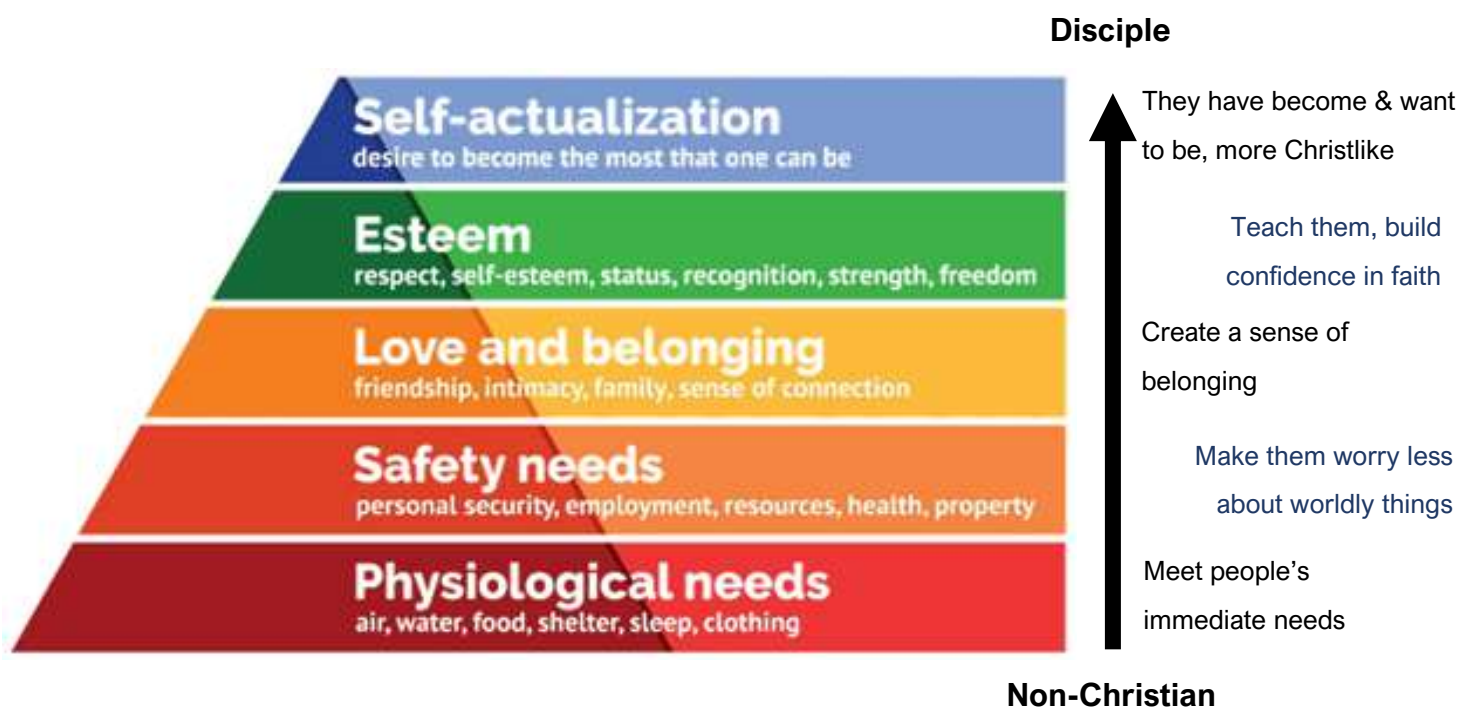


Some of this is achieved through our **open leadership** structure. Some is achieved through our encouragement for people to explore their **vocation**. More can be done though to support people exploring their vocation (this is not just to religious life as you can be called to any type of work/ministry).

# Evangelism

Jesus did not say to the would be first disciples of Jesus ([John 1: 35-42](#)) come and sit through an Alpha course. The first disciples saw Jesus and were told who he was by John the Baptist (proclamation). Then Jesus responded saying “**come and see**”. This was an invitation to be part of mission, to help Jesus in his mission. This is the way evangelism is best served, as an invitation to ‘come and see’, to be a part of the visible mission of the church.

The route from being an enquirer to being part of the church can also be seen using Maslow as a guide (remembering it’s not a perfect model but it’s a useful guide):



In the last year no new adults have been identified to me as enquiring about the Christian faith. One 16-year-old wished to explore faith more at Christmas, however they did not feel that they could ‘belong’ at All Saints and so have joined a different church in the town.

## Mission Highlights



### Lent Courses

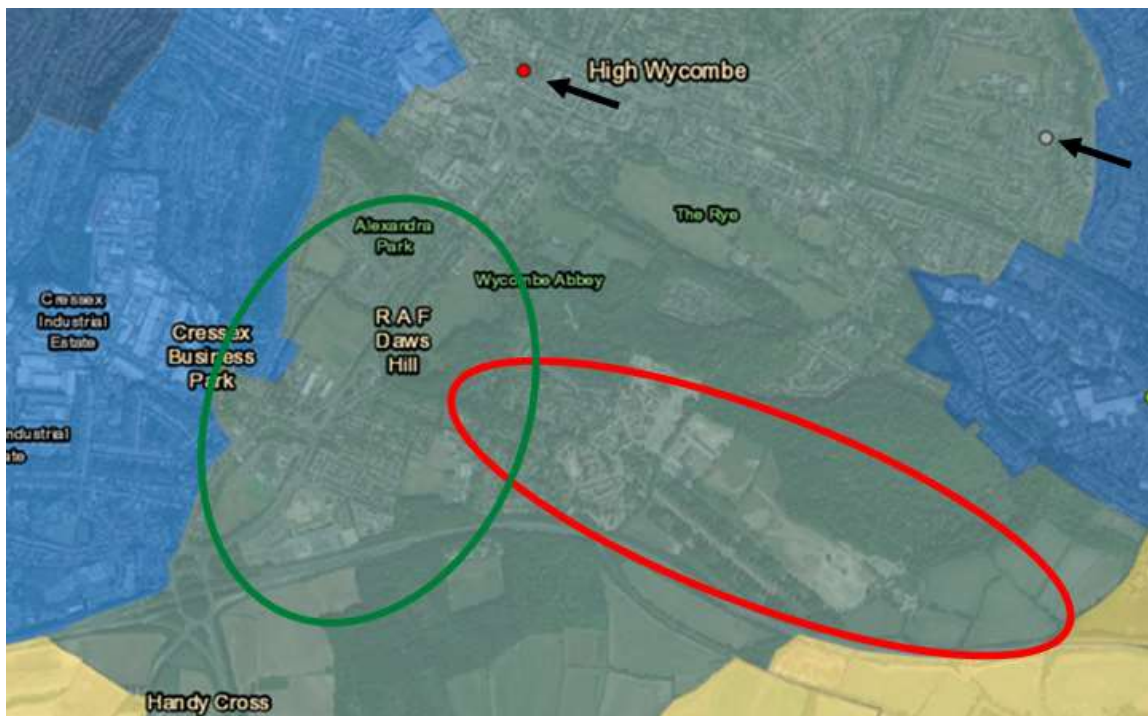
Life Events Project  
Arts and Spirituality  
Mustard Club  
Craft club

Churchyard Project  
Sanctuary Project

Café (offering of free water)

## Daws Hill / Pine Trees / Abbey Barn South

Efforts are underway in an ecumenical and multi-parish way to reach out to the community that is emerging in the new housing development in the old Daws Hill housing site, the new Pine Trees housing site on the old RAF Daws Hill, and the new Abbey Barn South development. This is a huge new housing area for high Wycombe and there are no established churches here.



Contact has been made with some Christians already living on the estate and work is ongoing to try and encourage a new missional community under the title of Faith in Action. A new Facebook group and newsletter is planned.

In summary what is going on in the area:

- Plans are in place for a forest church gathering
- Encouragement for groups to meet once a month on a Sunday for prayer
- Detached youth work will be starting soon at St Michaels
- Wycombe Youth for Christ are already supporting St Michaels secondary school

- We have approached Abbey View (a new primary school) to see how we can serve them. They have asked for support with assemblies and mentoring.
- Our hope is to set up a toddler group in the new community centre when it opens to meet and serve local need
- We hope to support the community centre and look for ways to generate 'love and belonging'.
- We are offering wellbeing support/pastoral care