

St Nicolas Church

Vision Consultation Proposals

June 2010



'Building Faith in the Community'

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1 INTRODUCTION

Since September 2008, members of St Nicolas Church have been engaged in a deep review of ministry and practice within the parish. By May 2009, sufficient consultation had taken place to allow the PCC and other leaders to distil a series of main vision headings under which further consideration could take place. In September 2009, separate working groups were formed under each vision heading. Accordingly, a diverse team of more than thirty individuals has spent a considerable time looking at the life of the church through six lenses:

Learning and Growth (Leader: Chris Bessant)	Leadership (Leader: Alan Jenkins)
Worship (Leader: Steve Parr)	Communications (Leader: John Kopij)
Ministry to Men (Leader: Neil McDonald)	Use of Church Buildings (Leader: David Wall)

This consultation document, which draws together the proposals from these six working groups, has already been refined following a meeting with the Parochial Church Council and other leaders in the church on 5 May 2010. It is now being made available as a basis for consultation with all who have an interest in the future life of St Nicolas.

Where do we go from here?

This vision document will be presented to the church family on Sunday 13 June. Following this meeting, the document will be available to all who wish to have a copy. We should be really pleased to receive your feedback during the next four weeks i.e. any time up to and including Sunday 11 July 2010. An ideal way of receiving your comments would be by email to: vision@stnicolasbookham.org.uk. (Your email will be received by each of the six working group leaders.) If you cannot email your comments (or find anyone to do so) please leave your response in the 'Rector' pigeon-hole at the back of the church.

This document will be refined in the light of the comments received and then taken forward through the normal decision-taking mechanisms of the church. For this reason no costs are included at this stage. Please note that all comments received (with the names of the individuals who have submitted comments) will be seen by all members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) when the final document is presented to them. It is our intention that the final document will be accompanied by a delivery plan to enable the PCC to begin to prioritise and cost proposals.

We have also set aside the evening of Tuesday 29 June (8.00pm in the Pastoral Centre) for any who would like to meet to discuss the proposals and ask questions. Representatives from all six working groups will be present. We will do our best to provide information where we can. (Please note that the purpose of this meeting is **not** to collate feedback; we would ask that comments on the proposals are fed back in the ways outlined above.)

2 OUR VISION

Our vision at St Nicolas is encapsulated in our *Vision or Mission* Statement agreed by the Parochial Church Council in February 2010:

‘Building Faith in the Community ‘

Building: is about dynamic action rather than static structures. Where faith is being built we believe this will be seen in growing numbers, growing learning and growing Christian maturity. We also recognise that the extent to which we are committed to building faith will be influenced by how much that faith means to us in the first place.

Faith: reminds us that at the heart of all our activity at St Nicolas is a living faith in Jesus. We seek to place this faith – which is revealed to us in the Bible and summarised in the creeds of the church - at the centre of everything we do.

Community: underlines our belief that the building of faith ought not to be restricted to one narrow sphere of life, but ought to spill in to all areas of life: not least the community of the church, the community of Bookham, the community of the workplace, and the community of the home. We recognise that we cannot do this work alone, but rather in partnership with God as he draws alongside us in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Further reflection on our vision statement can be found on the sermons page of the St Nicolas website (www.stnicolasbookham.org.uk)

The following proposals all flow from this vision. It is our recognition that although there is already much to celebrate and be thankful for at St Nicolas, a sensible number of changes over the next five years will help us continue to fulfil our vision.

3 LEARNING AND GROWTH

3.1 Vision for Learning and Growth 2015

A key aspect of Christian lives, and therefore the church, is that we progress and grow in understanding our faith and how it relates to the world in which we live. This is not a matter of dry academic theology, but rather is engagement with the living God of mission who has a church in the world. When Paul writes to the Philippians, he draws attention the importance of knowledge and insight:

“⁹ And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰ to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you

may be pure and blameless,¹¹ having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.”

Our 2015 vision for learning and growth at St Nicolas is that we will have achieved, or be on the way to achieving, some of these things:

- That learning about our faith becomes ingrained into the culture of St Nicolas.
- That members of St Nicolas are more confident to engage in teaching others.
- That the Bible informs and affects our faith, our personal lives and behaviour, our families, our societies, our ethical and moral outlook, and our sense of social justice.

The ultimate goal is that learning and growth become part of the accepted culture of St Nicolas and its members. Such a culture of teaching and learning would be self-sustaining and viral, in the sense that it would spread under its own impetus and bear fruit. All this contributes not only to the life of St Nicolas, but also to the people of Bookham and beyond.

3.2 Key Proposals

Proposal 1: Sermons, Themes and Series

Sermons are vital and core part of the worship and teaching ministry within the Church of England. Ministers are to be of 'word and sacrament', being held equally necessary for the faithful. For some people, sermons may be the only opportunity to learn on a regular basis, therefore the best should be made of sermons as occasions to learn. In addition, there are matters to be taken into account regarding the lectionary, services and preachers.

However, the current pattern of lectionary based preaching often seems random in its approach, with perhaps only the most tenuous link between the sermons from one Sunday to the next.

As an alternative option to the lectionary, a calendar of sermon themes and series might be constructed with the following suggestions:

- By books - a series of sermons working through the book, perhaps covering the main areas.
- Thematic - taking a theme, such as forgiveness or hope, and then preaching it through the bible, seeing how it develops from the beginning of the Bible to the end.
- Experience - how God has worked in the lives of particular bible characters, groups or nations.

Decisions about which themes to run would be made carefully and prayerfully by the Ministry Team (clergy and readers), taking into account all the relevant factors. Sermon series are not an opportunity for individuals to ride their own particular hobby-horse.

Sermon series would not be run continuously, back-to-back through the year; there will be many occasions when it would be appropriate to work with the lectionary. A calendar for the year ought to be drawn up detailing the available time periods or themes. Sermon series ought to be drawn up and published into a booklet, which is available to all people. Such a booklet would give some background information on the theme, listing the particular topics for each Sunday. Also, if there is a published book accompanying the series it ought to be made available to both the preachers and congregation. For the purposes of continuity, each sermon within the theme series ought to be discrete and self-standing in its own right. This would allow series to be viable if an individual misses a Sunday. The sermons should be made available on the website. It is not proposed to increase the length of sermons.

The leadership should regularly and prayerfully meet to discuss the sermon series, with one or two individuals assigned to draw up the series in terms of the actual Sunday scripture reading and particular focus.

Proposal 2: Occasional Study Sessions

Occasional Study Sessions are specialised talks which are laid on outside of the normal pattern of worship services. Sermon slots do not lend themselves well to teaching in-depth subjects which require expert input, not least because sermons are limited to 8-15 minutes. Occasional Study Sessions are a good option for external speakers and subjects which are beyond the range of our regular preachers.

A session might be of 30-45 minutes duration, and the speaker might be asked to suggest a few discussion items, to be treated in groups, with a discussion leader, and followed by a brief feedback session. A total event time of no more than 2 hours, perhaps including a meal or refreshments would probably be appropriate.

It is suggested that such sessions could be held 2-4 times each year, at a time most suitable to the target audience. The venue could be in church, Pastoral Centre, Church Room or larger events in the Barn Hall.

A survey of possible topics could be made among the congregation, with decisions being made on the availability of speakers or appropriateness to the issues and needs of the day. A few examples are given below:

Religious topics

- The origins of Christianity
- The relevance of Creation to the Christian today
- Judaism, Christianity and Islam – a comparison of three routes to God
- History of the Church of England
- Catholics, Anglicans and non-conformists – what can we learn from each other

- Spirituality – Practices and communities throughout Christian history

Related topics

- A Christian approach to riches and poverty – the need to concentrate resources and provide for all
- Ethical business
- Faith schools – inclusive or divisive?
- Environmental conservation and the Christian
- Discrimination – religious principles and the law

In addition, time ought to be spent looking into how Occasional Study Session could be presented in ways other than lectures and discussions. For example:

- Visits to places of Christian interest.
- Direct, hands-on mission training.
- Working with children, disabled or the elderly.
- Courses related to music.

Such courses would naturally require people with diverse interests and skills to come forward and offer to participate. Every encouragement ought to be made for people to do so.

There are also a considerable number of external courses that could be engaged as a parish initiative. The *Continuing Ministerial Education Programme* and the Diocesan Summer School are two examples of educational plans that could be of much use to St Nicolas members.

Proposal 3: The Library and Book Sales

This initiative covers two areas related to books: the existing library and book sales.

The library shelves at the back of church contain a variety of religious and Christian books of various types and relevance. It is not known to what extent the library is used, although it seems very little. There may be a good argument for sorting out the library, which would include removing some books and adding new ones. This would be a matter of enterprise, because it is far from certain where such books might come from. One possibility might be to create a 'dispersed' library by inviting people to add their own Christian books to a shared catalogue that all member of St Nicolas might borrow from. Naturally, this would require careful thought and management, although if the will is there it ought to be possible.

In so doing, attention would be drawn to the library which would promote its use. Rather than set out all the parameters here, whoever felt challenged to take up the task would be free to make suggestions and set objectives.

A second idea related to books is for book sales to be set up in church, either as a permanent or occasional feature. It is common in churches to find a link-up with Christian bookshops and suppliers in the region, perhaps supplying on a sale-or-return basis. In this way a set of the latest titles could be put on display for member of the congregation to buy after the services. Once again, this would require an enterprising mind, perhaps from someone who loves books. There is no intention to make a profit, only to promote the Christian written word on a break-even basis.

Proposal 4: Bible Familiarisation

The purpose of Bible familiarisation courses is to promote personal knowledge of scripture and confidence in its use. This is seen as vital if the teaching ministry of St Nicolas is to increase, which in turn is vital for supporting youth work, mission and pastoral ministry long term. Currently there are a limited number of individuals who are able to teach, which limits St Nicolas in various way.

Such a course would seek to try and help individuals to become confident in understanding the shape of scripture, the types of writing, and major themes such as sin, salvation, discipleship and hope. A course would need to be carefully constructed in order not to exclude people on their current level of understanding, ability to attend sessions and time available. There would almost certainly need to be a modular approach, with a particular running order which people could work through at their own pace. It may be a good idea to create a resource website to support the initiative. It remains a matter of debate whether such a course ought to be distance learning style, organised session or both. There are a great many resources available externally which would support both.

The first task would be one of definition: working out a scope, audience and required outcomes.

Proposal 5: Bible Reading Notes

Many people use regular bible notes, sometimes daily, sometimes weekly or other means. There are a great variety of such notes available to Christians, in the form of pamphlets, booklets or books. Many also have a subscription offering whereby someone can sign-up and then receive updates automatically by post. A good start was made by John Lambert in February 2010, although only a few people had signed-up. The provision of bible notes such as these sits quite well within a learning and growth strategy because as people learn more about scripture, or become disciples, they may wish to have some form of structure to help them.

Another related possibility might be to provide various 'thoughts for the day' on our website. Almost certainly some of the producers of Bible notes would also be able to provide an electronic copy of their material.

Proposal 6: Nurture and Discipleship Courses

Any church which aspires to grow numerically, in influence on society, and in pastoral concern must attract and retain new people, alongside current members. Members whose gifts are not realised and encouraged within the church will go elsewhere, or leave the church altogether. A universal feature of churches which are growing and vibrant is that they identify themselves with a clear message and purpose.

Nurture courses are intended to attract those who exist on the periphery of church life, for whatever reason. *Alpha* and *Christianity Explored* are the best examples of such courses. Running such courses has a dual benefit, because not only do they attract new members, but they also give an opportunity for existing members to engage with the core teachings of the faith. It is not unusual to run such a course and find long-term church members signing-up. Such courses should be run at least annually, ideally twice annually.

4 WORSHIP

4.1 Vision for Worship 2015

The vision for our worship at St. Nicolas is that it will provide a warm, welcoming and uplifting environment for all the people of Bookham to find, know and worship God – thus playing a key role in building faith in the community.

Our services of worship will be successful in 2015 if we see a broad cross-section of our community – young and old, male and female, familiar and new etc. – filling our services and growing in their faith.

Our worship should have a strong leadership team, and should involve the participation of the congregation, thus helping to build a strong community of worshippers.

4.2 Key Proposals

St Nicolas currently offers many well attended services that serve the needs of many parishioners. The Worship Group was asked by the PCC to look at expanding our current worship provision to see how we might reach out to more people in the parish to build faith in the community. The following are the Proposals of the Worship Working Group who spent 3 months researching answers to this question.

Proposal 1: New service with a different style

The current worship provision at St. Nicolas has been built up over a number of years to cater for the changing needs of the congregations. The Worship Group believes that we should continue to enhance what we currently offer to reach out toward the thousands of people in our parish that we don't currently engage with. The Group recommends starting a permanent additional weekly service that would be relatively informal, probably more contemporary in feel than our existing morning services, and particularly welcoming of newcomers whether they're new to the service, St Nicolas, Bookham or even Christianity. A warm environment and participative style for the service would be important to allow people to find and know God - and the service should be shaped for the needs of people in the parish as a whole. One of the main aims would be to widen the styles of worship we offer to attract and retain new people and build a strong supportive community in the congregation. Greater participation could include greater involvement by the congregation in planning and delivering the new service.

Proposal 2: Shape and elements of the new service

The Worship Group proposes that such a new service would have a flexible format, with content taken from a set of modules that give service leaders the flexibility to vary the service.

We propose the following service modules from which a (flexible) number would be taken to form the service in any given week, for example based on the yearly Anglican cycle, current events, a worship theme at St. Nic's:-

- Welcome/coffee (in church/at the door)/'gathering'/preparation
- Prayer/intercession
- Silence/meditation/thinking/reflection
- Praise/singing/music*
- Baptism
- Readings (with complete intros and background/context/explanations); different readers
- News/notices (for/from Bookham and The World)
- Multimedia performance
- Offering
- Testimony
- Communion
- Learning/talk/sermon/discussion (interactive/multi-media)
- Confession
- Prophecy
- Service-end/closure
- Fellowship/refreshments/after-service

The modules in the list above can be swapped around to give engaging, relevant and varied services week by week. To ensure our worship is encouraging a broad cross-section of the community and a wider range of expression, the planning and leadership of the new service will aim to involve a broad group of people in addition to the current ministry team, musical director and choir. This could be a mix of people – some with overall responsibility for the services each week and others responsible for specific areas such as prayer, music, and preaching.

The Worship Group looked at a number of times in the week and locations for the new service. It was felt that the time in the week which would suit most people/families best - and thus allow more to attend - would be Sunday morning. Given the time constraints and the need to prepare for the new service (music, audio visual etc.) on the day, the time we recommend for the new service is 11:15 – with the current 10 o'clock service moving to 9:30, which would also allow the congregations to mix between services over coffee. We also felt that, although there are some advantages to holding a service out of the church building "in the parish", the church building is at the heart of the parish and the best location to support the type of worship proposed.

To support the worship, we propose that a core group of 3-4 strongly led and well rehearsed musicians will be needed. Their focus would be on uplifting music involving contemporary music as well as the best of the older music.

Proposal 3: Audio/visual system

The Worship Group discussed how the needs and expectations of people today have changed since St Nicolas was built - we also discussed that different people engage with worship in different ways, and often via different senses. We discussed that for our popular services (such as on Easter Day this year) we can be victims of our own success, in that when St Nicolas is full and has attracted a lot of newcomers, the visibility of elements of the service is limited from many areas of the church.

The Group recommends that – in order to offer visibility from all areas of the church – we install an audio/visual system of the type that has become common in C of E churches across the UK and Surrey. This would also allow us to have hymn words, liturgy and video content visible to all of the congregation, and increase congregation engagement via (retractable) screens around the church. This will also allow us to introduce multi-media elements of worship and offer more flexibility to the running order. If we are to invest in an A/V system we recommend it be done for the benefit of as many as possible of our services and church events, not just the new service. For example at the current 10 o'clock service, should it be so desired, it would be possible to:

- show all the correct hymns and relevant verses on the screens
- show the Eucharistic celebration at the altar in all parts of the church
- see the pulpit and preacher - and chancel talks - from all parts of the church

A new A/V system will allow us to enhance what we currently do and also create the flexibility to stage and support new events in St. Nic's.

4.3 Additional Considerations

Sunday morning provision for children/youth

While it is certainly hoped that the new service will be attended by children and young people, serious consideration will need to be given to the arrangements for the Sunday morning children's groups for the (currently) 10 o'clock (the crèche, Sparklers, and Trailblazers) and new 11:15 services.

In the mid-term it is hoped that there will be enough new people/families attending the new service that there will be enough new helpers to cover the children's groups for the 11:15 service. In the early days of the new service there will be some challenges that will need to be met to provide adequate coverage. A great deal of thought has been given to possible solutions, but until a new service has been agreed it was felt premature to canvass wider opinion or propose specific plans. Before the new service begins the leaders and helpers of the current children's groups would need to meet, to discuss the options and make proposals. A new service would allow some people to help during 1 service and attend another Sunday service if they desired, thus avoiding the current "either ... or" scenario.

Other possible implications as a result of introducing an additional weekly service

The above proposal allows something new to be introduced without taking away what many people value in the existing 10 o'clock service. That said, it is impossible to introduce such a big change without there being some implications for this and other services. A possible change in time, and what we do about the provision of children's ministry, has already been identified. The following are some further implications:

- The existing pattern of a Family Service followed by 11.15am on the first Sunday in the month would no longer be an appropriate pattern. More realistic might be:
 - **9.30am Service**
 - First Sunday – Morning Prayer
 - Second, Third and Fourth Sundays – Holy Communion
 - **11.15am Service**
 - First Sunday – Holy Communion
 - Second, Third and Fourth Sundays – Morning Prayer

(NB 'Morning Prayer' will mean something different at each of the two service times.) It may be that one of the 11.15am services would incorporate a greater element of all-age. However, this is a detail that needs to be decided.

- The same lectionaries would be used at the 8.00am and 9.30am service. (Currently we use the *BCP* lectionary at 8.00am and the *Common Worship* lectionary at 10.00 am.) The advantage of this would be that the same person could preach at both services (= smarter use of resources), even if the sermon at the earlier service was a shortened version of the sermon at the later service. A further advantage to the 8.00am congregation (assuming it is the *Common Worship* lectionary that starts to be used at both services) is exposure to a broader repertoire of Bible readings.
- It is likely that we would need to review our existing provision of evening services. This is partly because the *raison d'être* for the service on the third Sunday in the month would be diminished, given that the new morning service will probably provide much of what people value in the existing *Evening Praise* service, and partly because if we are to provide a new weekly service we will need to work smarter with the resources we already have. (That said, even if we were to change nothing in the morning, we would probably still wish to review what we currently provide in the evening, given the relatively low attendances on all Sundays.) Moving to a pattern of one good and well-supported Evensong per month may be more realistic, especially if we work with other nearby Anglican churches to cover all the Sundays in the month.

5 MINISTRY TO MEN

5.1 Vision for Ministry to Men 2015

A quick look round the church on almost any Sunday will show that men between the ages of 20 and 60 are under-represented. If the men aged 20-60 programme is successful in 2015 the proportion of men in the congregation in this age group will reflect the proportion in the Bookham population and this age group will be growing both in numbers and depth within the church. Men from outside the church will quickly feel at home and valued within the church community; fellowship and mutual support amongst men within the church will be strong; and the group will provide leaders to drive the mission of the church forward.

5.2 Key Proposals

The ideas listed below are just illustrations of the kinds of activities that might be included in what, as short hand, we might call a 'men's programme'. The intention would be to increase the reach of the church into this under represented group by providing activities that they might find attractive – but there is no reason why women should be excluded from these activities. Thought should also be given to whether there is a need for activities

designed to help this group grow in the faith – activities that they would be more likely to respond to but which need not necessarily exclude women.

Proposal 1: Men's Outings

Trial a two-monthly series of 'men's outings'. Options include: karting; a moderately challenging hike; orienteering; a cycle trip; a day's sailing. The intention would be to establish a group that might meet on a Saturday every other month for an event that would provide plenty of opportunity for chat and getting to know one another alongside some activity that would be of interest to men.

Proposal 2: Dad and Kids Events

These are events which are arranged partly for the kids and partly to provide opportunities for the Dads to socialise with each other. These might be linked, at least initially to, or advertised through, junior church groups as that would be one way of ensuring that the kids were of a similar age. Again there might be value in attempting to set up a regular cycle of events.

Proposal 3: A 'Younger Barnabas Group' for dads and kids.

A 'Younger Barnabas Group' for dads and kids. This would meet early on a Saturday morning. Bacon rolls etc would be provided; toys for the kids; and a short, informal discussion.

Proposal 4: A 'St Nicolas Men' email group

Set up a 'St Nicolas Men' email group to inform men linked to the church in some way (however loosely) of events which they might be interested in. This could also be used to advertise working parties.

Proposal 5: Men's pub night

A men's pub night. A regular night would be established at a particular pub; an opportunity to socialise and get to know one another.

6 LEADERSHIP

6.1 Vision for Leadership 2015

Our vision is for leadership to be diffused across the church family, with leaders at all levels having the confidence to direct and make decisions. Our vision assumes a sufficient number of leaders, whereby no one leader is unable to do their job well due to unrealistic demands. Our vision is for leadership to be male and female, a variety of ages, always developing so that we are continually growing new leaders, and all exercised within a culture of support and accountability.

6.2 Definitions

The proposals below do not assume a precise definition of leadership. Sometimes by 'leader' we mean those who are innovators and creators who rely on people; at other times we mean those who probably ought more accurately be described as 'managers', people who are maintainers, tending to rely on pre-established systems to get things done. At the very least, though, we are probably talking about people who are able and willing to hold a position of authority and responsibility and to take a lead in a given context.

6.3 Outcomes

The main outcomes we are seeking are:

1. Sufficient leadership in place to match our vision; no areas of ministry held back due to lack of appropriate leadership.
2. People aspiring to be leaders because they recognise the importance of the task, the joy of serving, and the ongoing support and encouragement provided.
3. A proactive and intentional mindset (particularly amongst existing leaders) to identify, encourage and equip those with leadership gifts for future positions of leadership.
4. No bottle-necks due to leadership responsibility being concentrated in the hands of too few people.

6.4 Vision for Leadership 2015

The following proposals do not concern every area of our church's ministry; they are simply some of the key ones that the working group wanted to underline for the purposes of this vision document.

Proposal 1: Growing Leaders

The current Ministry Team is convinced of the need to grow leadership at all levels of the church. This will mean identifying, encouraging and training people with a gift for leadership, even before a sphere of service has necessarily been identified. Happily, CPAS (*Church Pastoral Aid Society*) provides a very good course for developing leadership which, once leaders of the course have been trained, can then be run in-house. We need to identify one principal leader and at least two assistant leaders to take this course forward.

Proposal 2: Authorised Ministries

These will be significant to the development of our future mission.

We believe that in the next four years we need to identify one further Ordained Local Minister in addition to Barbara McDonald (currently training), and also three Licensed Lay Ministers (Reader). The need for an additional OLM and further LLMs is particularly pressing for two reasons: first, we cannot hope to start a new and contemporary service of worship unless we have sufficient leadership in place; second, although we are immensely grateful for all that our current LLMs give (and we hope they continue to serve for many years to come), we need to be aware that three of our four LLMs have already moved to 'Permission to Officiate' (i.e. are above 70 years of age!).

In addition to OLMs and LLMs, we also believe that we need to identify four new Pastoral Assistants: one with a specific brief to lead the Bereavement Team; two with a specific brief to liaise with baptism families; and one with a specific brief to pastor men.

Proposal 3: Identifying and Encouraging Future Leadership

Although we do not wish to cut across existing good practice whereby various groups in the church continue to identify their own future leaders, we recognise that it is desirable if we, as a church become more proactive:

1. In identifying and encouraging individuals with a gift of leadership; and
2. In identifying and encouraging individuals who have a call to authorised ministries (ordained, Licensed Lay Minister (Reader), Pastoral Assistant).

We propose that, in the first instance, responsibility for these two things should reside with the Ministry Team (clergy + Licensed Lay Ministers (Reader)) and Pastoral Assistant Team.

Proposal 4: Ongoing Nurture and Equipping

We propose a regular cycle of events which will both nurture and equip. A very viable cycle could be:

- Spring Term: *Christianity Explored* (or equivalent, to help people understand the heart of Christian faith)
- Summer Term: *Discipleship Explored, Emmaus or Alpha* (or equivalent, to help people grow in Christian faith)
- Autumn Term: *Making Use of the Bible* (or equivalent, to help Christians really get to grips with a specific area of Christian faith)

In terms of leadership required, this partly depends on the size of each course. As a minimum, though, each course requires a leader and an assistant leader (and possibly also an administrator/organiser).

Proposal 5: Contemporary Worship

We are well-served by our current organist and Director of Music. However, our consultation document contains the proposal that alongside the traditional and choral, we develop alternative forms of contemporary worship. This will require a leader who is committed to these forms of worship and who has some experience of them.

Proposal 6: Marriage and Parenting

The Ministry Team is committed to exploring the running of Marriage and Parenting courses. The target audience would not simply be church members but the many in our community for whom such courses would be a real benefit. At the very least, both courses would require two leaders each.

Proposal 7: Youth and Children

Although our current Youth Development Leader is new in post, the period of this consultation looks beyond the three years for which have secured funding in place (2010-2012 inclusive). We should like to recommend that we consider funding a Youth Development Leader (or equivalent, exact job description depending on our experience of the Youth Development Leader over the next three years) for a further three years (2013-2015 inclusive).

7 COMMUNICATIONS

7.1 Vision for Communications 2015

St Nicolas will be a connected church where communications are recognised as being amongst the best in the Bookham community. People will be able to interact with the Church in many different ways, including from remote locations and at times convenient to

them (within a recognised secure framework). We shall target different groups to ensure what we communicate is relevant and meets their needs where they are. All information about what St Nicolas offers, including teaching and guidance, will be easily accessible at anytime to empower our people to convey the message of the Gospel. This will help us to build faith in the community, make known what we offer, strengthen social networks within St Nicolas and to the wider Bookham community.

7.2 Key proposals

The following are the main proposals of the Communications Team. There is much that is good in St Nicolas Church and we shall build on our existing strengths. There is also much more we could do and our proposals focus on what' and 'how' we might achieve this. Once the PCC has confirmed agreement, then more detail work can start on the implementation plan including timetable, cost and priorities.

Proposal 1a: Form a St Nicolas Communication Team

The team will oversee the delivery of our Communications Plans through all the different channels available for communications, and will be empowered and accountable for the delivery of the following:

- Design of the channels for communicating what St Nicolas offers
- St Nicolas marketing and presentational styles ('Branding')
- Noticeboard design and process for updating content
- Magazine purpose, format and process for acquiring content
- Weekly Newsletter purpose, format and process for acquiring content

The team will require technical knowledge about communications channels, and marketing and design skills. We shall have consistent communications of all our messages and information - this will include styles (branding) and adherence to agreed church policies. Whilst some channels will come and go, others are likely to remain relatively fixed over the next 5 years. We shall ensure the core means of communications are covered fully, such as personal contacts, written, telephone, texts, magazine, noticeboards, newsletters, email and web services.

Proposal 1b: Create a Parish Infrastructure Sub-Group

The world is in the centre of a revolution in the way communications are handled, information exchanged and the ways organisations work - this includes churches. This revolution has released energy and innovation - the challenge for the Church is how to tap in to this and channel it to help us spread the Christian Faith. This sub-group should be part of the Communications Team will be empowered and accountable for the delivery of the following:

- St Nicolas Web Site and process of updating content which is shared and agreed
- the IT components of all other teams and the church
- the IT elements of the register of church members
- IT needs for shared online filing and calendar/meeting arrangements

The growth in households with access to the Internet over broadband has grown exponentially, and today over 80% of UK households use the Internet regularly. This includes almost 100% of people under 40, but the number is less for those over 65, although this group is still growing in its usage. By 2015, the impact of this communications revolution will deepen. St Nicolas needs to plan its infrastructure to take full advantage of the possibilities offered through IT. The sub-group will have a continuous review and delivery brief.

Proposal 2: 'Ways of Working' for Pastoral Care and Prayer Support

An essential element of good communications is having an agreed, shared and documented way of working so that we can ensure consistent presentation via all channels. The Communications Team will work with all areas of St Nicolas to ensure that we capture actions, roles and accountabilities for all the main ways in which St Nicolas works and provides:

- Baptism
- Marriage Preparation
- Bereavement Support
- Prayer Requests

All these events share common elements and all are practical examples of how St Nicolas interacts with the congregation and wider community. We need a one-off input to capture the agreed ways of working and to review all existing documentation. There will then need to be agreement on any changes in the ways we work and communicate. We need marketing and design skills for the presentation of the 'ways of working'.

Proposal 3: Design and Deliver St Nicolas Worship (and Music) Communications

We need to design and agree how we 'market' and communicate all of our worship services, including targeting different audiences. Our intention for a more 'connected' church will allow us to direct invitations and proposals, but also for people to express their own preferences. We should make service sermons and accompanying video/visuals easily accessible – along with pointers and questions for further discussion and reading for our various groups. It will also streamline our communications, for example with the church leadership and House Groups.

Proposal 4: Design and Deliver St Nicolas Learning and Growth Communications Needs

The Learning and Growth Team has identified a number of proposals which will be strengthened in their impact through well designed communications channels - these need to be designed and delivered. The sermon calendar and themes need to be advertised and related notes and teaching guidance made easily accessible. Special study sessions and lectures need to be promoted and notes made available at any time - perhaps with discussion threads on our web site. The use of the church library with book reviews and sales can be promoted through various channels. Bible familiarisation can be designed and targeted to different groups such as youth. Our web site can enable distance learning and widen our choice of learning.

Proposal 5: St Nicolas Register of Members and Church Networking

The main focus of our communications must be to promote personal interaction and to ensure that we value the individual and the individual feels valued - we shall address the full spectrum of people's needs. We shall implement a church networking facility which provides for St Nicolas the same sort of opportunities for people to connect their church and spiritual lives as they do for their social and working worlds. This church network facility will enable people to update their own details and preferences so that we have a register of the congregation and other people interested in St Nicolas activities. We expect this networking facility to cover the majority of the Church in time, but we shall always provide an alternative for registering with the Church for those people who don't wish or cannot access such a service.

The world today is constantly alert to and adept at assimilating change. We see this as a positive opportunity for St Nicolas to connect with a hunger and need for spiritual growth, and to spread the Gospel and grow the Church. It will also deliver a more connected Church with increased networking between individuals and groups both inside the Church and to the wider Bookham community - and in ways they want to be connected.

8 USE OF THE CHURCH

8.1 Vision for the Church 2015

The proposals of the Church Interior Group will be met by 2015 if the interior of the church of St. Nicolas Great Bookham has been adapted and upgraded so that a greater number of the church congregation and the people of Bookham feel welcome and comfortable within its walls which will in turn help in "Building Faith in the Community."

To achieve this end the lighting, heating, accessibility and general layout of the interior will be altered to reflect the needs of the users for the 21st century. This will include the

flexibility of the seating within the church, the crèche arrangements and the visual and audio facilities. None of these alterations must be allowed to affect the fabric of the Grade 1 listed building.

8.2 Key Proposals

The Church Interior Group was given the task of looking at the present interior layout and examining options in which it could be improved. For St. Nicolas church to be used **fully** as a great Grade One Listed building in the heart of the community of Great Bookham it needs to function as a “modern” venue without, in any way, detracting from its beauty.

Some of the main outcomes of improving the church interior are:

1. To provide a level of comfort to the congregation during the weekly services, including the crèche accommodation, that is expected today.
2. To enhance the feeling of welcome for people, especially new members, when they enter the church.
3. To improve the flexibility of the present seating arrangements to accommodate the varied activities that take place or could take place - to make the church more useable, accessible and adaptable.
4. To enhance the safety of those who use the church, including those required to carry out maintenance.
5. To improve our Eco-standards on church heating and lighting to perform to its maximum efficiency and output.
6. To upgrade the audio and visual arrangements for church services and other uses.

The Group identified a number of areas where the points above could be addressed. It should be noted, at this stage, that some of the items so identified may well overlap and in will depend upon each other to perform fully.

The proposals listed below have all been discussed with the church architect, who is widely experienced in church buildings. He has advised on many points and feels the work would get the backing of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC, who give permission for changes to church buildings) with whom he has been in contact.

Proposal 1: Church Interior Lighting.

Because of the running costs of the existing light fittings, the difficulty in changing bulbs, the doubtful longevity of the existing system and the general unsatisfactory lighting within the church it was agreed that this matter be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

Note: Some two year ago estimates for a new lighting arrangement were obtained but put on hold. The detailed specification for a new and fully flexible system are on file and can, when necessary, be produced and/or updated

Final lighting layout will depend upon other items in this report. This links with all other Groups within the Vision Process.

Proposal 2: Use of the Tower Base.

Here again the group looked at the possibilities of making much more use of this area, which at present is an eyesore. Ideas discussed and suggested are the removal of the existing curtains between the main church and the tower base and also to the west door, and the separation from the main church by a timber framed glass enclosure with doors into the nave. This screen would fit behind the existing timber screen and would have a sound reduction down to 45dB. Storage space would be formed at lower level each side of the doors.

This would serve a number of purposes e.g. a draft lobby to the West door, a suitable area for the crèche to be housed so they could feel a part of the church service yet not disturb those in the main body of the church, and an area where coffee and tea could be served after the Sunday services. The library would be relocated and a computer terminal installed for use by the church members as required.

Suitable agreed arrangements would need to be made for toilet facilities for the crèche. This links with the Worship, Leadership and Communications Groups

Proposal 3: New Raised Floor and Total or Partial Removal of the Pews.

For the church to be used to its full potential it is vital that people using it must have the flexibility required for a number of different uses. The existing pews are uncomfortable and of no particular architectural merit or quality and restrict full use of the space available.

Instead of the pews the church would be equipped with comfortable chairs which could be interlocking (for safety purposes) and also stackable. The use of chairs affords an enormous variety of seating layouts to suit any occasion. If it was deemed necessary a few short portable pews would be used in some areas. The new kneelers would be either placed on the seats or stored underneath on a rack within the chair. The flexibility of using chairs links

closely with the use of overhead projection and screens as recommended in the Worship section.

The removal of the pews would require extensive repair work to be carried out to the existing floor or covering with a suitable material. At present the floor is a mix of softwood and parquet tiles, Victorian floor tiles and other finishes.

A better option than extensive repair would be the installation of an engineered, raised floor over the main part of the church, including the tower base, to the level of the chancel. In this way the existing floor of tiles, wood blocks and parquet would be protected and **the new floor give level access for the disabled from the main south door**. Any of the ancient monuments and brasses would be either covered by a suitable glass plate or simply have a removable panel over them. The existing heating grilles would be raised to be level with floor. The space so formed could be insulated and also serve as a service duct for electrical cables and heating pipes. Any new heating regime would also be able use this raised floor for its pipe runs.

Preliminary discussions have taken place regarding the replacing of the existing heating system with a new energy efficient one to meet the Eco- standards. Any such system would run beneath the new raised floor, thus eliminating the need for unsightly pipe runs around the walls of the church.

It is not intended at the present time to carry out any work within the chancel or choir stalls apart from the introduction of a retractable screen (see below).

Proposal 4: South Door Lobby or Narthex.

It is felt that the present entrance should be retained but a large inner lobby of timber and glass fitted to extend as far as the corner by the existing notice board. The lobby should be fitted with doors on all faces so that, if necessary, they can be folded back to improve the seating capacity of the church.

The lobby would serve to reduce the draft coming from the large oak doors and also act as a “meet and greet” area. The existing unsightly timber frame and curtain would be removed. The existing pillar safe would be re-sited within this lobby.

Proposal 5: West Door.

It is considered that an inner timber and glass door should be fitted on the inside face of the wall to give added warmth.

Proposal 6: Provision of Overhead Projector and Screen/s.

This item is one that is felt essential for the running of a 21st century church. It is adequately covered by the Worship vision group and therefore not necessary to repeat it, but it would form part of any overall scheme submitted to the DAC by the church.

Proposal 7: The Font.

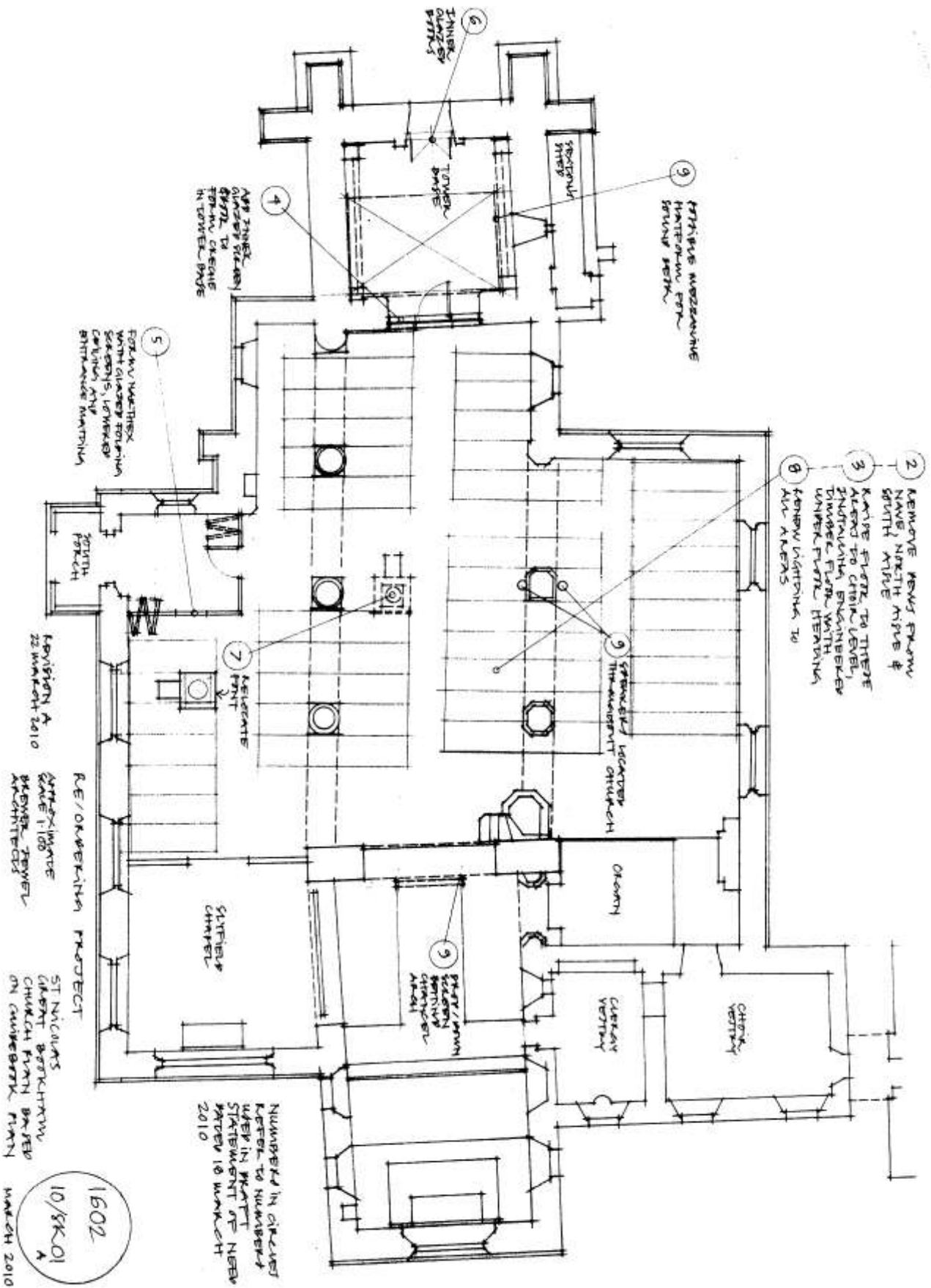
With the removal of the pews and the pillar safe (see south door lobby), it would be necessary to move the font. It could be sited as shown near the new south door lobby. The exact position is however open for discussion.

In addition to the above items the group felt that the inside of the church is extremely cluttered by notice boards (of which there are five), tables (of which there are six) and general storage. Whilst it is appreciated that some notices are necessary it is suggested that the number of boards be restricted to one and the tables to two - this will be addressed by the Communications Team.

In General

The Group recognises that the installation of expensive audio and visual equipment increases the need for extra security but takes comfort in that many other churches have done the same without apparent problems. This matter will be addressed fully in due course and as matters progress.

Any work carried out to the fabric of the church shall be such that it could, if necessary at a later date, be reversed without any adverse effect to the church fabric. This does not, of course, include the removal of the pews. All new work aims to be in harmony with the existing fabric and have the required consents of all interested parties.



9 CONCLUSION

Our hope is that the above will provide a good framework for thinking about our vision. At this stage we have chosen not to include an indication of the financial resources required. This is for two reasons. First, because we didn't want concerns about resourcing to become a barrier to thinking about the vision (if the vision is of the Lord then our conviction is that resourcing should follow.) Second, because further work on many of the proposals will be required before we have a realistic indication of cost (and we didn't want to spend time on that work until we could be confident we are heading in the right direction).

Version 3.2