



January 24 2018

Dear All,

I write to you following a very encouraging weekend with Mark Aldridge's visit to Cogges where he reminded us about how we can live a Father led, Spirit inspired life. I know from the conversations that I have had and the emails that I have received that many of you found it very helpful. If you weren't able to attend his talks will be on the website.

I wanted to write because it is both an exciting and a critical time in the life of our Church. Someone recently wrote to me:

A critical kingdom moment - God is clearly at work at St Mary's and this is a kairos moment. The enemy would always love to sow division to rob the church and community of God's blessing. Therefore it is important not to be ignorant of his designs. Unity is crucial to safeguarding the forward work of the Kingdom.

In this letter I want to give you some further information about the service changes that will be taking place at the end of February.

There are many encouraging things taking place at Cogges at the moment including the latest Alpha course, the growth in children's and youth work and the significant mentoring work taking place in the community.

VISION

Any decisions we make about the future of the Church we want to be driven by our vision:

- We want to reach out to transform and empower the next generations through the love of Jesus.
- We want to enable everyone to flourish through connecting them with God, each other and their world.
- We believe that in particular we should be looking to serve and support:
 - The lonely & isolated
 - Children & Young People
 - Parents of young children
 - Vulnerable families
 - Homeworkers
- We are called to become a resourcing Church, engaging in mission in our community and beyond.

To achieve the above we have some short, medium and long term plans.

SHORT, MEDIUM & LONG TERM PLANS

In the short term we are going to restructure the 9.15am & 10.30am services to create space for further growth (more details overleaf).



In the medium term we are encouraging individuals and groups to share their desire to see different neighbourhoods, needs and networks impacted by the mission of Jesus. Over the course of the next year we would like to encourage more outward focused communities and activities to develop.

In the long term we continue to consider opportunities around creating a facility that will allow us to support mission and ministry, locally and further afield.

NEW SERVICE PATTERN

Following much prayer, discussion and consultation over the last year, we have decided to restructure the 9.15am and 10.30am services from February 25th. The services will become similar to each other; this decision is led by the significant growth in younger families and also informed by the questionnaire that many completed at the end of last year. We want to give both services the same resourcing and amount of time. The services will have the same speaker and children's work. We are still discussing the youth provision and while the main focus of the youth work will be the later service, ultimately we would like to have some youth provision at the earlier service as well.

The times of the new services will be 9.30am-10.45am and 11.15am-12.30pm. Coffee will take place at the back of church after each service.

Rich & Catherine White are going to co-ordinate the 9.30am service and Andy & Heather McCulloch are going to co-ordinate the 11.15am service.

We are also looking to start a mid-week service at 2pm on a Tuesday afternoon. The first service will be Tuesday 20th February and among others we hope it may reach out to some of the lonely and isolated in our community. If you are interested in being a part of this service there will be a meeting at 2pm on Tuesday 6th February to discuss and pray for the service.

We recognise that all of the above will take significant organisation and are grateful for everyone who currently serves and helps facilitate these and other activities.

I would ask you to continue to pray for the elected Church Council (PCC) and staff as we try to plan and resource all of these changes.

VISION NIGHT (APCM)

At our Vision Night (APCM) on Tuesday 20th February we will be sharing further details of the next steps in the life of Cogges. This will include the proposed restructuring of the PCC, to better enable us to meet the needs and challenges of a growing church. We will be sending a paper containing the details about this shortly and please do keep a look out for it when it arrives.

Last week marked 5 years since I became vicar at Cogges and I can truly say that Sue and I continue to thoroughly enjoy being part of leading such a vibrant and faith filled community. Mark Aldridge reminded us to lean on the promise of Jesus in John 14 that we will do 'even greater things' through the provision of His Spirit.

I look forward to all that God is leading us into this year and beyond,

Blessings,

Simon