

**Generous, engaged, open:
OUR vision for our churches
2014-2015**

We believe that God is ...

Generous to the world,

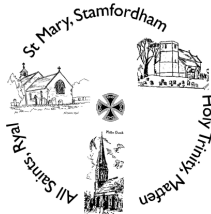
Engaged with the world, and

Open to the world.

We therefore commit ourselves to the diocesan aims of being
Generous, Engaged and Open.

Our current priorities are : to be ...

- ✘ **Generous in care for the community**
- ✘ **Engaged with children and young people**
- ✘ **Open to the future**



Revised September 2014

In 2013-2014, we ...

Generous in Thanksgiving

- ✘ used our Harvest Thanksgiving services to celebrate the life of the church in our communities, give thanks for the fruits we are reaping and offer hospitality to the wider community

Open to care for the community

- ✘ continued to develop our Shared Ministry Team
- ✘ explored how best to improve the pastoral care we offer
- ✘ considered whether all who minister have adequate support
- ✘ started to train Eucharistic ministers to take home communions
- ✘ concluded that the time was not right for a pastoral visiting team
- ✘ learnt about Dementia, inviting an advocate to speak to the PCCs and participating in the Deanery day
- ✘ in Stamfordham, held an enormously successful jumble sale

Engaged with children and young people

- ✘ made progress in creating a 'pathway' through church for children and young people
- ✘ moved towards seeking permission to admit children to Holy Communion before Confirmation
- ✘ consolidated Messy Church
- ✘ increased the frequency of All Age services in Stamfordham
- ✘ involved more lay people in leading All Age and other services
- ✘ obtained children's service books

Ongoing and Long-Term Initiatives

- ✘ continued to collect food for the Hexham food bank
- ✘ continued to offer free Dining Club tickets to newcomers
- ✘ continued to support the libraries in Nyabyeya and Nyakafungo
- ✘ continued the monthly Communion and a Cuppa
- ✘ continued the Upper Pont Dining Club
- ✘ further developed the Benefice Choir, which now sings for weddings
- ✘ obtained the backing of the Highlights Rural Touring Scheme to extend our programme of jazz gigs in Holy Trinity Matfen

Growth

- ✘ ran two successful 'Pilgrim' courses
- ✘ welcomed several new families into our congregations
- ✘ prepared a number of candidates for baptism and confirmation
- ✘ welcomed increasing numbers of prospective wedding couples

Buildings

- ✘ continued to beautify our buildings with additional banners
- ✘ installed a new sound system in St Mary's Stamfordham
- ✘ embarked on the restoration of the bell and bellcote in All Saints Ryal
- ✘ repaired the plasterwork in Holy Trinity Matfen
- ✘ began the process of choosing a new heating system for St Mary's Stamfordham

The Friends of Ryal ...

- ✘ also carried out several fundraising activities for All Saints Church

Our current priorities:

As small churches, we recognize that we cannot – and should not try to – do everything at once.

We aim to do well what we can, without feeling guilty about what we are not doing.

We seek to serve God faithfully, while enjoying God’s good gifts and our faith, and taking time to “Be still, and know that I am God.”

With that in mind, we seek to be ...

Generous in care for the community

	Who?	Timescale?
<i>Improve pastoral care across the parishes by</i>		
♦ training eucharistic ministers to administer Home Communion	MNW	September 2014
♦ ensuring there is support for all who minister in the church	SMT	Ongoing
♦ supporting the Great Whittington coffee mornings and Stamfordham soup lunches	Encourage all churchgoers	September 2014
♦ establishing a coffee morning in Matfen	Matfen PCC?	Jan 2015
... thereby encouraging the natural growth of mutual care, involving more people, and strengthening the ‘social glue’ in the communities		

Engaged with children and young people

	Who?	Timescale?
Strengthen the pathway for children/young people through church by		
♦ agreeing a policy to link Messy Church, All Age services, preparation for Holy Communion, youth group, Confirmation...	PCCs	September 2014
♦ completing the application to admit children to Holy Communion before confirmation	MNW, PCCs	September 2014
♦ creating activity bags for parents to use with young children during services	BNW and young mums	December 2014
♦ revising our safeguarding policies and revive the Responsible Caring Group	MNW, PCCs	Sept-Oct 2014

Open to the future

	Who?	Timescale?
Prepare for the vacancy by		
♦ ensuring preparations have been made so that the parishes can thrive	MNW Wardens	19/10/2014
♦ ensuring Wardens, Treasurers, PCCs and others are properly briefed		
♦ with the Archdeacon, preparing a parish profile	PCCs	Early 2015

- ✘ These are the priorities our PCCs have identified for 2014 onwards
- ✘ The names suggested on the plan aren't intended to exclude anyone else – we encourage everyone to consider how they might contribute to meeting these priorities.
- ✘ At a joint PCC meeting each summer, we shall assess the year's progress and consider whether to change our priorities for the coming year.

Future priorities: we shall also seek to ...

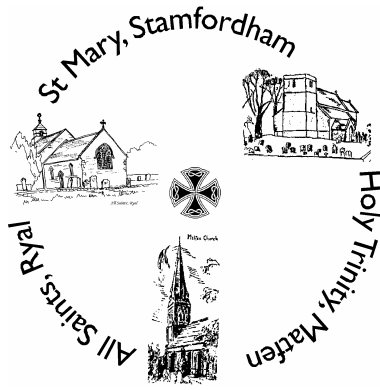
Engage with issues of poverty and hardship

Establish a link with a parish/parishes in Botswana

- ✘ We consider these to be important areas to develop, and intend them to be priorities in future years.
- ✘ This does not exclude us from taking some steps in these areas now, provided that they do not draw attention or energy away from our current priorities.
- ✘ We aim to be responsive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and welcome new ideas and suggestions

Eternal God and Father,
You create us by your power
And redeem us by your love.
Guide and strengthen us
by your Spirit
That we may give ourselves
in love and service
To one another and to you;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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Generous ... Engaged ... Open