



PARISH DAY REVIEW

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Discussion Topics

Worship & Prayer

Worshipping, talking with and listening to God

Christians & their money

Using our money to resource God's vision for us

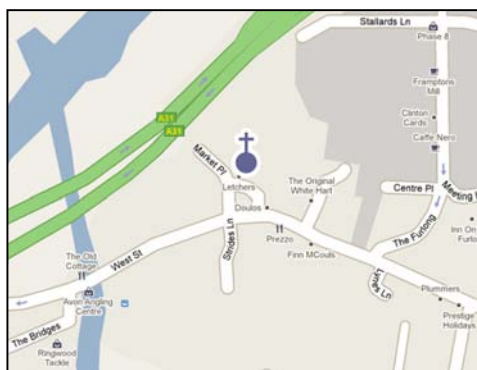
Care & the Community

Improving & extending our caring amongst the wider community—letting others know the good news of Jesus

Growth in Faith

Constantly learning, moving and growing towards God

At The Crossroads



Ringwood stands at a crossroads and as you pass it by, you have a choice of directions. At the Parish Day held at St John's Poulner on Saturday 6th March, people were talking about directions as well. The direction that the Parish of Ringwood should be following over the next few years.

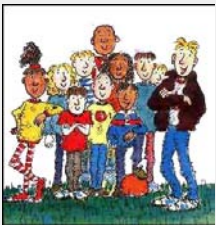
Nearly 90 people attended and the day was a real success. People came away feeling that, not only were they able to give their views, but they had enjoyed themselves as well! Four areas of Church and Community life came under the microscope (see panel opposite) and an impressive number of suggestions emerged.

Everybody hopes that over the next few years, our churches will continue to grow, not only in numbers, but in terms of our stature in the community and our depth of worship. We have strong leadership and vision, but it's up to all of us to make the Church grow by working together.

Some Suggestions Made on the Day



More Information on Church Finance



Reach Out To and Encourage Younger People



Welcome Pack for New Comers



Look at Adjusting Some of Our Musical Content

Times Have Changed

Modern life provides distractions from God. Many people still think of Sunday as God's day - a holy day, but patterns of life are changing. Some now work on Sundays; for others Sunday is a day to visit relatives, or go shopping!

We would like Sunday to continue to be our main worship day, but must recognise that this does not suit everybody. Careful thought needs to be given to the length, style, days and times of our services.

There were a number of suggestions that centred around making our services as relevant to modern times as we can.

There was also a clear desire to create and harness more togetherness across the churches of our parish.

The importance of encouraging children and young people was another strong theme that surfaced through the various discussions.

Meeting Needs

The group most under-represented in our Churches at present are young people and young adults.

We must do more to encourage and listen not just to young people but also their parents.

But we must not forget the needs of older people as well.



Initiatives

To encourage more people to join prayer groups - partly for fellowship but more, of course, to foster a greater understanding of the scriptures.

One excellent suggestion was to invite visiting talks from people with outstanding stories to tell so we can see that Christianity does work in all circumstances.



Some Other Headlines

- More teaching on giving
- Occasional use of modern technology with songs/hymns and notices on a screen.
- More integration with other Ringwood churches
- Better communication
- Encourage visiting

Communication Is The Key

Communication is all important.

Getting the message across is vital for every church. We should promote and advertise events more vigorously. Notice boards and leaflets are important, but one-to-one contact and word of mouth are the most effective means of encouraging people to join us.

We need to talk in the language of today or nobody is going to listen to us! We need to make ourselves more visible in the community.

Most people know where each of our churches are, but are we doing enough to make them attractive and welcoming?

How can we open up our Churches to people more often and let them see that we are alive!



Church - Not Just for Sundays

Whilst worship is very important, so is the Church's social life.

Social events are a good way to get to know each other better and involve people on the fringe.

For example "Dinner8" was promoted briefly at the end of the afternoon—it is these sorts of initiatives that will help to bring us more together as one parish

A Family Feeling

Both new and longstanding Church members enjoy the current style of worship.

Worshipping God is something He wants us to do and it can also help us feel inspired and uplifted as we face the coming week with renewed faith.

Inevitably, however, where one style of worship suits one group of people another group will prefer something different.

We need to work together and find ways that overcome these differences.

Although we have some differing views and opinions a strong feeling of real togetherness emerged through our Parish Day—we must build on this.



The Full Works!

A long list of the discussions that took place on the Parish Day has been produced.

It shows all the suggestions that were made - even those that may not be quite so practical.

YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT!

Even if you weren't able to come to The Day, but have suggestions about our church life, please send them to Jacqueline Brown or Anne Osborne.

We'd be delighted to hear from you.

Thanks to All Who Helped Prepare and Run Our Parish Day



Many thanks to . . .

- the Parish Day Planning Team
- those who produced and served food together with tea and coffee
- those who acted as Group Enablers
- everyone who came along and/or offered ideas
- those who prayed for the day



What Next?

The Parish Day is just the beginning.

Over the next few weeks four small sub-groups will be converting the ideas, thoughts and suggestions into a Strategy Booklet.

We then aim to hold a 'Launch Service' to mark the distribution of our Pass-It-On Packs, containing our new strategy in which we will all have the opportunity to share.