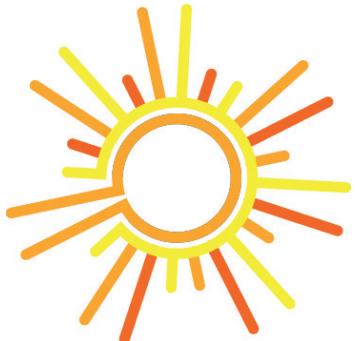


REFRESHING OUR VISION



Looking forward to 2021



Growing in Faith

Growing in Numbers

Growing in Loving Service



WELCOME!

Thank you for picking up this booklet; it sets out the Vision we're working towards for St Helen's and St Peter's churches in the coming years. Our Vision is set in the context of the Diocese of St Albans' *Living God's Love*.



In *Living God's Love* we are going deeper into God, transforming communities and making new disciples, especially focusing on the values of **generosity** and **joy**, **imagination** and **courage**.



Our initial Vision guided us through the period 2011 – 2016.

After five years we have reviewed our Vision against the changes in our churches and community and the considerable progress we have already made (reviewed on pages 4-7). Our new Vision (set out on pages 3 and 8-11) has evolved to fit our current situation and will guide us for a further five years to 2021.

Please pray that as a Christian community we would be filled with the Holy Spirit and follow in the footsteps of Christ as we live and work for the Glory of God. And do play your own unique part as God leads us on this exciting journey of faith.

God bless you,
with best wishes & prayers

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Banham".

Richard Banham, Rector

St Helen's and St Peter's Vision 2021

Our Mission

Living and Working
for the Glory of God



Our Values

As followers of Jesus, inspired by God's amazing Love,

- we **welcome, care for** and **value everyone**
- we are here to **serve the whole village** community
- we all **play our part** in the life of our church
- we **share the Good News of Jesus Christ** with all
- our **Christian faith impacts** every aspect of **our lives**

Our Vision

By 2021 St Helen's and St Peter's will be Christian communities ...

- growing in Faith
- growing in Numbers
- growing in Loving Service



How Far Have We Come?

Our 2011 Vision

By 2016 St Helen's and St Peter's will be...

- Vibrant centres for Christian service
- A community growing in Christian maturity
- Deepening our connection with God through worship

We identified five development priorities and set objectives that moved us towards the three points of our Vision. We have achieved a great deal in all five areas. Some highlights follow.

Each of these areas continues to be important in the ongoing life of the church.



2011-2016 Priority **Mission and Outreach**

To strengthen our mission and outreach by providing practical and pastoral support around the village



We didn't manage...

A strategy for evangelism • Better follow-up to welcome



We've achieved...

More than 30 Vision meals for more than 250 people • Coffee in the Chancel • Pastoral Focus Group • Better welcome at services • Christmas & Easter giveaways • Provided hampers of 'essentials' food for 20+ families over the summer • WWI Centenary • 'Living alone' Sunday lunches • Conversation and Cake • Established St Helen's Community Fund Group



The Mural at the Swan Pub

2011-16 Priority **Groups and Teaching**

To deepen our faith through small groups and teaching, such as Bible study, prayer and Alpha



We didn't manage...

As much spiritual development as we hoped for • Sufficient joint activities with other priorities



We've achieved...

Wide range of social events such as Cathedral trips, picnics, musical 'Capers' evenings, men's evenings, parish walks and Abbey pilgrimages • Word Live, two new house groups and a book group • Initial training for potential group leaders • Monthly prayer evenings • Three Alpha courses for a total of 40+ participants • Parish weekend retreat 2014 • Advent quiet day 2015 • Puzzling Questions course

Discussion group
at parish retreat



Carols 'n' Capers



2011-2016 Priority **Worship Development**

To develop our worship with more variety and something for everyone



We didn't manage...

To maintain the higher numbers attending services in 2011 and 2012

- To form a music group to allow more variety in worship



We've achieved...

Sermon series • Opportunities for children at start and end of services • Refreshed 9.30 intercessions • Variety in Sunday evening worship • Wider range of hymns & modern songs • Trial of family-friendly Parish Praise on 3rd Sundays • 11.15 family service on first Sundays now at St Helen's School • Organ refurbishment and new digital piano • Received a Training Curate (Welcome Kate!)



2011-2016 Priority **Extension and Re-ordering**

Completing our extension/Church Centre and re-ordering



We didn't manage...

To obtain Church Centre planning approval



Refurbished kitchen



We've achieved...

Upgrade to south porch with glass doors & hand rail • Redecorated Lady & Lamer Chapels, and south & north aisles • New heating system • Refurbished kitchen • Refurbished St Peter's car park • Substantial project-related fund-raising • Planning application for proposed Church Centre • New floor & adjustments to pews in SW corner • Working with United Church for possible refurbishment of their buildings while continuing to improve St Helen's

2011-16 Priority **Children, Youth & Schools**

To introduce and nurture faith among children, youth and schools



We didn't manage...

To maintain numbers in Junior Church • To maintain numbers of volunteer leaders for youth and children's work



We've achieved...

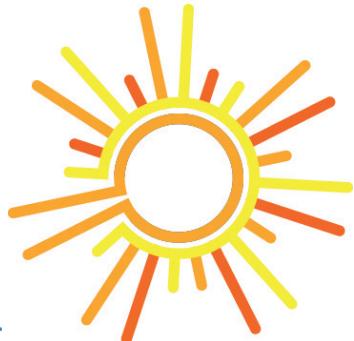
Maintained broad Junior Church provision • Developed youth work, including opportunities outside the parish • Capacity for young people to go deeper in their faith • Improved crèche area • Increased numbers of families attending monthly Kids' Worship through the move to St Helen's School • Hosting our first Youth Work intern



Richard Banham with newly ordained curate, Kate Daymond

REFRESHING OUR VISION

Looking forward to 2021



Growing in Faith

Growing in Numbers

Growing in Loving Service



Our Strategic Priorities to 2021

After much prayer (and careful consideration) we have set challenging goals and targets for the three areas of our Vision. We've done this because we believe God uses everyday folk in ordinary local churches to achieve extraordinary things. He has been faithful to us in the past and we entrust our future to Him.

Please look out for ways you can get involved and consider joining one of the three teams we're setting up to work towards our Strategic Priorities.

2016 - 2021

Growing in Faith

*Helping each one of us draw nearer to God
by deepening our understanding of our Christian faith*



- Having 10 new people participating in study groups by 2021
- Confirming at least 20 adults and 20 young people over the five years
- Presenting opportunities for all age groups in the parish to develop their Christian experience through a range of worship, social and teaching activities – and through opportunities to serve



Confirmation service



Our Cathedral trip to Bury St Edmunds

2016 - 2021

Growing in Numbers

*Bringing more people of all ages to faith
and the Good News of Jesus*



- Leading to an increased commitment to the church, with a membership better reflecting the demographic of the village
- Offering access to a variety of worship styles, including traditional, and developing weekly contemporary worship
- Create a rhythm of activity in pre-evangelism, enquirers' and discipleship opportunities so as to attract an average of 10 new people per year into enquirers' and discipleship activities over the five years



Remembrance Day Outdoor Service

2016 - 2021

Growing in Loving Service

*Inspired by our faith, to live out God's love
by serving our community*



- Increasing the number of people involved in providing service, through the church or otherwise
- Seeing church-led activities provide help to at least five new families or individuals in genuine need each year
- Monitoring the needs of the community and seeking to respond to them by developing well-focused initiatives, and co-ordinating them with other providers



Preparing Summer Hampers



Community Tea Party

St Helen's and St Peter's Vision Prayer



Father of all,

*Guide and bless us as we seek to grow your kingdom
in our community and in the wider world.*

*May we grow closer to you through our worship
and through our journeying together.*

*Make our buildings places where all are welcomed
and feel at home.*

*Holy Spirit, enable us to show your loving presence to
all through our generous living.*

We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen



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St Helen's + St Peter's · Wheathampstead 
living and working for the glory of God