

RECTOR'S UPDATE

I have just returned from an excellent two-day conference organised by CPAS for Anglican churches with congregations in the 350-800 range. I went with a clergy team made up of Lis and Ian Ward plus Steve Simcox. It was good to be together with over one hundred church leaders from around the country sharing issues that are relevant to our shared situations.



I was grateful to speak in one of the sessions about growing through barriers and shared some of the St George's story over the last 20 years.

The Attractional Model

St George's growth came initially from operating on what we might call an attractional model.

- Christian families looking for good children's and youth ministry.
- Seekers looking for a course about the Christian faith and friends being able to invite them on the Alpha course.
- Christians moving into the area and looking for a particular style of corporate worship and Bible teaching as well as mid-week small groups for fellowship and discipleship.

The danger of the attractional model is that if your building becomes full, even after creating new congregations, the impetus to make new disciples can become static as we focus on the people that we already have. Of course, the church is about meeting

together, but the making of disciples should always be ongoing and outward looking to those who are not yet disciples of the Lord Jesus.

The Minster Model

As St George's has grown in depth, it has been able to operate informally in the style of a Minster. The idea of the Minster model is of a mature central church that operates as a hub for a wider area and sends out resources in the shape of people to help the surrounding communities. Over the years, we have sent out people to help lead and preach in the wider area, we have sent teams to help with all age services; we have sent ordinands into ministry. We have even looked after other local churches for a period, thinking in particular of Wittering and Christchurch. The model of the Minster is one of service, with a team based at a hub.

The Missional Model

More recently, we have been exploring the idea of what it means for us to be missional. How do we grow the church in the wider area, outside the walls of St George's, in partnership with others? How can we mobilise disciples at St George's to engage with the places where they live and work.

Even if St George's feels full on a Sunday, can we continue to grow and make new disciples in the wider area, encouraging existing churches and creating new worshipping communities.

St George's continues to operate on these three levels. Attractional, Minster and Missional. They are not mutually exclusive, but feed into each other.

A strong centre and the ability to grow disciples at St George's means that we are creating the resources to be both a Minster as well as send and equip people to be missional in the places where they come from.

cpas



LEADING
THROUGH
BARRIERS
16-18 OCTOBER

NATIONAL LARGER ANGLICAN CHURCHES CONSULTATION

Steve Simcox BMO

It has been a joy to welcome Steve and Doreen Simcox to St George's with Steve's 'Bishop's Mission Order,' to help to equip us to reach out as a whole church into the wider area. Steve's appointment shows the commitment of St George's to being a missional church, engaging in the surrounding villages and Market Towns. This is one of our main priorities over the next five years.



1 Cheyne Lane

Alongside the appointment of Steve, the Lord has opened up the door for the purchase of 1 Cheyne Lane. We need to remember that over 95% of Stamford do not attend a Church of England Church on any given Sunday. Just because our building feels full, we must not become complacent about the call of Jesus to make disciples here in Stamford.



1 Cheyne Lane reveals our commitment to growing locally as well as wider. The new building will strengthen our ability to invite people in to find out about Christ and grow our ability to be a resource to the wider area. The new building will have over twice the space of St George's Place, including a large meeting space. As we seek to make disciples on mission with Jesus, we are looking to both grow our attractational reach and holding capacity, so as better to resource our wider mission to the surrounding villages and market towns.

Stepping Stones

I want to assure you that we are not in the business of buying real estate for its own sake, but for the purpose of the growth of the gospel of Jesus. The Lord has enabled us to take small incremental steps to match our growth and help build for the next stage as we have moved through a number of building over the years. George's Place has been a great blessing; it has provided a space to grow and nurture children's and youth ministry, the Alpha course, a variety of hospitality events for all ages and for many years the Church Office. Many of these ministries have now outgrown the building and so in the Lord's provision, St George's Place has become the stepping-stone to the next provision, which we pray will be even more fruitful in the years that lay ahead.

Blessings,

The Hub now has a

Bookstall

selling a small range of books, bibles and Tearfund Christmas cards.

The Hub is open from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. Call in and have a look.



Copies of the

Advent Study Guide

are now available from The Hub bookstall priced £5.00.

Homegroup leaders have already been sent the group study notes but the book also includes a 31-day study for personal use.