

## *Making Space for New People*

### *Initial Report of the January 27<sup>th</sup> Church Council Meeting*

The District Church Council (DCC) would like to thank everyone who has prayed, discussed and thought about our *Making Space* consultation on the Sunday worship pattern.

The DCC met last Thursday and, having shared in Holy Communion together, spent a productive two hours trying to discern the best way ahead for our Sunday pattern of worship. The meeting was constructive, good-natured and conducted in a manner one would expect from thoughtful Christian brothers and sisters. A fuller report, together with the minutes of the meeting, will be prepared very soon but church members will, understandably, be keen to know what has been decided.

Some areas of consensus were very clear to the DCC:

- That All Saints' wishes to focus its mission and ministry on as broad a spectrum of people and age groups as possible ("All Saints' for All People" was one way it was expressed);
- That the task of outreach should be urgently addressed by the whole church. The DCC believes that we all need to grow in our understanding of the nature of Christian mission and the part we all have to play in it. A key task remains to refocus our vision for mission from 'getting people to come to church' to living the Good News in our community and networks;
- That there should continue to be an early morning "Quiet Service" every Sunday;
- That there should be an ongoing and steady, but not radical, pace of change.

**There was no consensus regarding any of the three Options as proposed in the *Making Space* leaflet.**

However, the DCC did accept that, in seeking to reach out to all people, it was better to think not in terms of age groups but in terms of preferred *styles* of worship. There are those who would prefer to worship in the relaxed formality of most of our existing 10am services (including families with children), whereas there are also those who would prefer to worship in a more informal style (including older people).

Having considered the relative merits of trying to develop these formal and informal styles of worship within a single service or within two separate services, the consensus in the Church Council was that it should develop a pattern – for an experimental two-year period – based on the following:

#### **Each Sunday at All Saints'**

(the order and times of which remain to be finalised)

#### **An Early Morning Quiet Communion Service**

#### **A Formal Service**

(which could include both Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic worship)

#### **An Informal Service**

(which could include both Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic worship)

The DCC considers that all these services should be regarded as 'main' acts of worship given that, for those who attend each, it is their 'main' opportunity for corporate worship each week. Opportunities could also be found to have occasions when all three congregations gather to celebrate together.

The DCC considers that September would be a good time to begin such a pattern, allowing for time to plan and prepare for this change, including crucially, the identification and training of lay leadership to work alongside the clergy in delivering this challenging pattern. The DCC is now committed to this direction of travel and will be seeking the support and involvement of the wider church in order that it might come into being.