

1) Strengths and things that are going well:

Worship and Prayer

Something on in the church every day of the week.

Liturgy in the Anglo-Catholic tradition on Sundays.

Contemplative services.

Meditation

Healing service.

Bible prayer group.

Community

The Parish identifies itself as being friendly, steadfast, supportive, and welcoming.

It has a strong sense of camaraderie and a commitment to pastoral care.

It continues to be a community which is committed to charitable giving, namely Samaritans and more recently Carrie's Place.

It also identifies as having strong connections with the local community and enjoys working ecumenically.

Clergy and Laity work in a collegial manner

Reciprocal support and nurturing between Clergy and Laity. We work well together and identify gifts within each other to further the mission of the Parish.

Music

A strong musical history with traditional Anglican hymns as the focus and a seniors choir.

Buildings

We have buildings that are on the State Heritage Register and we use them well.

History

We have a strong sense of history, but are also keen to look forward and are beginning to have a more outward focus.

2) Challenges- things that weigh on us, cause us some anxiety

There are a number of major challenges we face.

One of the most important is how we maintain the impetus and the energy that Fr Chris brought to St James. Things were just starting to take off and we would like this to continue. The challenges will thus be how we continue to grow the congregation, deepen the spirituality of those within the congregation and those without, appeal to younger members of the community, promote an outward mission focus within the context of an unsympathetic and unsupportive culture and maintain our enthusiasm for all of that, especially without the leadership of a relatively young and energetic Priest.

We also find raising enough money to pay for what we have to pay for challenging.

We struggle sometimes with facing change and one of the challenges will be how we respond to possible restructuring within the Diocese, maintain what we already have and continue to offer new ways of being in Church so that we appeal to a broader number of people.

3) Hopes

We hope to maintain and bring to maturity what Fr Chris engendered within us.

We hope to continue in the Anglo-Catholic tradition.

We hope to continue to develop our Year of the Lighthouse metaphor as per our Mission Action Plan so that we can deepen our relevance to our community and grow our congregation.

We hope to continue to be led in practices that allow us to deepen our spirituality.

We hope to continue to offer different ways of being in Church, and develop our capacity for evangelism so that we can attract new people to Church.

We hope to deepen the ways we are involved in the community, especially in ways that have a social justice focus.

We hope to keep connections with families we meet through baptism.

We hope to establish deeper connections with other churches in Morpeth and also neighbouring Anglican churches.

We hope for a miracle.

4) Hopes for what a new Rector would bring

We hope the new Rector would bring an openness to engaging in an interpersonal dynamic which allows us to support them in growing their faith and skills as a Priest, and allows us to grow in our faith and skills as laity. We would hope the Rector would bring the capacity for creating relationships with us that are characterised by humility and genuineness.

We hope that our new Rector will bring an attitude of openness to us and to experience.

We hope they would bring a commitment to the Anglo-Catholic tradition.

We hope they would bring a deep spirituality and a commitment to deepening spirituality within us. We also hope they would bring an openness to continuing the contemplative services we have on offer.

We hope they would bring an eloquence when preaching.

We hope they will bring energy and an ability to elicit that in us.

We hope they would bring a commitment to identifying gifts within the laity and encouraging the use of those gifts. We hope that the Rector would be committed to working closely with Laity.

We hope that the new Rector would bring an understanding of the world, with a youthful outlook, a sense of humour who can relate to all ages.

We hope they would bring a knowledge of contemporary theology and be prepared to discuss it with us.

We hope they would bring a capacity to work in a Parish that has energy and life.

We hope they would bring a commitment to leading a balanced life.

We would hope they would bring enough wisdom to know that even though we have a long list of hopes, we will love and accept them for who they are and what they can bring to us.