



The St Peter's and St James Project

Key Objectives

Dreaming big and being bold in our planning in order to breathe fresh life into the city of Hereford, so that a new generation can rise up and continue the work of reaching out with the love of God to the hurting, the broken and the needy, as have so many who have gone before



The St Peter's and St James Project

Key Objectives

To establish St Peters as a City Centre Hub Church with a focus on Young People and Young Adults

- To engage with young adults through the creation of a chaplaincy service to the new University planned for Hereford and with Hereford Campus of Hereford and Ludlow College
- Working with other churches to reimagine ministry to the city centre, reaching out to the thousands of people who travel in for work or shopping
- To build on the existing relationship with Close House
- Develop a new online network of young adults across the city

Empowering the Laity to Re-imagine Ministry for the 21st Century

- Providing more opportunities to engage in mission through strategic central coordination
- Running regular discipleship and training courses to encourage and equip people into mission
- Creation of online material to encourage spirituality in the home
- To encourage the laity within the wider Diocese through communicating success stories and challenges encountered
- Provide training to clergy and key lay people within the Diocese through creating material from the learning of the project

Meeting Diocesan Priorities



This project seeks to significantly grow the church in the parish of St Peter's and St James, both numerically and spiritually. It is also believed that this will have a knock on affect throughout the city and diocese as the work is disseminated and people are encouraged and enthused afresh to join in with God's mission.

This project seeks to radically reimagine our mission as a Diocese to the younger generations that are missing from our churches, providing crucial learning for the Diocese. The long term sustainability of the project is key to enable this to continue, meaning new patterns of Church can emerge.



Wider strategy and rationale for the project

This project is specifically targeted at the revitalisation of the City of Hereford. The City of Hereford has a population of 65,000, a quarter of the overall diocese and by far the largest urban area. Indeed, the City has a disproportionate impact for its size on the surrounding areas. Hereford as a city in UK terms would perhaps be classified as a small market town but because of the very rural nature of the surrounding area it has a disproportionate influence akin to a much larger conurbation. As an example Hereford Sixth form college, Hereford College of Arts and Herefordshire & Ludlow College are all on the same site and draw young people from well beyond the county boundaries bringing significant numbers of young people into the city. The city of Hereford has an influence geographically, economically, politically and spiritually which belies its size. As a consequence, a modest investment can have an influence which in a larger city would be seen as a drop in the ocean.

Currently less than 1% of these people regularly attend church in stark contrast to our rural attendance of between 3-5%. We current invest £9.66 (per person) into ministry compared to an average of £15.10 (as high as £26.81 in Clun Forest). Hereford City also has some of the most deprived areas in the country (seven city wards in the top 25% IMD areas) and two of the church schools in the area have recently fallen into special measures, one of which is an area in the bottom 20% most deprived areas.

Statistics for mission figures for 2018 indicate that only 76 children under 17 attended Anglican churches in the City on a Sunday, which represents 0.59% of all children in the City. This is literally a crisis of faith that requires immediate and radical action.

The Diocesan mission is to "Inspire each generation to follow Jesus Christ so that lives and communities are changed and God's kingdom grows here in the Hereford Diocese, on earth, as in heaven."

The parish of St Peter's and St James is right in the heart of the city, and so this project seeks to assist in the delivery of this mission by meeting the following shared goals contained in the Diocesan Strategy: -

- To reach younger generations as strongly as older ones – so that disciples and churches better reflect the ages and backgrounds of the communities we serve.
- To lift areas of weaker attendance to match more closely our 3% rural attendance, and maintain our 3% rural average.
- To grow a "mixed economy" of congregations/worship – different styles, days/times, reach in every deanery across the diocese.
- To grow confidence in living disciples in the whole of life and the whole-life disciple-making churches.



Why St Peter's and St James and Why Now?

In 1968, the then vicar of St Peter's, Rev'd Charles Strong wrote this in a booklet to the church:

"St.Peter's, Hereford is a lovely building of great character that has been well cared for by many, many generations of worshippers. In addition to serving the parish, its position in the centre of the town gives Christians a great opportunity to reach those who for one reason or other cannot be reached by their own parish church. St.Peter's is more than this however. Certainly since the renowned John Venn became vicar in 1833 there has been a strong tradition of evangelical ministry, and the combination of the Gospel truth and simple worship continues to be a strength and attraction to many people. These two things then - central position and evangelical ministry - are the reason for St.Peter's existence today. They present at once the opportunity and the duty to reach out to people with the unadorned truth that is so sorely needed today."

Fifty-two years later we believe this unique opportunity is once again here for St Peter's Church by becoming a hub for young people and young adults who are sadly missing from many of our churches today, with 37% of the population of the city of Hereford being aged 0-29, and this set to rise with a new engineering university (New Models in Technology and Engineering , NMITE). By 2030 there is forecasted to be 5,000 students attending the university. The university HQ is opposite St Peters Church and St Peter's has taken the lead on discussions regarding the Diocese providing a Chaplain to the university. To have someone in post from the start of the new university will enable a natural growing together.

"At NMITE the wellbeing of our learners and staff is paramount. We are therefore pleased to be able to work in partnership with St Peter's Church as a contributor to the comprehensive support services that we will be offering at NMITE. As a start-up higher education institution, we are lean in our overhead staff. So to have a dedicated person in post through St Peter's, from the beginning, who can help us to shape our new chaplaincy service would be hugely beneficial and so we fully support this application."

– Karen Usher, Founding Trustee and Director of NMITE.

With the university buildings, including accommodation, being situated in or near the centre of the city this presents a terrific opportunity to open up St Peters Church as a City Centre Hub Church reaching out to young adults in this area. In addition, there are over 4,000 students at the further education colleges in the City and St Peters' will seek to engage with them and strengthen links with the Chaplaincy support provided there.

The link with St James is also key to the long term success of this project. There is already missional energy in St James Church with an excellent Messy Church, children and families



work and links to schools as well as running regular Alpha courses. The Parish is committed to funding a children and families' worker as it seeks to "grow younger". The project will seek to build on this expertise and drive to engage in the first instance with young people in and around the City centre with a view to commencing a Young Person's congregation in St Peters. St Peters has already piloted an alternative monthly contemporary worship service currently attracting 35 people from several churches.

St Peter's and St James PCC is also committed to the proposed Diocesan Missional Training Hub through offering the use of Church House, a building right in the heart of the city with excellent transport links within walking distance. The learning from this new work with children and families, young people and students will help to form best practice in providing targeted leadership and development training for Clergy and equipping lay people to play a full role in these areas within their own context.

The project will also link with neighbouring parishes, it will assist the Holmer project with the worship of the new midweek congregation and with the West Hereford Team in exploring a joint missional approach to the shared city centre. The goal of the "St Peter's and St James Project" is to grow a church that can long term sustain a ministry to the missing younger generations that live or study in the city of Hereford.

About St Peter's and St James

St Peter's and St James' in Hereford is a parish rooted in the Evangelical Anglican tradition with two church buildings and four congregations serving God together. We are people of all walks of life with a passion for Jesus, who explore the Bible to live its truth, who are open to the Holy Spirit, who care for one another and enjoy each other's company, who want to serve our different communities, and who have a desire to make the love of Jesus known and grow the Kingdom of God. We are actively involved in the community, in social issues, in the arts, and in the environment. SPSJ is a friendly and warm parish where you can find yourself at home.

Our shared vision as a church is 'Showing Jesus is Lord in our worship, witness, prayer and care' and every year we have a Bible Verse for the year. In 2020 this was from Ezra chapter 5 verse 11. Overleaf you can see a postcard that was given to every member of the church at the start of the year.



We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and we are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago - Ezra 5:11



Showing Jesus is Lord in our

Worship

God-focused - God alone deserves to be praised (*Luke 19:40*)
Relational - God invites us to come and know Him (*John 10:27*)
Communal - We cannot do this on our own (*Colossians 3:16*)
Whole-life - Everything is to be set apart for God (*Romans 12:1*)

Witness

Commissioned - Called to go and make disciples (*Matthew 28:19*)
Carriers of Hope - Christ, the hope of glory, lives in us (*Colossians 1:27*)
United - Being like-minded and one in spirit (*Philippians 2:2*)
Empowered - Clothed with power from on high (*Luke 24:49*)

Prayer

Dependent - Without Jesus we can do nothing (*John 15:5*)
Expectant - Believing God hears and answers us (*Matt. 7:8*)
Thankful - Remembering what we have in Jesus (*1 Thess. 5:18*)
Selfless - Seeking God's will for all people (*1 Tim. 2:1*)

Care

Sacrificial - To continue the work & example of Jesus (*John 13:15-17*)
Good Stewards - To be faithful in all God has given us (*Matthew 25:23*)
Big Picture - To care for the whole of God's creation (*Gen. 2:15*)
Transformational - Bringing the future into the present (*Rev. 21:1-5*)



www.spsj.org.uk