

Survey of Congregational wishes for a new Rector.

By far the highest number of responses, were for two main issues:
a need for change and growth, and a need to grow children and families work as a matter of high priority.

These requests came from all age groups including many over 75 years.

The above is noted at the start, because support for these two items was so far above any other requests, with numerous related comments being made in response to other questions.

1. Personal Attributes required of a new Rector.

The personal traits that were raised by respondents with significant repetition, were for a **kind, empathetic communicator, a people person,** with an ability to withstand pressures from the work.

Able to engage with all ages including children.

An evangelist, a bible teacher and an energetic leader.

Someone with a track record of working in and being a part of a Church which has gone through significant change and as a result has achieved growth.

A candidate who has clear ideas of how church growth can be achieved, and has the **energy, strength of commitment and a strong desire to see change and growth** in a new Church setting.

A very significant number of respondents said that they would like to see a **young family in the Rectory,** who were all very involved in, and committed to, the Church.

2. Main priorities for the new Rector.

Children and Youth work.

The importance of **Children, Families and Youth work** was a common factor flagged up by the highest number of all respondents, with 75%

highlighting the need to concentrate on this area in order to grow the Church.

Of this number, **well over three quarters specifically raised the need for the appointment of a full time Families worker** in achieving this aim.

One of the main changes sought was for a morning service aimed at families, the younger ages, and inclusive of those who may never, or only rarely, have attended Church.

A service with little formality, involvement of young people, relevant teaching and good lively music provided by youth groups, was raised by many respondents.

The requirement for an ongoing engagement with families who are relatively new to any form of Church based worship, was raised by some respondents, through afternoon services in the form of Messy Church or Families at 4.

The continuing engagement with schools and other youth organisations in the village was frequently mentioned by respondents.

There was a suggestion by some respondents that a form of sports clubs in line with other local Churches, could be set up.

Music

Related suggestions included **services with music groups providing a mix of music types**. The involvement of teenagers in this music was often flagged up.

Services.

Shorter, livelier, informal, family friendly were all words used.

Groups

There were a number of suggestions that social/friendship groups be set up following all Christening courses, and that House Groups for younger families were also established. Ongoing contact with couples married in the Church. Points made, groups lead to friendships and an opportunity to support and build on this.

3. Other Actions for consideration by the new Rector.

Services.

Responses have shown a **desire for change, circa 70% of respondents** flagged this factor up.

This was often related to making services more “relevant” to families, children, life today, and those who may be new to Church events and services. It was also a stated preference for a very significant number of the respondents themselves.

These comments were asking for services with a great deal less formality, that were able to be understood by all, including newer attendees, and longer term participants, It is worthy of note that some of the respondents asking for these changes have been attending services spasmodically for years, and others in this comment category, regularly for far longer.

Included in this area of comment, were requests for **fewer communion services** at the 10am Sunday service, “**more teaching**”, “**livelier uplifting hymns**”, “**shorter prayers**”, and “**shorter services,**” saying these were more in line with the needs of families and new comers to Church based worship needs, as well as their own preference.

These comments came from all age groups, from younger groups to the very oldest.

There were a significant number of requests for **less liturgy**, the status quo being described by a wide range of respondents and ages to be “repetitive”, “incomprehensible,” a “foreign language to those who have not grown up with it,” and taking up time that they would prefer for teaching.

Out of the respondents who flagged up a wish for a more modern service on a Sunday morning, a number raised the possibility of retaining the early traditional service on a Sunday morning, with the later service being contemporary, serving younger, newer to the Church, or seekers to the faith, with less formality, simple Bible teaching and with a relevance to the life of young families, and using modern hymns and music.

There was an acknowledgement across many responses which recognized the opposing needs of a formal service for some, and a contemporary

service for others, and a kindly appreciation that provision of both was necessary and important to fairly serve all members in the Church.

Social Media.

There were a number of responses which asked for an **updated website, and a better use of social media and blogs.**

Further, the **online streaming of services, groups and meetings** has proven very popular and many have requested that this continues and is developed.

Engagement with the village.

There was a request by a good number of respondents that the Church should **“engage more with the village”**, indeed aim to become a **“central hub in the village.”**

Suggestions included, opening up for meetings, toddler events or coffee. Alongside this, mention was made by quite a few respondents about the layout of the Church and its inflexibility for alternative forms of worship, and meetings.

Climate Change.

Several respondents flagged up the urgent need for the Church to act on the issue of the environment, and suggested that young people may also appreciate this move.

Survey details.

This survey was carried out for the process of seeking a new incumbent for the Church. Confidentiality was promised.

The majority of surveys were completed by email, a small number conducted by telephone calls, some by zoom, and the remainder came by post.

65 members of the Church responded.

eleven were in the under 50 age, thirty seven were in the 50 to 75 age range, and seventeen in the over 75 group.