

Summary of Congregation and Community Consultation 2021

Congregation Consultation

Overview

In late February/early March, we sent out the consultation questionnaire to the church family and our village community groups to gather information on what we would want from our new vicar. From an Electoral Roll of 120, 38 people replied. 8% were in the 30 to 50 age group, 39% in the 50 to 75 age group, and 47% were over 75. 82% classified themselves as attending church regularly, and 21% as occasional, infrequent, or special events only.

Not all people have answered all questions, but there is sufficient information to find commonality in the answers. This is the summary of your answers to the questions.

House for Duty, Part-Time or Full-Time Vicar?

One of the key areas we were interested in was whether we should revert to a House for Duty vicar, who works 2 days plus Sunday, or whether we should continue with a full-time vicar, who works 5 days plus Sunday.

We asked you to rate the duties of the vicar as High, Medium or Low in order to find out what was important to you. Here is the summary from High to Low:

Activities	Importance
Services, including weddings, funerals and baptisms	High
Pastoral Care	High
Mission	High
School	High
Administration	High
Discipleship	Medium to High
PCC	Medium
Deanery Synod and Chapter meetings for Diocese and Deanery	Low

Cassa was paid through the Ministry Fund which was set up for 5 years to the end of 2021 to pay her as a full-time vicar. A small number of people contributed to this fund. So we asked whether you were willing to increase your financial contribution to the church to decide whether we could afford to pay for a part-time or full-time vicar, or whether we should revert to a House for Duty vicar. **There was a clear indication that people are not willing to increase their contributions, so we will revert to a House for Duty vicar.**

Those who completed the questionnaire answered as follows:

	No
1 extra day	65%
2 extra days	74%
3 extra days	79%

Attributes and priorities for the new vicar and the church

We asked a number of open questions to understand what you would like to see in the new vicar, and what activities you expected from them, and from the church. Here are the summaries of your replies, capturing the common comments.

Question 1: What are the 3 main attributes you would like to see in the new vicar for Holy Trinity?

- a. Characteristics for the vicar: friendly, approachable, caring, compassionate, showing empathy, vibrant, bright, cheerful, sense of humour, outgoing, enthusiastic, people person, creative, willing to try new ideas, more informal than formal, demonstrates leadership but also delegates and encourages others to contribute, a team player, a clear and confident speaker, eager to use modern media.
- b. Worship style: traditional and contemporary services, broadminded, accepts diversity, is open to different points of view/worship styles, interested in the issues of society (climate change, etc), eager to work with/have joint activities with the Baptists and Quakers, and Chalfont St Giles.
- c. Community outreach: Continue the contacts and engagement with the local schools and nurseries, support and engage in community activities and be a visible presence, engage with families and young children especially.

Question 2: What should be the 3 main priorities for the church family in the next 2 to 3 years for Seer Green and Jordans?

- a. Build blended worship: rebuild the in-person worship in the church building, but continue to support the online streaming and coffee and chat; encourage families into church; help maintain the church family that may be split between online and in-person; increase participation and involvement from more people, including the children; broaden the appeal of the church; re-establish music and singing in the church.
- b. Support people in their daily life, not just on Sundays: support families and children; support church at home; house groups and discipleship courses; deepen the faith of the congregation, both regulars and less frequent.
- c. Keep the church as the centre of the community for all in the community: mission with the Baptist Church; respond to changes in society and people's lives (Brexit, pandemic, climate change, etc); support local charities; pastoral care.

Question 3: What actions do you think the church family could consider in order to continue to support and sustain our communities?

- a. Welcoming and supportive: visit new residents, welcome pack, welcoming attitude; pastoral care; continue care shown to our neighbours during the pandemic.
- b. Participate in community activities: visible support for local charities, businesses and groups; engagement with the schools and nurseries; support young families; forge closer links; encourage participation of church family in village activities.
- c. Establish church activities to fill the gaps and be open to everyone in the community: coffees, teas, 5 minutes peace, relevant talks and support groups (but not duplicating what the Baptist Church does); invite schools to participate in services; have a variety of services that are friendly and open to everyone.

Question 4: What actions do you think the church family could consider to increase the involvement of children and families in our Church, and our involvement with them?

- a. Youth and family ministry: Continue what Janna is doing; service for children at least once a month; family friendly, shorter services; worship opportunities for different age groups; encourage participation in the services; ask children to decorate the windowsills; Junior Church; use church for school assemblies, maybe by year group and invite parents; talks relevant to parents eg drug use.
- b. Teenagers: Bible study groups; house groups; 'lock ins', music nights; get them to lead a service or be involved in a service; topics of interest to them eg environment, mental health and link to God's word.
- c. Participate in village events and have our own events: school fair, scouts, church fete.

Question 5: If you were to describe the church to someone new in 3- or 4-years' time, what would you like to tell them about our church family and villages?

Warm, welcoming, friendly villages and churches. A place to meet friends. A church welcoming to all and everyone has a place in it. An active church and community. Caring and supportive. Non-judgmental. Holy Trinity is actively engaged with the Baptist Church and the communities. The Christian message is preached and taught in a way that is inclusive and inspires people to be a force for good in the world.

Communities Consultation

Overview

12 groups across Seer Green and Jordans have been interviewed, with different questions to the congregation, asking what they wanted from our church. The local schools have not been contacted yet, due to their other commitments to open up the schools. This is the summary of their feedback, containing the shared ideas.

- a. The community groups want to engage and partner with us. In some cases, there seems a desire for the church to initiate activities, with the community participating, in others for the church to be visible in community events. The church may still be perceived as the vicar, and many requests are for the vicar to attend, volunteer or support.
- b. The church could also use its social media to advertise its activities to the villages, and to show support for village activities.