

St John's Mission Audit Survey 2008 **Summary analysis of 212 questionnaires**

1. Demographics

- 50% of our responding congregation is over 70, compared with 33% in the 1991 Parish audit (a survey returned by 227 people, compared with 212 this time).
- The proportion of under 50's in the congregation has significantly declined; 50-59 has remained constant
- During that period the age ratio of the Alresford population has not significantly changed, but we know that the percentage of older people generally is forecast to increase in the next two decades
- We consequently have a lower proportion now of working people in the congregation, and of full time homemakers
- We also have a much higher proportion of single people in the congregation
- Over 40% of our congregation have lived in Alresford over 20 years, compared with 21% in 1991; 23 % of our congregation have lived here under 10 years, compared to 50% in 1991. It has therefore become a more stable community, both within St John's and in Alresford generally, with a lower rate of influx of new residents and potential new worshippers.

2. Church attendance

- The majority of our congregation have attended St John's for over 15 years; in 1991 the majority had started coming in the past 10 years.
- 64% of the survey currently attend church at least once a week, compared with 85% in 1991
- 8.00am and 9.30 services on Sundays continue to be the main services attended, but the growth in new services eg Second Sunday and Sunday at 7 has made the pattern of worship more varied, especially as a higher proportion of people do not attend weekly and choose between services. The largest congregation is consistently at Second Sunday (160+) and they constitute the highest concentration of younger families and children. This younger group were the lowest level of respondents to the survey, despite strenuous efforts to involve them in it. 9.30 Communion on the remaining Sundays attracts 125 or less with an older profile.
- Records of attendance at services demonstrate exceptionally high numbers at Festivals (200-300) with the Christmas Eve Crib service holding the record at between 400 and 500.

3. Perceptions of St John's

The remaining questions (from Q12 onwards) were concerned with the perceptions of respondents of their experiences at St John's, their likes and dislikes and their views about the relationship between St John's and the wider Alresford community. They can be summarised as follows.

Q12. What Are You Looking For From Worship at St. John's?

- Spiritual refreshment/inspiration
- Peace/ opportunity for reflection
- Meeting God
- Fellowship
- Strengthening faith

- Communal worship

Q13. What Changes To Worship Would You Like To See?

- More informal/modern worship
- More traditional worship
- More Christian teaching
- More opportunity for reflection /silence
- More weekday services – only 4

Q14. What Do You Like *Most* About Worship In St. John's?

- Welcoming /friendly
- Phil - plus the ministry team
- Variety of services
- Choir and music
- Pastoral care
- Sermons
- Involvement of children and families

Q15. What Do You Like *Least* About Worship In St. John's?

- Services too long
- Noisy children
- Services /music dull
- “Dumbing down” of traditional liturgy
- Cliquiness – a few non-welcoming people
- Changes in services
- Choir in north aisle

Q16. What Is Your Main Way of Finding Out About Services & Other Events At St. John's?

Magazine; weekly notices. 7% use website.

Q17. How could the church support you more?

- Offering more social activities:
- Visiting you & listening to your needs:
- Praying for you/your family:
- Car pool- transport for evening meetings

Q18. What gets in the way of you coming to church?

- Family commitments (large majority)
- Health
- Work
- Children not wanting to come

Q19. If you could change just *two* things about St. John's, what would they be?

- More to attract children and young people
- More modern hymns
- More informal services
- More traditional liturgy
- Shorter Sunday morning services
- Move choir back into chancel

- Slow pace of change
- Better access to JPH from church
- More welcome before and after church
- 9.30 start too early
- Improved communication from PCC and re service changes
- More quiet in church before services
- Have Communion every Sunday
- More non-eucharistic services
- Choir should be less performance and more there to lead worship

Q20. What do you think St. John's does for the Alresford community?

- Focus
- Caring
- Weddings, baptisms, funerals
- School links
- Bringing people into church – concerts, Watercross Festival
- Working with the other churches

Q21. What additional things could St. John's do for the Alresford community?

- Youth activity/youth worker
- Social events
- Revive street wardens scheme
- Regular coffee mornings etc in JPH
- More use of church for concerts/art exhibitions and other activities
- Involve children more
- Young family /parenting support
- More representation on town/community organisations eg Town Partnership

Q22. How can we reach out better from St. John's to more people in the wider Alresford community?

- Distribution of parish magazine to *all* households – summary edition or annual special
- More community activities in JPH
- More to encourage young people
- Christian bookshop
- More accessible services
- Alpha course publicised for wider community
- Provision for disabled parking/ more help with transport to church and church activities
- Use of north door – more visible to the town
- Listen to people who do not go to church
- Better communication from PCC and explanation of worship and changes through the magazine