

Church @ Home for 1 May 2022

Project Phoenix: Why in God's name?

A while ago the PCC decided to re-affirm our commitment to a new Parish Centre, known as Project Phoenix.

In making that decision we wanted time to reflect on why a new Parish Centre is part of our Mission as a Church and why it matters to God.

To help us during May each of our Sunday sermons (8am and 9.30am) will reflect on one of the 5 Marks of Mission and you are invited to come and engage. The 5 Marks of mission of the Church are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth



Our Five Marks of Mission

This Sunday we are reflecting on the first mark of mission – to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God. In some ways this Mark of Mission is a good summary of the whole Christian life and what we are called to strive for above all else.

With the coming of Christ, the kingdom begins not in the coronation of a mighty king but in the birth of a crying baby. Yet as Jesus' ministry begins in Mark, he announces, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). What Israel had long awaited, Christ had now inaugurated. I sometimes feel that we are told that we are called to proclaim the Good News, but we don't actually say or teach much about Good News in a practical sense, apart from 'it's Jesus'

The Marks of mission of mission help us – as the next 4 marks of mission go into the 'what' of the kingdom, but more of that in the following weeks.

The big question for now, how does spending a lot of money on a new parish centre help proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God? Well firstly it enables us to have a building and facilities which will enable us to live out the kingdom in our community more effectively and powerfully.

Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, what it also does is show our intent, and that the church and our desire to live out the values of the kingdom is still strong here in Harpenden. At the moment we are limited by what we can do and how we can serve others. Just imagine what we could do in the future with a new parish centre?

I only ask that you continue to pray that God's will be done, and that we his church continue to strive to listen to his voice so that the Good News of the Kingdom will be proclaimed through Project Phoenix, and that as God requires, generous hearts and minds will be open to enable it to happen.