



# Worship in Rural Contexts

- Our Starting Points and Issues
- **Programmes and Staffing**
- **Cultural Calendar**
- **Big Church, Little Church Worship**
- **Keeping our bearings**
- Challenges & Opportunities
- Resources, Loose Ends etc

8.00 am

9.30 am

11.00 am

1st

BCP HC  
HAM

CW HC  
FEN

FAMILY  
STOKE

2nd

BCP HC  
STOW

BCP HC  
LEA

CW HC  
CROFT

3rd

BCP HC  
HAM

FAMILY  
FEN

CW HC  
STOKE

4th

BCP HC  
STOW

MATINS  
LEA

FAMILY  
CROFT

## Revised Monthly Service Plan - wef January 2009

Agreed by PCC 10/08

### EXPLANATION:

Revision due to St. Peter's new 'Accessible' Service on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays

Bi-monthly FS at Kington and The Well put on hold; Parish Healing Services to Mondays

Sunday	Inkberrow	Cookhill	Kington	Dormston
1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	8am HC2 10.45am FC I	9.30am FC I		4.30pm HC I
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	8am HC2 10.45am FC I	9.30am MPs	9.30am HC I/2	4.30pm/6pm EP
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	8.00am HC2 10.45am <b>New AS</b>	9.30am FC I	10.45am <b>MP</b> (month 1)	-
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	8.00am HC2 10.45am <b>FC I</b>	9.30am FC I	4.30pm <b>EP</b> (month 2)	10.45am MPs
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	8.00am HC2 10.45am FC I	9.30am MPs		

### KEY:

MPs = Morning Praise; MP = Morning Prayer (BCP); EP = Evening Prayer (BCP);

F/HCI/2 = Family/Holy Communion (Order 1/2); FS = Family Service; etc

### NOTES:

Month 1 = Jan, Mar, etc; Month 2 = Feb, Apr, etc

Occasional Family (all-age) Services at St. James and St. Peter's will be chosen to fit seasonal calendar

### WEEKDAYS

Occasional Mondays: Services of Wholeness & Healing, 7.30pm (around the parish?)

Monthly Tuesday evening services at St. Paul's to be put on hold for review

Weekly Wednesday, 10am Holy Communion at St. Peter's continues

# Regular?

Many services became no longer weekly but monthly, creating a context which demanded esoteric knowledge to find them, discouraged that the favoured Anglican bird of passage, the casual attender, and created patterns of irregular attendance as an unwelcome norm in spirituality.

*George Lings*

# Joining Together?

The [Methodist Church] policy became to close small local chapels and ask people to come together to form critical mass or joinable churches.

Conversations I had with Methodist leaders tell me one third of the people simply stopped going anywhere, one third stayed local but transferred (usually to the Anglicans) and only one third complied.

*George Lings*

# Flying Machine?

It is better to provide simple but sustainable weekly lay-led services of the word, with Eucharist less frequently, than to operate with the priest as a whirling dervish Eucharistic machine, flying around the benefice, parachuting in for the magic words, splitting the integrity of word and sacrament and unable to build pastoral contacts.

*George Lings*

# Local Christian Communities – centrally supported

- Each church has a small worship planning team
- Trained and supervised by central staff, with resources centrally available
- The team meets regularly to review, plan, assign tasks, agree themes, etc
- Each member of the team will have particular gifts and callings (eg eucharistic ministry, 'preaching', 'ideas', IT/DTP)
- Every service is co-planned and co-led by at least 2 of the team, involving where possible others not in the team

# Family/National Year

- Start of school year (September)
- All Saints (an antidote to Halloween)
- All Souls
- Remembrance
- Christmas
- New Year
- Valentines Day

# Family/National Year

- Mothering Sunday
- Lent, Holy Week and Easter
- St. George
- Exam time
- Fathers Day
- End of school year (Y6 service)
- Holiday time

# Agricultural Year

- Creation - 2nd Sunday before Lent
- Plough Sunday - 1st Sunday of Epiphany
- Rogationtide - 6th Sunday of Easter
- Lammastide - 1 August
- Harvest Thanksgiving - Start of October
- Prayers in times of Agricultural Crisis

# Comments & Issues...

- Lots of one-offs?
- Trying something different (at least once!)
- Small (cell?), medium, large...
- Group/benefice services? Valuable? Necessary?
- Attractive and thorough publicity
- Sustainability

# Intimacy? Formality? in small congregations...

Worship 'quality'?

Safety in numbers (exposure in small numbers)

Relationships

Informal gathering/word/prayer?

Formal Eucharist?

# Musical Options

The Organist

A music group (which may include children)

The Digital Hymnal

Midi files on the existing organ

'No Organist - No Problem' etc

Unaccompanied singing

# Handling God's Word

Bible Study or Study Course

DVD or CD

Drama or dialogue

Pre-written homily

'Conversation'/discussion

Meditation

Poetry?

Podcast (or DVD?)

# Intercession

Contributions from congregation?

Newspapers?

Local and wide

Actions/movement

Multi-sensory/activity mix

Silence

# All-Age & Inclusive

Crèche Area?

Junior Church/Sunday School

Printed resources

All-age worship?

Workshops (in a local hall?)

Midweek?

Saturdays?

# Making Worship

Leading people in worship is leading people into mystery, into the unknown and yet the familiar. This spiritual activity is much more than getting the words or the sections in the right order. The primary object in the careful planning and leading of the service is the spiritual direction which enables the whole congregation to come into the presence of God to give him glory.

*New Patterns for Worship*

# What they really, really want...

A de-churched enquirer was talking recently about his journey back to faith after 20 years. After a while, the question of where to worship came up. The key criterion for this person was not the style of service nor the distance to travel. Instead he said, 'I want something that is going to connect me with the living God. I don't care what that looks like - I don't mind being challenged or even uncomfortable.'

*Mission-shaped Parish*

# What is possible?

The rural church is not going to grow regionally noteworthy ministries in preaching, musical excellence or provision for varied ages of children's groups. What it does is **offer something simple and sustainable, where all who go count; they know and are known.**

*George Lings*