

# **God Gives the Growth**

Saint Alban's Church

Mission Action Plan

2015 - 2018



## Introduction and Background

The Saint Alban's Chaplaincy Profile, drawn up in 2014, provides the background, and an essential starting-point, for this Mission Action Plan. It described Saint Alban's as "an Anglican church, offering ministry in English to a wide variety of Christians of many different cultural backgrounds and Christian traditions." It went on to offer the following Mission Statement:

We are an international church family who, whilst worshipping God in the Anglican tradition, welcome people from all Christian faiths and also those who are on a spiritual journey in search of faith in God. We strive to see ourselves as the Body of Christ – the salt and the light to encourage those on this journey.

St. Alban's provides a strong foundation and a Christian presence, providing sanctuary for many seeking both spiritual care and fellowship, and sees itself as a 'home from home' for people from many different backgrounds. As a community of Christian faith, we keep in mind the advice attributed to St Augustine: "In the primary things, unity. In the secondary things, liberality. In all things, charity."

The Mission of the Church is the mission of Christ – we use the Five Marks of Mission frequently, quoting it in all relevant documents and public communication.

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

After providing a summary of current parish activities, the profile laid out a "Vision for the future of the parish." This was based, in part, on a consultative survey carried out within the congregation. It identified six specific areas for development:

- **Diversity and Welcome.** "Our aim is that we are accessible to everyone who would like to join us, whatever their background and whatever their previous experience of church has been."
- **Pastoral Care.** "It is important that there are always support mechanisms in place for those who are struggling, particularly as the congregation includes the whole of Denmark."
- **Young People and Students.** "Both Copenhagen and Aarhus are international cities with great opportunities to engage with the English-speaking community."

- **Worship.** “We would also like to explore different styles of service ... and explore ways of providing opportunities and activities for young people.”
- **Visitors and Pilgrims.** “We would like to explore how we could provide a stronger ministry to those who come through our doors and are open to some sort of faith encounter. We need to make the most of the opportunity of engaging with all the visitors.”
- **Space.** “Although we have a large worship area (nave) and some small rooms that can be used for meetings, we don't have a dedicated social/meeting space.”

Further background for this Mission Action Plan was provided by the Mission Day / Away Day which the Church Council undertook on 13 June 2015. After input from the Chaplain and discussion both in small groups and in a plenary session, the gathering identified four priorities which would receive attention in the short and medium terms. They were as follows:

- The need to provide accessible toilet facilities at the Church and a determination to continue to investigate options for a church hall.
- The need to provide additional paid staff (clerical and/or lay) to support ministry at Saint Alban's.
- A new “welcome” initiative, to include quarterly welcome lunches for new members and a designated welcome@st-albans.dk email address.
- The need for a multi-annual strategic plan for Saint Alban's.

## Theological Framework: God gives the Growth

Mission — and this Mission Action Plan — begins and ends with God. Much of what follows in this document is, quite rightly and necessarily, concerned with plans, strategies, targets and objectives. These, however, must be given an appropriate theological context if they are not to be seriously misunderstood.

The first piece of necessary theological underpinning is the principle that the mission into which Saint Alban's is called is the *missio Dei* - the mission of God. Therefore, while the Church can and must play its part in that mission, it by no means constitutes the entirety of God's loving and transforming presence in the world. In the words of the South African missiologist David Bosch, "The *missio Dei* is God's activity, which embraces both the Church and the world, and in which the Church may be privileged to participate ... [it] takes place in ordinary human history, not exclusively in and through the Church." (*Transforming Mission*).

This realisation has fundamental implications for how we perceive our work and witness. In this understanding, the goal of mission is not simply growth in the size of a particular instrument of that mission such as an individual Church or congregation. The goal of mission is much more expansive than that, involving as it does the growth of God's kingdom of faith, hope and love in the world at large. A central congregational calling, therefore, is not to simply to invite others to "come and see" what we are doing *inside*, but to seek-out the presence of God *outside* the walls of the institution and join-in with that divine activity.

An equally essential, and related, piece of theological context relates to the concept of "growth." For Christians, the essential growth to which we are called is, as Saint Paul reminds us, an increase in spiritual maturity and in becoming Christ-like — "We must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ." (Ephesians 3:15b). This grace-enabled growing and maturing is our hope and our calling and can be seen in lives characterised by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22). It may be that such increase in the fruits of the Spirit will coincide with periods of numerical growth; but the latter, while welcome, can not be our sole focus, or an end in itself.

Finally, we should be mindful of Saint Paul's admonition to the squabbling Christians of Corinth when they boasted about their missionary "success." Paul reminded them that while they had indeed undertaken specific and necessary preparatory tasks — "I planted and Apollos watered" — it was ultimately God alone who had brought new life and increase. "So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."

For us at Saint Alban's, this Mission Action Plan is our carefully and prayerfully considered attempt at planting and nurturing in this place at this time. We commend it to all those who wish to see the continued flourishing of the Anglican Church in Denmark; but most of all we commend it to the One who alone gives the growth.

## **Walking Together in Faith**

In 2015 the Diocese in Europe published a strategy document (see Appendix A). Entitled “Walking Together in Faith” it sets out a “common purpose” for the Diocese, which includes “Knowing ourselves as the beloved children of God” and “Loving God and our neighbour and sharing the Good News.” This vision is explored under five priorities – growth, evangelization, justice, reconciliation and resources – each of which is given further elaboration in a series of sub-headings or objectives.

Although primarily produced for a diocesan, as well as a chaplaincy, context, “Walking Together in Faith” provides a useful road-map and check-list. It is also understood that applications for central church funding will be expected to be in line with the stated Diocesan Strategy. Therefore, the document is used here (with certain modifications and additions) as a framework for our Mission Action Plan.

The final draft of this Mission Action Plan was agreed by the Saint Alban’s Church Council at its meeting of 24 January 2016.

## Priority 1. Building up the Body of Christ and fostering growth

	New Initiative	Lead Responsibility	Timeline/ Target	Extra Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Deepening faith and practice in prayer and worship.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Teaching the faith and promoting Christian education.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Establish a Saint Alban's Youth Group (Teenagers) to meet at least monthly during term.</p>	<p>Council, Chaplain, Ministry Team and subsequently a Youth and Student Worker / Assistant Chaplain (see 5 below).</p>	<p>Underway.</p>	<p>Programme Budget of DKK 10K per annum. For staffing cost see 5 below.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Encouraging and supporting the vocation of all the baptized.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Undertake regular Christian discipleship / spiritual development / prayer courses such as the Church of England 'Pilgrim' Course.</p>	<p>Licensed Readers with support from rest of Ministry Team.</p>	<p>First 'Pilgrim' course in 2016.</p>	<p>Programme Budget of DKK 10K</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Nurturing new disciples especially young people.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Investigate the possibility of a regular Sunday morning creche for the under 3s.</p>	<p>Council.</p>	<p>2016.</p>	<p>Approx DKK 300-500 per Sunday.</p>
	<p>Establish a Saint Alban's Student and Young Adult (20s and 30s) Group to meet at least monthly during term.</p> <p>Investigate the possibility of extra Sunday services, e.g. 'early' Eucharist on 'First Sundays' and /or major Feast Days; and regular Sunday afternoon services.</p>	<p>Council, Chaplain, Ministry Team and subsequently a Youth and Student Worker / Assistant Chaplain (see 5 below).</p> <p>Chaplain, Ministry Team and Sidesmen co-ordinator.</p>	<p>Underway.</p> <p>Underway.</p>	<p>Programme Budget of DKK 15K per annum. For staffing cost see 5 below.</p>

## Priority 2. Sharing, with other churches and agencies in God’s Mission

	New Initiative	Lead Responsibility	Timeline/ Target	Extra Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Proclaiming the Good News.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Valuing and sustaining a culture of welcome, invitation and hospitality.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Seeking opportunities for growth.</i></li> </ul>	Regular ‘Welcome Lunches’ for new members.	Council, Chaplain and Welcome Team.	Welcome lunches for approx. 20 people to be held quarterly.	4,000DKK per lunch. 16,000DKK per annum.
	Accessible Toilet Facilities.	Council and Church Amenities Improvement Committee.	Underway.	20K for initial drawings.
	Grow Electoral Roll (ER) membership and review annually.	Council.	Grow ER by 25% by 2018. <sup>1</sup>	
	Grow the average Sunday attendance in Copenhagen and review annually.	Council.	Grow average attendance by 50% by 2018. <sup>2</sup>	
	Review and possibly extend the trial monthly services begun in August 2015.	Council, Chaplain and Aarhus Congregation.	Underway.	
	Investigate opening the Church to pilgrims and visitors on Saturdays.	Council, Chaplain and Guardians.	Underway.	
	Refresh and renew the Chaplaincy website. Continue to grow Social Media profile and activity.	Council and Communications Team.	Underway.	

<sup>1</sup> The 2014 ER figure was 169 (source: 2014 Parsh Profile). A 25% increase would bring it to 211.

<sup>2</sup> The average Sunday attendance in 2014 was 96 (Source: 2014 Annual Report). A 50% increase would bring it to 144.



**Priority 3. Striving for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment by:**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>New Initiative</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline / Target</b>	<b>Extra Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Defending the poor, the disadvantaged, and those in need.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Promoting a discipline and culture of safeguarding.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Combating slavery and human trafficking.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Challenging the comfortable and comforting the challenged.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Encouraging care for creation.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Closer co-operation with the anti-trafficking group Hope Now, e.g. marking Freedom Sunday.</p>	Council.	Underway.	
	<p>Develop and Extend “Green Church” activities.</p>	Council and Green Team.	2016.	
	<p>Renew commitment to Diocesan safeguarding policies and processes. All those working with vulnerable groups to undergo appropriate vetting and training.</p>	Council, Safeguarding Officer(s)	Underway.	
	<p>Renewed focus on Outward Giving as a core part of our mission.</p>	Council.	Underway.	

**Priority 4. Working for reconciliation:**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>New Initiative</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline / Target</b>	<b>Extra Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Within the Church at all levels.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Among nations, ethnicities and religions.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Amongst those with different convictions on issues of gender and sexuality.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Annual Parish Retreat.</p>	Council, Chaplain, Ministry Team.	First in 2016.	5,000 DKK
	<p>Investigate the possibility of appointing an Interreligious Officer.</p>	Council.	2016.	
	<p>Sustain and grow a culture which honours our diversity and encourages gracious dialogue across difference.</p>	Council.	Ongoing.	

**Priority 5. Resourcing through:**

Priority	New Initiative	Lead Responsibility	Timeline / Target	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Stewardship of our gifts and talents.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Increasing numbers of volunteers and paid staff.</i></li> </ul>	Multi-annual Mission Action Plans, with financial and other targets, to be produced every three years.	Council.	First MAP to be published in January 2016.	
	Grow financial giving (Plate Collection, Envelope Scheme and Regular Contributions). Review annually.	Council.	Grow giving by 30% by 2018. <sup>3</sup>	
	Recruit a part-time Youth and Student Worker / Assistant Chaplain (approx. 2-4 hours per week) as an immediate interim measure.	Council, Chaplain and Standing Committee.	Underway.	Estimate of DKK 2,000 per month, DKK 24,000 per annum.
	Recruit (a) a full-time Youth and Student Worker / Assistant Chaplain in conjunction with a 'Porvoo Church', thereby sharing the cost, or (b) a part-time person on our own.	Council, Chaplain and Standing Committee.	Begin recruitment in 2016, in place by 2017.	Estimate of DKK 250,000 per annum. c. 750,000 DKK over three years.
	MAPs (and annual reviews) to be shared with Viggo, Lindholm, and Cray Jensen trustees. Partner with them in funding new initiatives.	Chaplain and Treasurer.	Underway.	
	Investigate cost-saving measures to maximise use of funds.	Council.	Ongoing.	

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<sup>3</sup> In 2014 the total for Plate Collection, Envelope Scheme and Regular Contributions was DKK 290,054 (Source: 2014 Financial Statements). A 30% increase would give a figure of DKK 377,070.

## **Appendix A. The Diocesan Strategy Document**

### **‘WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH – A STRATEGY FOR THE DIOCESE IN EUROPE’**

#### **We seek to build a common purpose throughout the diocese by:**

- Knowing ourselves as the beloved children of God
- Loving God and our neighbour and sharing the Good News
- Generating a shared sense of direction in the power of the Holy Spirit
- Providing a focus for all that we do.

We will work towards this by:

#### **Building up the Body of Christ and fostering growth**

*Within the Anglican tradition through each congregation and in partnership with other Churches by:*

- Deepening faith and practice in prayer and worship
- Teaching the faith and promoting Christian education
- Encouraging and supporting the vocation of all the baptised
- Nurturing new disciples especially young people

#### **Sharing, with other churches and agencies in the evangelisation of Europe by**

- Proclaiming the Good News
- Valuing and sustaining a culture of welcome, invitation and hospitality
- Seeking opportunities for growth

#### **Striving for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment by**

- Defending the poor, the disadvantaged, and those in need
- Promoting a discipline and culture of safeguarding
- Combatting slavery and human trafficking
- Challenging the comfortable
- Encouraging care for creation

#### **Working for reconciliation**

- Within the Church at all levels
- Among nations, ethnicities and religions
- By intentional engagement with the institutions of Europe

#### **Resourcing through**

- Stewardship of our gifts and talents
- Increasing numbers of full time clergy and candidates for ordained ministry,
- attending to
  - Recruitment
  - Retention
  - Resources
- Well structured archdeaconries



SAINT  
ALBAN'S  
CHURCH

*The Anglican Church  
in Denmark*