

Archdeacon's proposals for St David's and St Michael's -

A Consultation and Survey

There was an initial Parish Meeting with Archdeacon Andrew Beane on Saturday 6th November 2021 at which proposals were outlined. Here is a summary:

- The proposal is for St David's to have a larger role in the City Centre working alongside Central Parish but also, Unlimited, St Matts and Exeter Network Church.**
- There was a recognition of the less than wholly positive relationship between St David's and St Michael's that has been a drain on the energy of both churches over many years.**
- There was also a recognition that, for St David's, not realistically being able to appoint a woman incumbent is a major problem in view of the way the ordained ministry in the Church of England has developed in recent decades. But there was also a recognition that keeping a male priesthood at St Michael's is important for a good proportion of the congregation. Both positions need to be respected.**

The Archdeacon concluded with four possible options.

- PCC will affirm women's ministry at both churches and St Michael's will welcome women priests;**
- Look to move towards becoming a Churches Conservation Trust Church**
- Explore setting up an interim ministry and St Michael's becoming a stand-alone parish.**
- Move St Michael's towards working with Heavitree Mission Community as a FiF parish.**

There was a congregational meeting on Sunday 21st November 2021 after Mass at St Michael's to discuss these proposals and the question of representation on the St Michael's Committee and the PCC.

It was also recognised that new committee members and officers (Chapel Warden, Secretary and Treasurer) were

needed for three of these options to be possible. A new committee needs to be confirmed by April.

It was agreed that a consultation should be run in the new year (2022) and Laura Casimir offered to help produce a questionnaire for St Michael's community to gather opinions on these options.

We now need to consult you about the proposals and have outlined some of the pros, cons and questions associated with each proposal. Please indicate your level of support for each option and make any comments you wish.

- 1 Opposed to this proposal**
- 2 Unhappy with this proposal but could accept it as a compromise**
- 3 I could accept this proposal**
- 4 I am happy with this proposal**

Please note that this is a survey whose results will be carefully noted by the PCC and Archdeacon but it is not a vote!

Those surveyed are:

- **regular worshippers at St Michael's**
- **those on the Parish Electoral Roll for St Michael's**
- **representatives of the regular users of the building**

The Survey for you to complete...

How often to you worship at St Michael's?

Please circle as applicable

Weekly Once a month Occasionally

If you use the building for other meetings/activities how often is that?

Please circle as applicable

Weekly Once a month Occasionally

Proposal 1

- **The PCC will affirm women's ministry at both churches and St Michael's will welcome women priests;**
- +ve The parish would be able to move forward together, especially with respect to the appointment of future incumbents**
- ve Some worshippers at St Michael's might find this impossible to accept and might leave**
- ? Would this leave a viable congregation at St Michael's which could reach out and grow?**

How do you rate Proposal 1? (1-4) _____

Comments or questions

Proposal 2

- **Look to move toward becoming a Churches Conservation Trust Church**

You can find out more about the Churches Conservation Trust here:

<https://www.visitchurches.org.uk/what-we-do.html>

+ve St Michael's Church building would be preserved for posterity and could be used for community activities

-ve The present worshipping body would be dispersed and find other churches, but it might still be possible to hold a limited number of services in St Michael's with the agreement of the CCT

? Would the Churches Conservation Trust actually take St Michael's on and what worship, if any, might still be possible?

How do you rate Proposal 2? (1-4) ____

Comments or questions

Proposal 3

- Explore setting up an interim ministry and St Michael's becoming a stand-alone parish.**

+ve St Michael's would be able to set an agenda focussing on its Anglo-Catholic tradition.

-ve St Michael's would not have a geographical parish, nor would it have the integral support of a wider parish set up.

? How would priestly ministry be provided? This would require clear arrangements for good governance for matters like safeguarding and finance. Would it be possible to elect a strong and active PCC?

How do you rate Proposal 3? (1-4) ____

Comments or questions

Proposal 4

- Move towards moving St Michael's under Heavitree Mission Community as a Forward in Faith parish.**

+ve This would bring St Michael's into line with a major Exeter Parish which is committed to the principles of Forward in Faith and does not accept the ordained

ministry of women as priests or bishops. It would link St Michael's with a parish firmly within the catholic tradition of the Church of England. St Michael's would have the support of a larger parish.

-ve Those in favour of the ordination of women as priests and bishops might find this hard to accept.

? How welcome would St Michael's be within the Heavitree Group and what could St Michael's offer to them? For this to be a realistic option there would again need to be clear arrangements for governance.

How do you rate Proposal 4? (1-4) _____

Comments or questions

Finally...

Do you have any other creative suggestions about a way forward that enables both churches to flourish?

Would you be willing to give active service as a member of St Michael's Committee or our present (or future) PCC? We currently need people to serve as Secretary, Treasurer and Chapel Warden and as PCC representatives if we are to secure a viable future for St Michael's as an active worshipping community. Please give this your prayerful consideration. *All members of committees need to undertake basic Safeguarding Training, and PCC members additionally act as Trustees for the parish, with the responsibility that entails.*

If you would like to contribute to the running of St Michael's, or would like to know more, please speak to Fr Nigel Guthrie nigel.guthrie1@gmail.com

Thank you for taking part in this survey.

**Please return to our Parish Administrator:
d.leightonplom@gmail.com**

**or paper copies should be returned to St Michael's Church
or to 95 Howell Road.**

All responses must be received by 27 March 2022