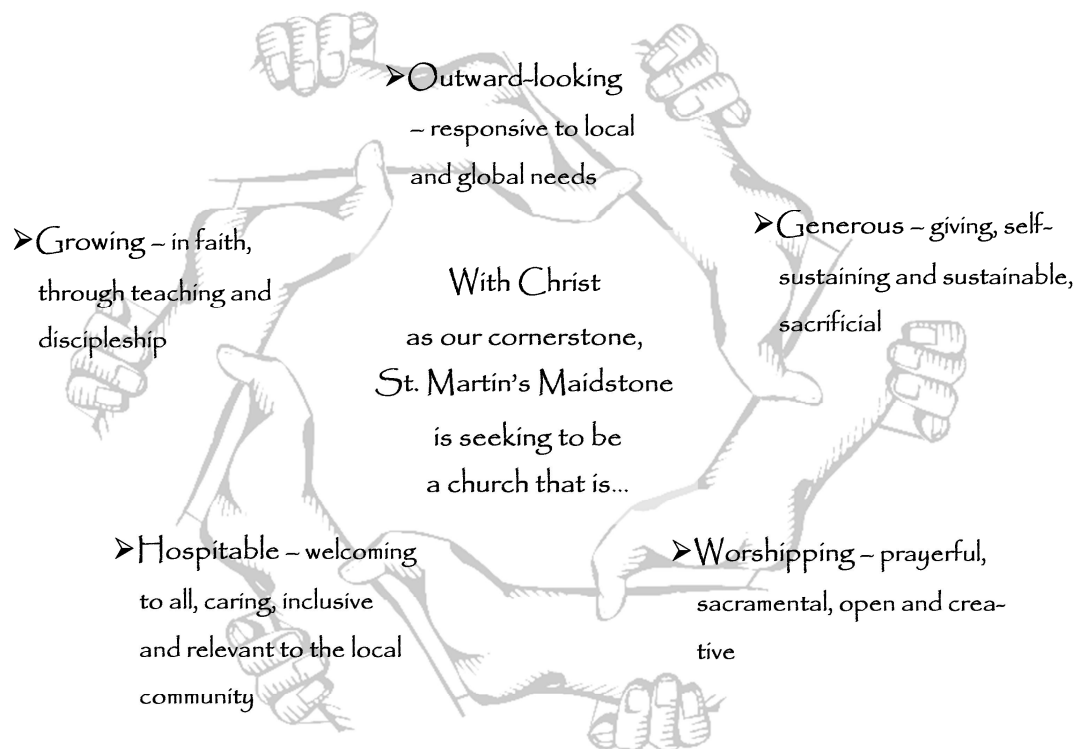


## St. Martin's Church Maidstone with St. Hilary's House: Parish Plan

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What we understand by this is:-

- We will work to make sure all are welcomed and included in our worship so that it is accessible and not discriminatory and that we, reflecting the diversity of our God, have room for all. It is our aim that the whole church is involved in this, though some may have a specific ministry eg. sidespeople, crèche and children's groups, pastoral care team. We will endeavour to build the church's profile as a frequently open, 'working' church in the neighbourhood, and to develop the hall as a welcoming community resource.

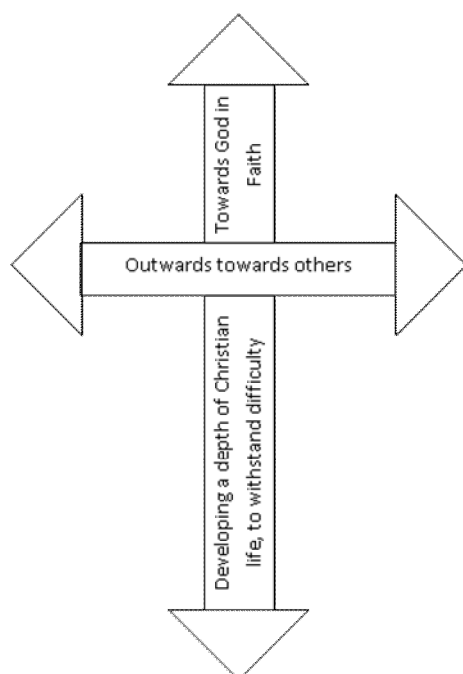
## St. Martin's Church Maidstone with St. Hilary's House: Parish Plan

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- St. Martin's enjoys a sense of being 'out of the box' in our churchmanship, crossing traditions and trying new ideas, while remaining faithful to the order and structure of a Eucharistic liturgy most Sundays. Spirit-led creativity and imagination are important aspects of our worship. We are developing our prayer life so that prayer is at the heart of all that the church does.



- As God has blessed us with so much, we want to return our thanks –through the giving of time, money or talent( or all three!) and sometimes this may feel costly; but in order to ensure that St. Martin's continues to bear witness to the love of Christ in this community in future generations, we need to dig deep now. Developing new patterns of looking ahead, budgeting and giving will, we hope, assist this process.
- We will aim to offer and use our facilities in positive ways so that the community can benefit, retaining with this a sense of God's welcome and a desire to share the good news of his kingdom so that all who encounter him here are enriched. In our outreach we seek to meet people where they are and respond to their need.



- We recognise the need for three-dimensional growth – upwards (towards God in faith), outwards (showing God's love to the people of the parish and those we live and work alongside) and downwards (developing a depth of Christian life which can withstand difficulty and seeks to understand where God is at work in the world).

## St. Martin's Church Maidstone with St. Hilary's House: Parish Plan

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We will know that we are achieving this if:-

- People return for another visit... and another, especially after occasional offices
- Our congregation reflects a wide spectrum of lifestyles, experiences, abilities and theology!
- Men, women and children connected with the church are playing an active part in its life and activity
- Those seeking spiritual help and sanctuary are supported with appropriate pastoral care
- We have healthy links across parish and deanery with other churches
- New worship opportunities are being created and enjoyed
- Our monthly half-days of prayer are well-supported
- We are able to meet our budget forecasts because we are planning towards them
- Regular giving does increase
- Our fund-raising committee is active and effective
- New mission opportunities are being discovered and are bearing fruit (eg. Messy Church, Men's breakfasts)
- Our relationships with families and individuals, schools and businesses in the local community increase ~ especially in the new-build areas ~ as people recognise that the church exists to support and pray for them and to offer care and a sense of God's love whether they are regular churchgoers or not.

## St. Martin's Church Maidstone with St. Hilary's House: Parish Plan

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- Study groups (seasonal and regular) continue to grow
- Lay ministry continues to develop
- We are receiving positive feedback about our hall and church buildings

*Our vision is of a church which is fully involved in the community which it serves and to which it belongs – a place in which people feel comfortable enough to come and go, accessible, non-judgmental, a community where they can find help, support and love in whatever form they need it – an unmistakable demonstration of God's love for them.*

*January 2012*