



St Michael's  
Linlithgow

# Newsletter Special Issue: 2030 Vision



In this first newsletter for 2021, you'll find a vision statement for how St Michael's should go forward over the next 10 years, which has been approved in principle by Kirk Session. You can find a fuller exploration of the themes of the vision in two more detailed documents available on the church website: a [2030 Vision Discussion Paper](#), and a discussion paper on [Improvements to the Sanctuary](#). This paper is also available on the website, at [A Vision for 2030](#).

This vision grew out of the '2030: Our Story' workshops held in 2019, and the consultation 'Learning and Looking Ahead' in May 2020. We are very keen to continue the discussion! Please contact Alan Miller with your thoughts or questions about the 2030 Vision at [sessionclerk@stmichaels-parish.org.uk](mailto:sessionclerk@stmichaels-parish.org.uk).

## A Vision for 2030

St Michael's has a long and distinguished history. Yet this heritage cannot shelter it from the effects of our rapidly changing society. Church attendance here and across Scotland has plummeted, and many of our neighbours – feeling that they cannot turn to the Church – are more isolated and anxious than ever. To address this changing context, we must return to the reason why God created our church: to meet the material, emotional and spiritual needs of *all* people, whether they are churchgoers or not. If the practical and spiritual needs of our neighbours are not met, St Michael's will struggle to survive. Yet God wants us to survive and thrive, and to regain our place as the spiritual heart of our town.

The 150 participants in our '2030: Our Story' workshops identified a number of key themes: new forms of relevant worship, a greater range of events and improved visitor experience in the Sanctuary (church building), and new forms of hospitality and service for our neighbours in Cross House. These themes form the basis of our 2030 Vision. The Vision is of an ancient community animated by a living hope, that becomes a blessing for our town through its service, facilities and witness.

The four principles that underpin the vision are welcome, welfare, wonder and worship. Because each person is loved by God, we **welcome** all with loving hospitality, and seek to look after their **welfare**. For those who find themselves **wondering** if there is more to life, we provide accessible and engaging **worship**.

### What will this involve?

- **Cross House** will be transformed into a centre for community and wellbeing. It will have a beautiful social space at its heart, around which many other activities will take place. Alongside our own initiatives such as the Sunshine Sing-Along and the new St Michael's Listening Service, we will partner with professional services and other groups to develop Cross House into a vibrant community. It will be a place of care and connection, where we can welcome and mingle with guests, and signpost them to all that St Michael's does in both Cross House and the Sanctuary.
- The church **Sanctuary** will host a greater range of worship along with other events. More flexible seating in the body of the building would facilitate, for instance, seating in the round for Communion, or setting up prayer stations. Our visitor experience will also be enhanced, both in person and online, to explain more clearly the spiritual significance of the Sanctuary. All of this will enable us, in this remarkable space, to engage neighbours and visitors alike with the Christian faith.
- Alongside traditional worship – and spearheaded by our new Pioneer – we will create **new forms of worship** that are relevant and attractive to our neighbours.
- We will deepen our emphasis on **discipleship** (Knowing Christ Better). Part of this discipleship will involve **training** to develop the wonderful gifts of welcome, teaching, evangelism and service that our members and elders have been given.
- We will continue to develop our expanding **online presence** to help us engage, organise and communicate effectively.

### How do we start?

We will soon develop a more detailed plan for the first 3 years of the 10-year Vision period. The key strands of the plan are likely to include:

- Developing new partnerships with groups in Linlithgow to facilitate greater community at Cross House
- Generating new and creative forms of Church, led by our Pioneer Worker and a group of trained members
- Refurbishing and transforming Cross House in a 3-year development programme
- Addressing structural issues in the church Sanctuary, including the Crown of Thorns, roof issues and damp penetration
- Planning enhancements to the church Sanctuary, including a modern and sustainable heating system and high-quality and appropriate seating
- Undertaking a major, professionally-supported fundraising campaign.

An ancient community of faith responding to the changed Scotland of today with welcome, welfare, wonder, and worship. An accessible, flexible, and beautiful Sanctuary, along with a vibrant community centre full of every generation, group, and type of person. This is the heart of our 2030 Vision.

While this is, at points, a challenging and costly Vision, the price of doing nothing is even greater. These proposals give us the opportunity to bless Linlithgow, share our tradition and treasures with even more people, and – alongside traditional worship – meet the spiritual needs of our neighbours in new and exciting ways.

**ST. MICHAELS PARISH CHURCH OFFICE**

CROSS HOUSE, LINLITHGOW  
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