

**THEMES EMERGING FROM PMC CONGREGATIONAL INTERVIEWS
(St Nicholas)
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2015**

Partnership for Missional Church (PMC) is taking us through a process of learning about and growing our Parish (and other) congregations. In this first phase of the process, Listening, we have already undertaken two activities, Dwelling in the Word and a Timeline event. This short report is a summary of the findings of the third activity, interviews carried out by two members of the congregation (Listeners) with eight other members of the congregation and documents how St Nicholas sees its own congregational mission and ministry.

In the interviews, the Listeners asked the interviewees to describe an experience of profound worship; how they sense God's presence and activity in this congregation and how they would describe the congregation to someone new and how they would be nurtured here. Additional questions included asking people to recount memories that gave them anxiety about the future of the congregation (and ones that give them hope); how people participate in the life of the Church; what they would expect and hope to see in the future; how we manage conflict and what tells us that God is present in worship.

The PMC experts have analysed the responses and have suggested a large number of questions we could ask ourselves. Many of these will be posed during the remainder of the PMC process. In summary, they conclude that St Nicholas is a caring and welcoming community. They also noted that people encounter God here and have significant and profound spiritual experiences through building the Church, through its worship and through practical activities. Individuals and Fellowship Groups provide strong pastoral support for members. They suggest that to grow we need to find ways of building on such strengths and apply them to the community of Emmbrook as a whole. St Nicholas' needs to learn the lessons of the past in terms of introducing any changes, but need not be afraid of doing so, because generally the congregation handles differences of opinion well.

Some of the points emerging as opportunities for the future include:

- * Identifying how we can help people to speak about their experience of God to strengthen and grow the Church.
- * Managing change sensitively
- * Building on recent successful LYCIG events, especially with an eye on the future and the arrival of many new residents to the area.

Thank you to the interviewers and interviewees who have helped us to begin discerning our strengths. With the help of PMC, our work continues as a congregation to listen to God's call for St Nicholas' and to equip ourselves for the future to which he is calling us.

The Listening Team
St Nicholas's Church