

Questions from the Building Project Meeting – 25th January 2018

Some good questions came out of the meeting.

What follows is a series of answers to the points raised, some of these are made following consultation with the Architect and this report was brought to the Project Team for comment, and as a result amendments and clarifications have been made.

Q1 What response should we give to “business people”, who maybe non-Christians, as to why they should support a Christian Church?

Answer: From the very outset of the project we have stated that it is our intention to be a part of the Community as well as having a place of worship. This is an extract from our Presentation of Information...

*As we say in our mission statement above – Gleneagles Church is “**here to serve the community**” and our vision is to be able to do that **every day of the week**. The new building will be a place central to the life of the community with a varied range of activities and opportunities open to all as well as being church on Sunday mornings for our worshipping congregation.*

Our aims are to:

(1) Significantly develop our already strong links in the community through activities and projects.

(2) Establish and grow the Christian Church in Gleneagles by word and action and through worship and service.

It is envisaged that the Church building will be used in mid-week for activities which will include a full programme of community events run by members of the community, such as Scouts; Guides; Sea Cadets; other voluntary groups and organisations; etc., as well as Church run projects for the community, some of which we already run, such as Parents and Toddlers groups; youth club; children’s clubs; lunch and keep fit clubs for older people; counselling and advice centre; community events; community cafe (non-profit making); drop-in centre; other community activities and projects.

We will also develop our already strong links with Wellingborough Daylight Centre in providing facilities to support Foodbank and by providing desperately needed emergency accommodation for the homeless.

So, to “business people” we would say that your support will help to create a place for the community as well as a place for our worship.

As part of the project preparation, many meetings (21 to date with another 10 or so planned) have been held with community groups or agencies and there is a very high degree of expectation/anticipation of the arrival of our building and the use to which it can be put to within the community.

This evidence is the kind of information potential funders from the business community will want to hear in order that they will support what we are aiming to achieve.

Q2 Are we being too worldly and not just trusting God to provide?

Answer: We are committing our building project to prayer, regularly, and trusting God to provide. This doesn't mean that we don't take action alongside our prayers. We take this action prayerfully and with God's guidance. This is a Biblical way to proceed.

If we go back to Scripture we can see some good examples of how "the things of God" were built using the wealth of the world.

When the Israelites escaped from Egypt they received much by way of resources from the Egyptians.

In 1 Kings 5, we see King Solomon during the building of The Temple asking King Hiram (Phoenician king of Tyre) for wood. It is clear that there is a good relationship between the two and both communities profited as a result.

In the Book of Nehemiah, we see that the rebuilding of Jerusalem is started by the gift of materials from King Artaxerxes (Persia) who again had a good relationship with his Jewish servant and was happy to support the rebuilding. There is also the picture of the Jews with a sword in one hand and working on building the wall with the other (Nehemiah 4:16-18). This is a picture of spiritual warfare, hand in hand with practical action. We do not believe that God wants us to pray and then sit back, do nothing and just wait.

In the Book of Haggai – Haggai prophesies and challenges Zerubbabel to start the rebuilding of the Temple. Although there is no direct appeal to a foreign king for materials the context suggests the close presence and possible influence of King Darius.

Q3 Is the building going to be environmentally friendly and built in an ethical way – i.e. eco-friendly?

Answer: The following are included in the design:

Air Source Heat Pumps

Rainwater Harvesting

Insulation – the insulation specified in the design is 10% higher than currently required by current Building Regulations.

Glazing – there are 2 very large expanses of glass – the glazing specified is low energy glass that is argon filled to minimise heat loss/transfer.

Solar panels were considered but ultimately rejected due to efficiency rates and the withdrawal of Government subsidy, the roof we have currently is not in the best position to gain maximum solar gain.

We could pursue higher efficiency methods such as those found in the ultimate energy efficient buildings, but the initial capital outlay would push the cost out of reach – this could be reconsidered if we had a series of significant gifts that exceeded our targets!!!

On the question of ethical building – we believe that the professionals we are using operate to excellent ethical standards. It is of note that current modern approaches to business means there is an awareness that the employment of staff should be done in an ethical manner. Namely – Minimum Wage, adherence to Modern Slavery guidelines and Pay Equality etc. In preparing our Tenders each company was subjected to an assessment as to their compliance with these standards.

Finally, as far as is possible in relation to matters under our control we adhere to all aspects of Diversity and Equality and we would intervene where we become aware of any potential failings in these standards amongst partners.

Q4 Should we be setting a deadline by which funds must be raised? If not, the price will keep rising and we may never reach the target; setting a date would then provide a point when alternative options are addressed.

There are a number of things to consider and these are outlined below.

- i) We do not need a deadline in order to consider other options. We are open to other options.
- ii) However, the other options are not very positive – they are:
 - a) Stay where we are. This is increasingly difficult for many well-documented reasons.
 - b) Use the church in Great Harrowden. This is a very limited facility, difficult to heat, no facilities for children, difficult car parking, outside of our parish.
 - c) Use another church. This would be outside our parish obviously and use will be limited, including that we would not be able to have a Sunday morning service.
 - d) Put portacabins onto our building site and use those whilst fundraising for the building. The costs would be £120,000 for site clearance and levelling, £200,000 for groundworks, £97,000 for drainage, £400,000 for utilities. Total £817,000. Then there would be the cost for the portacabins. For more on portacabins see appendix 2.
 - e) Build something much smaller – see the answer to question 5.
 - f) Use a warehouse on Park Farm Industrial Estate – one problem is that this is in another parish. The structures are very poorly suited to our needs as a church. It is away from where people live. We will not be able to do any community activities from there. It will be difficult to encourage people in the community to come to a warehouse out of their way.
 - There will be no possibility of a community café / drop in.
 - Children’s facilities will be very limited.
 - Conversion/Refurbishment will be costly – most Units are bare skin walls with big industrial fan heaters.
 - Other negative factors are: Car parking will be an issue. Rental prices didn't look good – initial enquiries have been made. It is likely we’ll need Change of Use – but Planning application is not costly in the region of £500-600. Commercial/Industrial use mixed with Social/Pleasure will not be good – traffic movements of HGV & Vans mixed with private cars.
- iii) Other than the option to build something smaller, all other options leave us with a wonderful piece of land with which we cannot do anything. Plus we will have wasted over £200,000 on purchasing the land, plans, drawings, planning consent, archaeological survey, initial roadworks, etc. We would have to become convinced that God did not speak to us in the first place for this to be acceptable.
- iv) Waiting on God for long periods is a very common experience in the Bible. Luis Palau wrote that the ability to wait on God is THE sign of maturity as a Christian. So we continue to wait on God and believe that we must keep waiting for as long as it takes and that God will keep his promise and build the building. If we set a deadline we will be saying to God, “We will wait on you but only until...” That is not a Biblical way to proceed. We believe that we have heard God speak and are waiting on Him to build the church and community centre. See below, in Appendix 1, details of how God has spoken and led us so far.
- v) Even if we discount what we believe we have heard God say, there are many practical reasons for building our planned church and community centre. The area, especially given the plans to build 3000 more homes (10000 more people) which will be in our parish in the next ten years, needs a church and community centre with the facilities which we will offer.

- vi) Gleneagles is one of only two parishes in the whole of the UK that do not have a church building.
- vii) It is possible that we have not heard God, have been wrong all along and that He does not want a church built in our parish. If that is the case we will arrive at that conclusion but do not feel that we should set a deadline at which point we say 'God hasn't said'. For one thing that will be saying to God, "If you do not give us the money by such and such a date we are giving up." That will be putting God to the test in a way in which the Bible says we should not.
- viii) God is blessing our church in many ways. We are growing: Our children's numbers have gone up, our adult age profile is going down, we have increasing people resources with many skills, and financially we have stayed in the black for the last ten years even whilst raising £180,000 for the church building in the last seven. It is hard to believe that God would bless us in all these ways if all along we are going down the wrong track with regard to the building.
- ix) Whilst we wait, we do ask God the question, "Is there another way that You want to show us?" We don't set a deadline to ask God that question but remain open to God showing us another way. Melvyn says, "I have done this over the years, and each time God has said, 'Rest, relax and wait on God'. And He has also reminded me of what He has said all along, 'Build my people and I will build the church.'"

Q5 What does the community really need? Are we being too ambitious? Should we build a simple building?

To answer this we need to go back to the very beginning of the design process. We started our design process from the point of looking at what we had in the old Redwell Junior School:

- A Hall
- A Kitchen
- Toilets
- A Creche Area
- A selection of rooms for the Sunday Children/Youth groups
- To this, we added a Secondary Hall and an Outside Area.
- To all of these must be added – Car Parking (a requirement of the Planning Authority) and the all-important Storage Areas.

These elements were those we required in our building. The building we have planned is not 'grand' in any way but simply includes everything that we need, that is, all of the above. A 'simple' building consisting of just hall, toilets, kitchen and perhaps one or two other rooms would severely limit our activities especially with children and youth groups.

We have the beginnings of a business plan which includes letting our facilities for conferences and other uses. This will raise significant income and enable us to allow community groups to use the facilities for minimal cost or for free as well as contributing to our running costs. We will lose any potential to earn income in this way with a 'simple' building.

A 'simple' building will mean that we will not be able to provide community facilities like a community café and drop-in; provision for needy and homeless during severe weather; spaces for community groups and community events. Central to all of our funding requests have been our plans to provide services and facilities for the community. We have raised £105,000 so far through such funding requests.

The question was raised – “what does the community really need?” In the answer to Question 1, it was mentioned that consultations have been held with over 20 groups and more are planned. It is significant that all those interviewed are looking forward to the facilities we hope to have on offer. There are none of a similar nature in Wellingborough or more importantly within our Parish. A 'simple' building won't offer these facilities and will disappoint groups with whom we have consulted.

The total cost of a 'simple' building is estimated at **£1,370,690**. See appendix 3 for details of how we have arrived at that total. This means that we will still, of course, be waiting on a miracle of God to provide for us.

Funding wisdom tells us that once we have raised about £1.5m of a £2.5m project, the next £1m will be much easier to raise, as funders will know that the project is going to happen. So if we raise something close to £1.5m it would be far better to then seek to raise another £1m than to build a 'simple building', which is not purpose built and does not serve the community. The 'simple' building option also means that adding to it in future phases is a very expensive option.

Also bringing Contractors back onto the site for the later phases will have a significant impact on Church life and also will have an equally significant (damaging) impact on the car parking and landscaped grounds.

Q6 Is it possible to change any aspect of the design to make it more cost-effective; to change the design of the roof to a more conventional shape – surely that would save a substantial sum?

The design is not grand or expensive. The only way to achieve cost savings would be to make it smaller. This option has been discussed in the above answer to q5.

Re: the shape of the roof. Whilst the roof is an interesting shape the cost is similar to the cost of a conventional shaped roof so little or no savings would be achieved by changing this. In our case to change the roof even if it came out cheaper would mean a significant deviation from the Plans as agreed within our Planning Consent and could mean a return to a new Planning Application.

Compiled by Chris Gledhill – Churchwarden & Chair of Building Project

March 25th, 2018

Appendices 1, 2 & 3 follow...

Appendix 1 - How God has spoken and led us so far.

What follows sets out the pathway of how we have heard from God and what He has said.

In the Alpha Course, there is a very good session on Does God Guide? In the session there are 5 Tests which are very helpful – The 5 CS's of God's Guidance:

Commanding Scripture, Controlling Spirit, Counsel of the Saints, Common Sense and Circumstantial Signs.

Through all the preparations for the Building Project we have sought God in prayer and listened to what He has said, and we believe that this has shaped the way we are moving within the project. So then, using the 5 CS's...

Commanding Scripture & Controlling Spirit – these are very closely linked and here follows some of the things we have received whilst in prayer.

1 Melvyn wrote this for the Building Project website: -

Whilst praying about Gleneagles Anglican Church in March 2007 on the day before my interview for the job I'm now doing, I felt God say to me "This church needs a building". During the interview, Phil and Jacqui, the two Churchwardens, told me that the church wanted their own building and that they had asked the Archdeacon what they needed to do to get one. From 2007 to 2010 we didn't do much about it other than make some enquiries. It was an important time of waiting on God – to make sure that this was God's idea and not our own

In October 2010 during 20 days of prayer to celebrate Gleneagles Anglican Church's 20th Birthday. God spoke very loudly about the new church through several people. At the PCC and Leaders Day in November 2010, all agreed that we must explore the possibilities being convinced that God wants us to build his kingdom here and he wants to build us a church to help us to do that.

All along God has repeated this message – **"Build my people and I will build your church."** We must continue with the task of being Jesus' arms and legs, proclaiming the gospel, reaching our community, blessing each other, blessing others, making disciples – and **He will build the church.**

2 Prophecy – June 2010 given in advance of the building land becoming available...

I am the Lord surrounded by the heavens and the heavenly hosts. I am the Creator, the Giver and Sustainer of all Life. You think yourselves poor, you think you have nothing, then be of good cheer, ask and you shall receive, knock and it shall be opened up to you, seek and you shall find. You will receive an abundance of everything to build a Church for My Name. Ask for wisdom and you will receive. Ask for wisdom and it will come. Ask, "what do I want you to do and I will show you". Come and receive, you do not know what to ask for, or even how to ask, but I am running to bless you and to be there with you.

The building will be unlike any other building designed by man, it will attract both the great and the small and those who are wealthy and those who have nothing.

It will stand in a busy place next to a main highway and yet be a haven of peace and quiet, a sanctuary of rest and refreshment away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

3 In August 2011, whilst away on Retreat Melvyn, was reading Genesis and came to Chapter 23. At the time there were some very intense and difficult negotiations around the main plot of land upon which the church is to be built. It was beginning to feel like the deal would not be done because of various obstacles. In Genesis 23 Sarah dies and Abraham sets about buying a plot of land as a burial place. The chapter ends with the land being made over legally to Abraham. Having read this Melvyn felt prodded by God to check his emails where he found one from the Diocese stating that the land had been made over legally to Gleneagles Church.

4 On December 18th, 2013 the Borough Council Planning Committee met to discuss our application.

As Melvyn and I drove to meet the Architect prior to the Committee Meeting he told me of a word from Dan Hulland who was reading in the book of Haggai, chapter 2.

The book is all about building the temple...

V18 mentions the 24th day of the 9th month and says in v19 "From this day on I will bless you."

Dan had looked further into the background of that scripture and found that that day in the Jewish calendar equates to December 18th in ours!!

I don't know about you but when God speaks everything suddenly **almost audibly** just clicks into place and that for me was one of those times.

So, we went into the meeting confident in God who was saying "From this day on I will bless you." It was incredible to hear so many positive endorsements from the Councillors of our work to date and the feeling that the Councillors were looking forward to our building as a positive addition to the community. So, when they voted to grant our application it felt so much like "From this day on I will bless you."

5 + 6 In 2015, again whilst on retreat, Melvyn was reading through the books of Haggai and Zechariah having got to those books in his reading plan. It is fair to say that both books are "building books" – as they both record the circumstances of the rebuilding of the Temple. It is well worth going to them and reading them through again. There are so many references to the "how" and "why" of the building process.

7 The final scripture comes from the book of Kings. The circumstances are somewhat unusual but in the light of God speaking makes a great deal of sense. Melvyn was out driving and saw a car with registration plate AK61... Strangely Melvyn became convinced that God was saying that this was a Scripture reference that he must look up. After a bit of thought he decided to look up the First Book of Kings as the A he felt referred to the number 1 and the K was Kings and then the 6th Chapter verse 1. The words appeared... **he began to build the temple of the LORD.** Strange? A Circumstantial Sign or a Controlling Scripture, either is possible but what is clear is the consistent way that God keeps bringing the idea of building to our attention.

Common Sense – When we look at what we are doing as a church and the fact that for 27 years we have met in a rented hall but have still managed to grow, it is common sense to follow a path that gets us to a point where we have a building within which we can expand and develop our ministry further. It is common sense that this area needs a church. It makes sense to look at the experience of the two most recent new churches that have been built in our area. Christ the King was built in 1987 with a congregation smaller than Gleneagles current congregation. The church has steadily grown since then to become the largest church in the Diocese with a building used every weekday by the community. Wollaston Baptist Church opened their new building in November 2012 and the church has thrived since then growing significantly and being a resource for the community.

Counsel of the Saints – In early 2011 we were trying to find land where we could possibly build a church. The land on Farm Road adjacent to the Ock and Dough pub, available for a very low price, was brought to our attention. But this was not in our parish at the time. We were uncertain what to do. In April 2011, during a Gleneagles Church prayer day, a visitor from Christ the King Church, Kettering, told Melvyn that he was certain that God had provided that land for us and that we had God's gift right in front of us and were ignoring it. Shortly afterwards, Liz Wells said exactly the same thing using the same words. Following that Jane Michael spoke of walking past that land and seeing a vision of our congregation worshipping there. Others affirmed their conviction that God was directing us to that piece of land.

In May 2011 the PCC met on that site and prayed for an hour before returning to the Church Office for more prayer and discussion seeking God for His direction. We concluded by the end of that meeting that we should purchase that site for our new church and community centre. But we had no money for the purchase.

In July 2011, even though the Diocese was very short of funds, the Bishop and his staff decided to purchase the land for us. This was an amazing affirmation, encouragement and expression of support and belief that this was the correct course of action and what God was saying from Bishops Donald and John, the Archdeacons and the other Senior Staff that make up the Bishop's Staff.

Two significant Christians, Bishop Donald & Paul Bell, Mayor of Wellingborough – publicly approved our plans and have done so via our publicity material. Many other Christians who hear of our plans speak positively about what they see and hear. The other side of that counsel is that we are always listening to what is said, some of this may be negative but overall the direction has been that this is the right thing to do.

Overwhelmingly other Church Leaders in Wellingborough have expressed strong support for the vision to build and assure us of their prayers. We did have opposition in the early stages from a couple of Anglican clergy but one has moved on and the new clergy who have moved into Wellingborough Deanery in recent years have been very supportive.

Part of that Counsel is to address the Questions that have been raised in the recent Building Meeting.

Circumstantial Signs – a key sign is the availability of the funds – whenever we have needed to spend money on aspects of the project we have always had the funds in the bank.

I came across 2 quotes that I use in our fundraising applications that I felt were very useful...

A recent Local Government Association report commented on how very beneficial a Faith based group can be in influencing health and well-being and noted the further benefits of the potential for collaboration with statutory agencies.

“Working with faith groups to promote health and wellbeing:” Report by LGA - Jan 2017

Churches, chapels and meeting houses are seen by British adults as providing a range of important benefits for the UK. The top three most important perceived benefits are as places of worship (52%), as examples of beautiful architecture (51%) and as an important part of local identity (42%). Only 9% of Britons do not think that churches, chapels and meeting houses have any important benefits for the UK.

National Churches Trust Survey and Report - Feb 2017

Appendix 2 – More on portacabins

I discussed this possibility with our Architect, he has recently overseen the placing of 3 Portacabins at a project he is running, and the placement costs alone were £15,000. To this we would have to add a supply of sewerage, water and electricity and the Planners would want to charge for Planning Consent and we would need to supply car parking before the site is taken into use.

Another potential problem arises with supplying water and electricity. Any utility services brought onto the site should only be brought on once. To do that we would need to do all the excavations to ensure the services were running in at the right level to coincide with the foundations of the building.

That principle also exists for the car park as it too is tied in with the levels for the foundations.

We would have to spend these anyway, but the phasing would be wrong as the contractors would have to return to the site and move stuff around when the Portacabins were removed. There is a significant potential for waste.

Appendix 3 – Cost details of a ‘simple’ building

In the current design, we have 1,245 sq. metres of floor space. The current project cost is £2,558,220 which gives a unit cost for each sq. metre of £2,055.

In a Simpler Building – we would need to provide Hall, Foyer, Toilets & Storage – by using elements from our current plans the cost could look like this:

	Sq. mtrs	
Hall	285	
Foyer	192	
Toilets	35	
Storage	46	
TOTAL	558	@ 2055 per sq metre = Total cost £1,146,690
Plus, design and drawing work and planning consent £124,000		
Foundations and floor slab for the later phases £100,000*		

So a ‘Simple’ Building would cost around £1,370,690

*When considering the ‘Simple’ Building – it would be sensible to look forward to later additions to the building to bring it to final completion. So at the point of creating the ‘Simple’ Building, we would want to lay the foundations and floor slab for the later phases. This is a cost difficult to extract but would be in the order of another £100,000.