

Plan for Growth



4 June 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objective:

As a Church we seek, under God, to grow by:

drawing people **in** to the life of the church,

building them **up** in their spiritual life

sending them **out** in service to our community and the world.

Goals:

As immediate goals in our pursuit of this objective we propose that we seek:

To see regular Sunday attendance over 100 in the next 3 years.

To develop a culture of growth, discipleship and service.

Solution

We believe that we will achieve these goals by developing a culture of:

Prayer

Invitation and Welcome

Spiritual Growth

Understanding the Plan

Following a series of congregational meetings we believe that prayer, welcome and spiritual growth are the three priorities that should guide our planning as we seek to grow as a church. There are a number of concrete steps that we can see are needed in order to develop in these areas. Describing our priorities by means of

developing our church culture should also help us to identify future possibilities for growth and to maintain our focus as we seek to prioritise our investments of time and money.

- The details of the plan are organised under the three headings of Prayer, Welcome & Invitation and Spiritual Growth. Many things could be lined up under more than one heading, but for ease of comprehension each suggested initiative will be listed only once.
 - As an early part of the implementation of the plan, the *Transforming Church Committee* (TCSC) of the PCC will draw up an annual chart of events.
 - An important part of the plan is Feedback Analysis, i.e. that the TCSC will review progress and outcomes at least 6 monthly to gauge what is/is not working, where our priorities are/are not being expressed in our decision making, and what new actions we might consider in order to promote our aims.
 - The Plan for Growth is not intended to outline everything that we will be doing as a Church in the coming months and years. Our existing ministries and the work of maintaining our properties remain vital to our mission. This plan may, however, help us to prioritise and approach these existing ministries more deliberately in the light of our desire to become a more prayerful church growing up together and growing new disciples.
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DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF PRAYER:

Pray without ceasing: 1Thessalonians 5:17

LYCiG Feedback:

Many of the feedback forms at a number of the different LYCiG evenings stressed a desire and a sense of call to deepen and develop our own prayer lives and to commit ourselves to God in prayer as a church in a new way. Prayer is the engine room of any growing church as it is only by God's power that we can truly grow. To help this culture of prayer to develop we plan:

1. To devote a series of Sunday morning sermons to the subject of prayer. Covering amongst other things, what it is, why we do it and how to pray.

2. To host a prayer meeting once a month, to which the whole congregation will be invited. These meetings will be low pressure and no one will be expected to pray aloud if they do not wish to.

These meetings will last no more than an hour

They will include some help and encouragement in the development of a personal, private discipline of prayer.

Further details of format etc will be made available in advance of the meetings

3. To develop an annual cycle of prayer for the intercessions on a Sunday morning, which will also include a particular focus on praying for the growth of the church.

4. To support the congregation in developing a more consistent prayer life outside of church meetings, with the provision of a monthly prayer diary and the encouragement of meeting in small groups to pray.

DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF INVITATION & WELCOME:
...day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. Acts 2:47.

LYCiG Feedback:

A repeated theme throughout the LYCiG course has been the need to make it easy for new people to become part of the church family at the Old Church. This was highlighted in discussions about welcome and services, and in the vital question of how we encourage people to come in for the first time.

- 1. To review our welcome at the 10:30 service**, this will include a revamp of the pew sheets and the addition of a “welcome team” to work in line with the sidemen.
 - 2. To add a service of Morning Prayer on the first Sunday of each month** this gives the opportunity for a shorter service that is a little easier for newcomers to participate in and follow.
 - 3. To have at least two “guest” services a year.** These services will be deliberately ‘user friendly’ for people who do not usually attend church and the congregation will be encouraged to prayerfully consider whom they might invite.
 - 4. To run *Alpha* or *Christianity Explored*** at least once each year. These courses provide a very accessible introduction to the Christian faith, but they also give people an excellent opportunity to develop relationships within the Church family.
 - 5. To plan an annual cycle of social events** aimed at developing links with the local community. These will have a variety of target age groups.
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DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH: *let us go on toward perfection: Heb 6:1.*

LYCiG Feedback:

During the course it became clear to us as a leaders group that in terms of the “three circles” of numerical growth, spiritual growth and growth in service: that our own spiritual growth as a congregation would be the driver for progress in the other two circles. For that reason we see it as vital that we develop a sense of “holy dissatisfaction” with our own spiritual development, and offer renewed opportunities for growth and discipleship in the congregation.

1. To develop home groups for Bible Study and mutual encouragement.

2. To offer resources for personal study. This will include continuing to offer the BRF notes, but also providing a church bookstall and possibly a modest ‘lending library’ of Christian books.

3. Encouraging the development of prayer triplets within the church family.

4. Exploring the use of resources such as “Uncover” Gospels project to encourage reading of the Bible one to one.

5. To consider together how our discipleship works out in our homes, our employment and in service to our local community.
