

## **A vision for the church**

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### **1. Develop the spiritual foundation of the church**

The church's number one priority is to be obedient to God, walking by faith and being led by the Spirit. The church's current values show a strong commitment to being spirituality focussed, and this should be maintained, as it will fuel the other strategies.

- Maintain the church's commitment to enabling people of all ages to experience God in a corporate setting
- Revitalise the church's corporate prayer life
- Ensure the ministry of Word is faithful, Christ focussed, gospel centred, relevant and results in life change.
- Establish appropriate levels of theological and practical ministry training and mentoring
- Explore appropriate ways to ensure that people are actually being disciplined rather than simply 'cared for'.
- Explore use of retreats and seminars for spiritual input
- Connect Christian education streams (adults, children and youth) with the vision, purpose, goals and priorities of the church

### **2. Explore what it means to be a team**

The church has already started along this path with the intentional incorporation of new Elders, the formation of other teams such as Leadership Support, Transition Team, Junior Church, Preaching and Worship. To expand this further it would be useful to:

- Establish a common understanding of what it means to work together for the common good
- Increase maturity in managing conflict, having robust conversations and strengthening interpersonal communication.
- Work with specific teams to build healthy team dynamics, enabling people to be active, engaged and heard, while ensuring practical results are achieved
- Set role expectations for team leaders and provide training, encouragement, support and mentoring
- Encourage all ministry leaders to work in teams, or at least have one other person as a backup and potential successor.
- Apply the 'Sabbath' principle, so that team dynamics and team members are continually refreshed

### **3. Improve organisational effectiveness**

The church needs 'just enough' structure to support life, just as a trellis supports the vine or a scaffold enables a building. Good aspects of the current culture need to be maintained.

- Work through vision and values and express in terms of supporting behaviours. i.e 'If we have this value what will it mean practically?'
- Provide ministry coaching for all existing and potential ministry leaders
- Clarify expectations for all significant ministry roles, and maintain appropriate accountability for results
- Instil start and end dates, with periodic evaluation.
- Explore ways to assess how the church is doing
- Encourage leaders to re-examine, simplify or eliminate tasks that are not contributing to the church's new vision
- Ensure that all meetings achieve desired outcomes, so that people see meetings as opportunities rather than obstacles
- If people are not available for a specific ministry, consider eliminating or restructuring.

#### **4. Lead the church through change**

Changing a culture requires intentional and careful effort sustained by a committed core, with well-defined goals, open communication and consultation over a long period of time.

- Envision the church towards change, explaining the principles of change management, and describe benefits and costs
- Gather a core group motivated to see change
- Collate a list of all suggested improvements arising from the Transition process and prepare a prioritised action plan in consultation with key stakeholders.
- Start small – identify opportunities for experimentation.
- Move focus away from events and facilities and towards walking by faith, experiencing deeper life, being spiritually refreshed, discipling one another and connecting with the community and the world with the gospel.
- Explore alternative formats for public gatherings that foster spiritual growth and body unity.
- Explore rebranding and refocussing
- Explore and expand the meaning of membership to convey identity, belonging and commitment
- Expand the consultative process to include diverse members of all ages, including children
- Consider re-forming the leadership support team, or other such consultative and engagement vehicle to provide an opportunity for all congregation members to participate in the development of the church to the degree that they choose.

#### **5. Actively diversify the ministry of the church (transition the pastoral model)**

In order to fully embody the principle of Empowering Leadership, it will be necessary to significantly depart from the traditional model of Pastor, especially with a part time or bivocational (tentmaking) engagement. It is strongly recommended that the church release the new Pastor to focus on the change agenda. The church is already in a good position to take this step as it has become accustomed to operating without a full time Pastor. It would be good to maintain this momentum and resist the natural tendency to revert to old patterns.

#### **6. Establish missional attitude and behaviours**

In order to reach the community it is necessary to think like a missionary - understand the culture, make personal connections at points of felt need, and proactively look for opportunities to live and explain the gospel.

- Identify and empower key individuals to take proactive steps.
- Continue to explore connections with school communities via the church's relationships with the chaplaincy services
- Provide training and mentoring in missiological principles
- Continue to provide opportunities for attendees to respond to the gospel and grow in their walk
- Provide training in gospel understanding and communication. Aman has conducted two such courses in Adelaide – Contagious Christian (program), and his own adaptation of Youth Dimension conversational evangelism.
- Explain how to distinguish between gospel and culture and how to contextualise the gospel so that unbelievers are better placed to respond

#### **7. Continuously evaluate and assess progress and effectiveness**

- Review these strategies regularly
- Establish appropriate opportunities where the congregation can hear from God (could be prayer/worship/reflection/discussions/feedback etc) and contribute to the decision-making process (and thus sustain corporate ownership)
- Develop appropriate measures to assess progress