

# NEW SHOOTS BOOKLET DRAFT

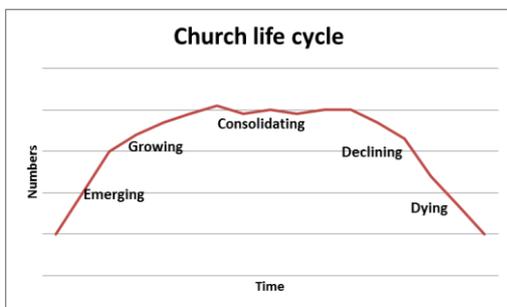
## OUR NEED FOR A VISION

Jesus commands us to “go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19) To be faithful to this Great Commission, we need to regularly re-think how to do this at this time in our context.

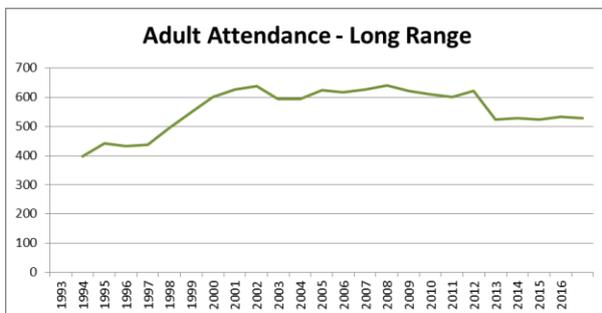
Our church is well established. The challenge for churches like ours is to stay fresh, adaptable and open. Otherwise we will experience less energy, less involvement and declining numbers. We believe that we are already experiencing these effects and are in danger of decline overall, through different congregations are at different stages.

We need a fresh vision to unite, energise, realign and drive our church.

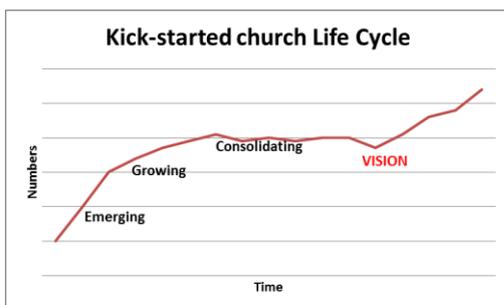
The predictable life cycle of churches:



Our church's numbers:



The impact of a fresh, strong vision:



## **WHO WE WANT TO BE**

We want our church to be a Christian community marked by three key cultural qualities:

### **Compassion**

We have received God's compassion in Christ. We seek to reflect his compassion individually and as a church.

We aim to be moved in compassion by the spiritual needs of the lost, the earthly needs of the down-trodden and the personal needs of others in our church.

We look for greater compassion to liberate us from Christian complacency, create a godly discomfort that is other-person-focused, and cause us to look outward beyond our own needs.

### **Clarity**

We have received the light of the knowledge of God in Christ. We seek to become clearer in our understanding, experience and response to him.

We remain committed to proclaiming Christian truth by expounding the Bible. We seek to improve the quality of this Word ministry at every level: preaching, small groups, one to one ministry and personal Bible reading.

We aim to speak with clarity where the Bible touches on social issues and equip our members for a clear witness in a complex world.

### **Integrity**

We have received the incredible privilege of being God's people in Christ. We aim to be worthy of that calling in both the operation of our church and the personal conduct of our members.

For our church, this involves transparency, accountability, wise governance and strong servant-leadership under Christ.

For each member, this involves sincere faith in Christ leading to love for neighbour, personal holiness in speech, relationships and ambitions, and commitment to Christian disciplines such as prayer, Bible reading and fellowship.

## **WHAT WE WANT TO DO**

There are three chief activities that our church must always make sure it is undertaking effectively.

### **Reach**

We want to reach all people, especially those in our local area, with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This involves:

1. Connecting with everyone in our local community through various programs and approaches.
2. Telling unbelievers the saving message about Jesus in a way that is appropriate to each one, formally through the church's programs or informally in members' conversations.
3. Integrating newcomers into our church so that they make friends and become involved in church life and ministry.

### **Build**

We aim for all of our members to be growing in their relationship with God, personal holiness, doctrinal clarity and mission-mindedness.

The key means by which we seek to build people in Christ are:

- Edifying church services (preaching, singing, corporate prayer, example, conversation)
- Intentional small groups (focused on disciples making disciples)
- Effective care networks (support through transition or hard times)
- Personal Christian disciplines (resources for individual Bible reading and prayer)
- Intergenerational ministry and influence

### **Send**

We want to be 'sending' all of our members into ministry and mission for Christ by encouraging and supporting them to serve according to their gifts in weekday occupations, community involvement, personal relationships and church ministries.

We also want our members to be aware of God's plan for the nations and to be actively involved in supporting global missions, especially the support of our church's mission partners. We want to share the blessings that God has given us through fruitful partnerships beyond our parish boundaries.

## HOW WE WILL DO IT

### WHOLE-CHURCH UNITY

We seek greater unity across our whole church, aiming for our diverse congregations to be closer together.

Benefits of greater unity:

- Diversity of specialist ministries able to be offered across congregations (kids, youth, seniors, outreach events)
- Efficiency through sharing resources (administration, infrastructure)
- Financial strength and stability (less need to borrow money for projects)
- Encouragement, collaboration and stimulation within the staff team

How to increase whole-church unity:

- A whole-church vision
- Sharing of staff across congregations
- Whole-church ministries and events
- Improved centralised communications
- Governance at the whole-church level

## CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY

Our weekly congregations, where our members 'go to church' are the centre of our church life. More than any other factor, the health of these gatherings reflects the health of our church community.

We seek to take the following approach to our congregational ministry:

- The Word of God must be central to every church service
- Every congregation must be made as accessible as possible to newcomers
- The quality of up-front ministry must be maximised in all church services, though different styles will be suitable to different congregations and venues
- We will aim for at least 80% weekly attendance rate in every congregation
- Changes must be made where congregations are not growing to encourage and allow growth
- Diversity of congregation size, tone and style allows us to offer 'something for everyone'
- Where a congregation fills 75% of the physical capacity of its venue we will seek to split the congregation to allow for further growth
- We will seek to have at least two larger congregations (250+) as part of our church to offer a different style of church, give easier options for future church planting and use resources more efficiently, recognising that larger congregations require different ministry models and production standards
- We will seek to grow Night Church, which seeks primarily to reach youth and young adults, as large as possible

## SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

Small groups are an important part of our church life. We aim for 100% of our church-members to be part of a small group.

It is important that small groups have a clear purpose. In our small groups we will aim to *train each other as disciples of Jesus*.

Christian discipleship involves the following aspects of relationship with Jesus:

- Costly personal allegiance to Jesus
- Maintaining Christian disciplines including prayer, Bible reading, fellowship and witness
- Desire to grow in Christian maturity
- Commitment to fellow-disciples
- Involvement in the mission of Jesus to make more disciples

The primary goal of our small groups, therefore, is not relationships with each other but our relationship with God, strengthened through relationships with each other. In small groups we learn together from the Bible, pray for one another, encourage and admonish one another, and serve Christ together.

To train each other effectively in small groups, the groups need a sense of movement and progress, being dynamic, not static. So [our goal is for](#) small groups [that will work best when they](#) are:

- Congregationally based,
- Reshuffled regularly (annually or bi-annually),
- Led by suitably gifted people who are focused on discipling, equipped and supported, and
- Part of an overall discipleship ethos and strategy for the church.

In recognition of the importance of small groups to church life and members' growth, along with the need to provide resources for groups and training for leaders, we aim to have at least one staff member whose time is largely dedicated to overseeing small group ministry in our church.

## THE CARE NETWORK

As a church, we aim to see that people with pastoral needs are cared for in way that is timely, appropriate and real. While pastoral care occurs informally and in small groups, the Care Network aims to operate around and underneath other structures to provide pastoral care where it is needed.

The features of the Care Network are:

- A number from each congregation serve as Carers who are available to give pastoral care.
- Care is coordinated on a congregational level, with Coordinators working with the pastor in each congregation.
- Carers are trained, equipped and supported by the overall Overseers of the Care Network, at least one of whom will be a staff member of the church.
- The Care Network covers the integration of new people into congregations.
- The Care Network incorporates the practical ministry of providing meals, drawing on a pool of people willing to supply meals. There will also be an emergency supply of meals kept in a freezer at church, with someone coordinating this 'freezer ministry'.
- Prayer lists are distributed regularly to those who want them – sometimes for the whole church and sometimes just for a congregation. They contain prayer points for people who want to be prayed for by their congregation and/or the whole church.
- The Care Network will possibly be expanded in future to establish 'mercy ministries', looking to needs outside the church.

## KIDS AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Kids' and youth ministries are strategically important. The course of a many Christians' lives was set to follow Christ in childhood or adolescence. Good kids' and youth ministries also make it much easier for families to join our church.

The expansion and improvement of our youth and children's ministry programs is crucial for the long-term health and growth of our church.

Under God, we will seek to achieve this by:

- Growing our weekly youth groups;
- Growing and multiplying our weekly kids clubs;
- Continuing to provide Special Religious Education in local primary and high school in partnership with other local Protestant churches and advocating for its place in public schools;
- Running innovative occasional programs for children and youth such as holiday clubs, camps and other events;
- Growing weekly Sunday School classes as part of growing congregations;
- Recruiting, training and supporting people for children's and youth ministry; and
- Facilitating the development of meaningful relationships between young people and older generations in our church; and
- Complying with all moral, legal and diocesan obligations to provide safe ministry for children and youth.

Due to the labour-intensive nature of kids' and youth ministry, we aim to employ staff to plan, coordinate and lead teams in kids' and youth ministry.

## GLOBAL MISSIONS

We aim for global mission to become closer to the heart of our church. This will involve developing:

- a greater awareness of the world outside our area including other cultures,
- a theological vision of the whole world ('the nations') under God's plan, and
- a deeper conviction of every person's need for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Consequently, we aim to increase the dimensions of our church's collective support for mission-work and develop rich, supportive relationships between our church and churches elsewhere. We also aim to identify and send our people into the cross-cultural mission field.

We plan to do this through:

- maintaining a church partnership with Compassion Australia, involving individual child sponsorship and links with a church in a developing country,
- regular mission-awareness trips for small groups to visit Christian work in places of other cultures,
- [encouraging our members to become involved directly with missionaries.](#)
- ongoing prayerful and financial support of various Mission Partners representing different kinds of gospel-centred mission-work in a range of cultural contexts,
- recruiting and sending members into full time ministry and cross-cultural mission, and
- making donations to Christian mission organisations

## OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

We aim to see scores of people becoming Christians through our church every year. We recognise that, as an established church, reaching people with the gospel and opening our church to them is a particular challenge. We look to be continually innovating and changing what we do to make sure that we are reaching people effectively.

In order to reach people with the gospel, we will seek to train and encourage our members to relate, invite, speak and welcome others in the name of Christ.

At a church level, we will seek to connect with people through the following kinds of activities: mid-week groups for parents and infants, school SRE, youth groups, kids' clubs, retirees' social activities, mercy ministries, men's events, women's events, weddings, funerals, community seminars and pre-evangelistic courses.

We will seek to tell people the message about Jesus through: gospel church services, youth groups, kids groups, men's/women's evangelistic events, other evangelistic events, weddings, funerals and Christianity Explained courses (or equivalent).

We will seek to welcome newcomers to our church through an effective welcoming system in each congregation. We will seek to integrate new members into the life of our church through the Care Network.

Overall, we wish to develop an inviting evangelistic culture in our church which involves fervent prayer, personal commitment and real action to reach the lost.

## GOVERNANCE AND STAFFING

We seek to promote a model of governance in which Parish Councillors and Wardens make decisions for the good of the whole church rather than “representing” the interests of one congregation, venue or group. In order to encourage fresh thinking and develop new leadership, we will seek regular turnover of the membership of Parish Council and Wardens, with each person ideally serving for three to five years.

We seek to employ enough administrative staff for the church to function in an organised, safe and efficient manner and for venues and communications to be attractive.

[We will maintain a policy website to communicate church policies with members](#)

In line with our strategy for congregational and other ministries, we seek to employ pastoral staff in a range of roles with a mix of pastors focusing on particular congregations and other staff focusing on areas of ministry across congregations.

As the Senior Minister leads both the Parish Council and staff team, as well as having ultimate responsibility for all ministry in the church, he needs to maintain a presence in all congregations.

[We promote development and performance review of our staff.](#)

Ideally, in ten years' time, we would like to have a staff team with a good mix of male and female covering the following areas (full or part time):

- A Senior Minister plus two or three other ordained ministers as congregational pastor-teachers (theologically trained)
- A small groups ministry leader (theologically trained)
- A Care Network leader (theologically trained)
- A women's pastor (theologically trained)
- A youth/young adults ministry leader (theologically trained)
- A children's ministry leader (theologically trained)
- A retirees' ministry leader (theologically trained)
- A communications officer
- A facilities and infrastructure officer
- Administrative/clerical staff

## PROPERTY

We aim to make full use of our church's three properties: Christ Church, the Factory and Winmalee Anglican. This commits us to a range of congregational styles and sizes, since each of our properties has a different feel and potential.

All of our properties should be maintained to a standard at which they are both functional and attractive to newcomers. The presentation of our properties should reflect our pride in our church and the profile we wish to maintain in the local community.

In addition to maintaining venues for public ministry, we seek to own and maintain suitable residences for accommodating pastoral staff as opposed to renting accommodation for them.

Up to 2026, the following property works are required for our vision to be realised:

- Completion of refurbishment of Winmalee Anglican church building
- Provision of new facilities for Sunday School at Winmalee Anglican
- Refurbishing the residence at 347 Hawkesbury Rd for ministry accommodation
- Upgrade audio/visual facilities and child-safety measures at Christ Church
- Refurbishment of the Factory to increase auditorium capacity, improve spaces for informal fellowship and provide better disabled facilities
- Acquire an additional family residence for ministry accommodation

## SUMMARY TEN YEAR VISION

In ten years' time, we would like, under God:

- to be a church of diverse congregations united strongly in shared identity, culture, mission and leadership, and connected across generations;
- to be a church recognised by both its members and the broader community for compassion of heart, clarity of mind and integrity of action;
- to have several congregations of varying sizes meeting weekly, including at least two with over 250 attendees;
- to have one large Night Church congregation for youth and young adults with several hundred people attending weekly;
- to have over 250 children and youth in weekly groups where they are trained as disciples of Jesus;
- to have a happy, godly, unified, effective staff team with a mix of functions including congregational pastors and specialists in particular areas of ministry (Eg. children's, youth, retirees, pastoral care, small groups, women's and administrative functions);
- to have strong, well-trained and well-supported networks of lay-leaders carrying responsibility for various aspects of ministry throughout our church;
- to have 100% of our members in weekly small-group fellowship that is focused on training each other in Christian discipleship;
- to have a broad and effective system of pastoral care that looks to the needs of church-members, newcomers and the community at large;
- to have sent over 25 people to study for vocational ministry/mission between [2016-2017](#) and [2026-2027](#);
- to have a strong, fruitful gospel-partnership with one or more churches beyond our parish; and
- to be a deeply prayerful church, relying on God and glorifying him in everything.