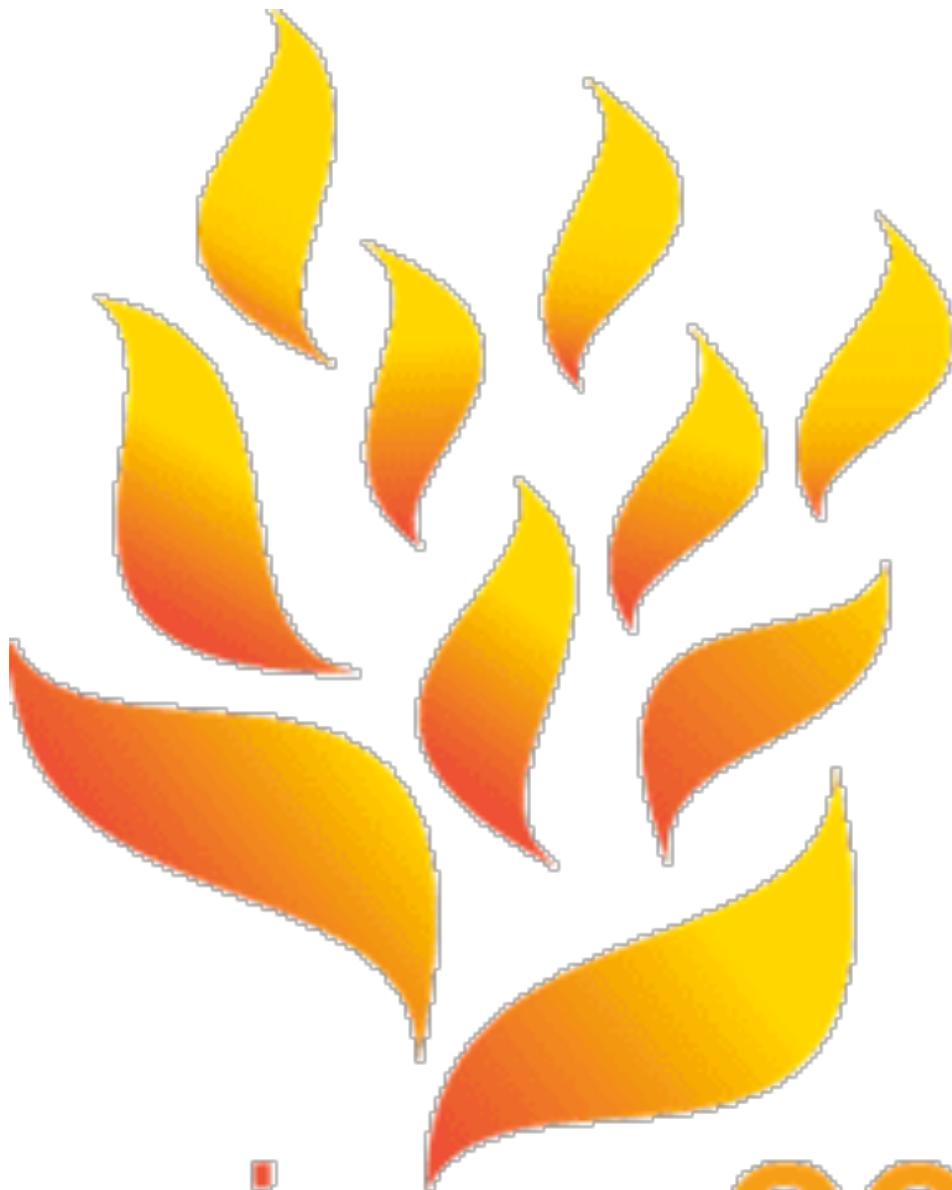


Whangarei Anglican Church



vision2020

2020 and Beyond

Vision Discussion Paper

The Church exists for nothing else but to draw people to Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose.

C. S. Lewis

Table of Contents

Present Context

Where we Find Ourselves Today

Page 6

Future Press Release

Articulating our Future

Page 6

Philosophy Behind Transformation

How We Get There

Page 8

Steps to Success

Milestones on the Way

Page 10

One Page Strategic Plan

The Plan in Abstract

Page 13

Present Context

Before we can begin to project our hope for the future, we must understand where we presently are so that we can make realistic and thoughtful goals. With that in mind, the following is a quick overview.

Congregation Numbers: There has been general growth in congregation numbers with a significant number of newer people attending. This is positive, but a number of historic parishioners have either passed away or become unable to attend over that time and so there has been little qualitative change in worship numbers. Our present numbers are reflective of the average stipended Anglican congregation in New Zealand. With the demographic of the congregation, the reaching of others is paramount for ongoing life.

Financial Position: Financially the community is in much better shape than it has been over the past few years. We are, presently, above budget and looking toward a surplus at the end of the year. The caveat on this is the recognition of a Diocesan Council grant to support the stipend of the Priest in Charge, and the Priest Associate's ministry and housing being covered by the First Ministry Placement. This means that, overall, the parish is financially supported to around \$90,000/year. If we wish to achieve 2 FTE or 1.5 FTE Stipended Clergy, we will need to address this deficit in creative ways.

Community Life: Overall, it would be fair to say that the community life has generally lifted over the past two years. Through various community events and engagement with the challenges of our context (financial recovery, refreshing relationships, increase in church engagement) spirits have been lifted. With Alan's departure, however, comes a test of this spirit. There is a need to recognise the power within the community itself, not only in the enthusiasm of one person, if we are to maintain that positive life going forward.

Social Outreach: Over the past 18 months we have significantly increased our social outreach in terms of serving the needy and gathering people around causes. In particular, the work of Soul Food and those from our community who volunteer brings our community and our assets into direct contribution to the hungry and homeless of Whangarei. The Selwyn Centre continues to serve the elderly through meals and fellowship on a Monday morning. Through the Social Justice Group, we have come to be in contact with and support *Te Tai Tokerau* Emergency Housing Trust and other social initiatives. Each of these have built community, within and outside our church, in our response to the need of others.

Spiritual Life: The spiritual life of a community is greater than the sum of the parts. It is not a reflection on the spiritual life of all, nor is it an averaging out of some arbitrary scale of spiritual health. Rather, it is a reflection of zeal and passion for the work of God's kingdom and for the sharing of the gospel message with those who have not heard it. Prayerful contemplation and the personal relationship of members of our community contribute and

build these outwardly expressed concepts, namely worship and evangelism. This is the area of our communal life that has probably shifted the least in the past 18 months. While there is a love of worship, there is not always an enthusiasm for it – instead often a critique of it. Overall, I feel this is rooted in a belief that it is our worship that puts people off joining us. Though there is a degree of truth to this, in a respect, the belief that just changing worship will transform our community is destructive as it both causes conflict between ‘traditionalists’ and ‘modernists’ and draws people from the act of worship to critique and frustration, which, in turn, diminishes corporate spiritual life.

Pastoral Life: In the past 18 months, an emphasis has been placed upon the structure and support mechanisms for Pastoral Care and Home Communion in the parish. This is in large part because of the weight that had been placed upon specific clergy and people just prior to our arrival as others had become unwell. The structure around this ministry is now located in the Pastoral Care Group, the Licencing of Lay Ministry, the gathering of non-stipended clergy and the covenanting with those who wish to so that commitments and expectations of clergy can be established and roles clarified. We still require additional people to join these ministries but there is a better structure to find substitute when people become unwell or unable to fulfil their roles.

Building: At present, our primary facility, Christ Church, is outdated, inflexible and aged. While not obvious to seasoned congregants, to those entering with fresh eyes, the flaws of the building are very apparent as is its feeling of being run down. This also gives people a sense that the community itself is the same – run down and stuck in ways that are no longer connecting with an external reality. We MUST address this issue if we wish to see any other part of our life change.

Future Press Release – Articulating Our Future

The Future Press Release you will read below is an example of the kind of report we hope could be distributed to Church and Secular news agencies at the end of 2020. It reflects what we hope to see, and some of how we might get there. The act of writing this is an important part of informing what could otherwise be dry information and hopefulness. As you read it, see where you become excited by it or where you feel challenged by it. You are also invited, prior to our Vision Conference on Saturday, August 12 from 10am to 12pm, to write your own Future Press Release and share it with those who gather.

Whangarei, (Northland) – The Anglican Community in Whangarei has seen a rebirth in recent years with a number of new initiatives revitalising once weakened connections between themselves and the wider community of Whangarei. This has created not only a turnaround in attendance but seen the church, through its people and building, become a significant part of the city’s civic, cultural and social fabric.

“Those who belong to the Anglican church in Whangarei are very aware that their challenge is to build community wherever they may be, whether it is at work, sports, home or with friends. This concept is key, as it empowers us all to see our relationships and actions as a means of building the church” explained the chair of the Parish’s Vestry. “What has happened here shows that once we begin to consider the needs of the ones not with us over our own, people and places transform.” Living into that commitment, the central church building of the Whangarei Anglican community, Christ Church, has undergone significant renovation to make it a space that is flexible to the needs of the city it finds itself in. “While we all treasured what the church had been and all that was in it, we realised the need to transform it to fit a new era and culture” the chairperson said. These changes have created a buzz around the music and performance scene of Whangarei, and also now sees the church used as a hall venue for local schools.

In addition to the physical changes, the Anglican community in Whangarei made the brave decision several years ago to invest heavily in a role they call the ‘planter’. This person had a specific responsibility for those who did not attend church, finding ways of getting to know them and drawing them together such that a small community would be built. Over the past three years this person has connected with and helped establish several new communities, some of which now rival the church’s main 9am congregation. “The reason this found success is that the congregation really acknowledge my role as a gift to the city, not as one bound to their own care and benefit. It was an offering to people, and the people responded” we were told. “When our people recognised that, like the shepherd in the parable of the lost sheep, our concern should be for the one not with us, the lost ones,

and not the ones who are already here we saw a major culture shift. This is what has opened the door to effective ministry and also growth in all our communities” the Vestry said.

All this focus on those not in their midst has not resulted in a lack of care for those already there, however. Recognising this new endeavour and the requirements it placed upon those traditionally charged with regular visiting and care of those within the community, volunteers have come forward and begun expressing their latent gifts of care and nurture. Through what they call their Pastoral Care Group, the pastoral needs of sickness, concern or mobility that exist within the church community have been addressed, with all knowing they have support to call on should they find themselves out of their depth. This delegating of roles traditionally held by the clergy has seen an activation of lay people throughout the community as needs arise and gifts are discovered in filling them. This more than anything has energised the congregations as they have found their place in the church and how they can contribute to the wonderful things happening around them. “It is not enough to simply draw people together for its own sake, unless they have a purpose they will always dissipate. In the shared faith that we proclaim as we build communities in Christ’s name, we offer people not only fellowship but meaning” the chairperson said, “and meaning in the context of community is what has truly brought life back to our church and city.”

Questions for Reflection

Is the above a press release that you would like to see our church be able to release in the future? Why is it or why is it not?

What part(s) of the Future Press Release does excite you, and which parts trouble you?

Philosophy Behind Transformation

To achieve the vision set out in the 'Future Press Release' several things must be initiated within the community and have the buy in and support of the present congregation. The following areas are to be a focus.

Employment:

In order to achieve the mission of being a community the builds communities, we need to have both a community builder and a community maintainer. These roles relate back to the church's language of Planter, the one who builds community, and Pastor, the one who cares for that which is already there. They are vastly different roles, with different gifts and leadership styles needed. As such, **our need will be at least two full time equivalent roles. At least one of these must be an Anglican Priest** to maintain the Eucharistic and sacramental spirituality of Anglican community as well as pastor people to greater Christian lives. **The planter role, on the other hand, could be lay or ordained**, but must be filled by a person who wishes to extend the reach of Christian community beyond the church and into people's lives and homes.

Building:

To be a community that can accommodate greater community building and development, **the assets we have must be reimaged in light of our mission not our history.** As such, Christ Church needs to be modernised such that it becomes a flexible and multi-purpose venue able to accommodate events and concerts, while also housing tradition, experimental and small group worship. This can be best achieved by the **replacement of pews with individual seating, the reorganisation of the sanctuary to occupy less space and lend itself toward performance as well as Eucharistic worship.** The longer-term vision must also allow for Christ Church to be a venue of hospitality, with the inclusion of better **kitchen facilities** for meals and refreshments, **hospitality spaces** and **toilets**. If we try to maintain Christ Church as a monument to history, it will have no future.

Community:

At present, the 'angel' of the church for Whangarei Anglican is one that has consistently been described as in hiding, sad, weeping or afraid. Others still have identified it as being something of potential beauty but that has growing upon it a moss from inaction and lack of care. This is not this vision people desire. Instead they wish for something that is contemporary, bright, an angel that in its humility has a sense of glory, a sense that it knows who it is, the authority it carries and strength behind it, but that does not boast in it or find

it a source for pride. To become this, we must rally around a central mission that enlivens us to hope. We must look for the good news at work in the world already and join in. If we focus on our own efforts to grow or change, we will become frustrated. We need to look instead to where God is already succeeding and changing people. The cost of this will be in recognising that we may have been working against God in places, and actually be quite distant from his heart for the one sheep that is lost, not the ninety-nine that were already with him.

Questions for Reflection

How do you react to the idea of the two roles of Planter and Pastor? Do you feel these would be effective? Why do you think it could work, or why not?

What is your reaction to the idea of modernising Christ Church? If you like the idea, what makes it positive for you? If you do not like the idea or the direction of building works, what do you feel it is missing or ignoring?

If someone came up to you on the street and knew you were a part of the community of Whangarei Anglican, how would you like to be able to describe our community and do you feel you can say that honestly at present?

Steps to Success

The following is an outline of some of the milestones over the next three years that will be important markers of movement along the road to our vision for 2020. While they are not absolutes, if we are to achieve our goals, these are important markers for governance bodies and also for our congregation.

Planter Role

This will be the person charged with developing new communities around our church and connecting with external community groups and areas of need in the city. In contact with these areas, the planter will draw people into fellowship and worship in new and different ways.



- Employment of 'Planter'. Begin to connect with communities on fringe of church, Messy Church, Mainly Music, Youth. Also begin plans toward developing further groups; Mothers of Preschoolers, SPACE Programme.
- Have acclimatised and begun development of new programmes, both planned and from conversation with the fringe communities. Sourcing of funds and relationship building with similar programmes in secular space. Connection with other cultures in Whangarei to help build worship groups.
- From these initiatives have built relationships that lead to development of new worship communities, whether home groups, bible study or fuller worship services. Discipling process begins and faith formation and teaching.
- These communities have leaders in development or ready to take charge of themselves, some interchange between communities or people and gifts. Planter finds others of community building ilk to assist with further development and eventual stepping back from those they have planted.

Pastor Role

This will be the person charged with pastoring those communities that already exist within our church and maintaining the 9am worship service, gradually developing it and the worship life of its congregation.

Early 2018

- Employment of 'Pastor'. Begin to acclimatise to worshipping community and recognise need and potential. Develop plans for developing liturgy and worship. Begin to address areas of teaching needed for community and faith development, particularly on sharing faith and evangelism.

Mid-Late
2018

- Have begun some teaching initiatives and liturgical shifts. Have undertaken to visit and speak to at least half of worshipping community, with a plan to visit others.

Mid 2019

- Have developed two year plan for teaching regarding the sharing of faith and developed worshipping life of 9am with input from those interchanging between new community groups being developed and tradition 9am congregation

Late 2020

- Have developed a lively community at 9am, with increased attendance of around 130-140 on a Sunday morning. Congregation aware of and supportive toward other communities developing within wider church life with regular initiatives/events joining the various groups.

Building Works

The building works that we hope to begin toward the end of 2017 are a necessary part of the developing of the Christ Church plant as a multi-use, flexible facility that can compete with other venues as a leading space for civic and cultural events, as well as maintain the worship life and practices of both tradition Anglican spirituality and contemporary services.

Early 2018

- Stage one of building project complete or in process of completion with chairs now in nave and sanctuary space reduced and leveled to appropriate height. AV, lighting and other peripherals to worship have been installed.

Mid-Late
2018

- Space is being used and/or advertised for wider community groups and events to make use of. May require casual labour or event management role from volunteer. Meeting rooms advertised as spaces to gather away from an office

Mid 2019

- Regular events being booked in Christ Church with contracts for yearly events in place. Revenue stream for venue increasing. Stage two of project to begin with the installation of toilet block and kitchen facilities.

Late 2020

- Christ Church recognised as one of best venues in the city for performance, music and theatre. Regular events with team to set up and pack down. Income of around \$10,000/year from use of space.

Vision
To be a people of Christ



Mission
To be a community that builds communities in the name of Christ.



Strategic Projects, Programmes and Activities

What projects, programmes, services and activities will we focus on over this time to ensure success.

Worship

Building worship communities that reflect the people who gather in them

- Continue to develop and slowly modernise 9am service, launch Sunday School
- Draw Messy Church into main church building with more advertising.
- Identify and resource music groups with view to band and small choir.

Building

Creating space for community to gather in many forms.

- Complete Stage One of Building alterations.
- Collect information on community groups and others that may find space useful.

Planting

Developing and Partnering with communities around need and place in life

- Through community agencies develop links and knowledge of 'need' communities in city.
- Connect with wider cultural groups, religious and non-religious.
- Develop community in consultation with Messy Church families to address needs to young families.
- Develop teams to run ALPHA twice per year.

Pastoring

Ensuring that those who are part of our communities are cared for and guided in their faith.

- Develop, resource and grow the Pastoral Care Group.
- Licencing and training of those in roles.
- Encourage organic growth of fellowship groups.

Critical Success Factors

What do these areas require to work?

Worship

- Improving projection and digitising of liturgy and music
- 6 monthly training of worship teams
- Development or employ of musical talent to lead music in newer services
- Change of worship space to provide flexibility
- Identify and resource possible Sunday School teachers and provide appropriate space.

Building

- Begin works on stage one of plans and increase flexibility and AV capability
- Draw faculties committee into discussion to expedite approval
- Remove pews and replace with chairs to provide flexible and comfortable worship space
- Install better heating system

Planting

- Employ a person in role of 'planter' to connect and come alongside different groups within and outside church.
- Congregational teaching on the early church and role of planter vs pastor.

Pastoring

- Calling and advertising for people to join pastoral care team in their work
- Congregation growth in sense of need to gather and openness to one another.

*You are invited to read and digest all the information in this document over the following week. Please engage with it as fully as you can and come with **questions or alternative visions** to the **Parish Forum on Sunday 6, August.***

*We will speak more to the possible future and vision of our parish at our Vision Conference on **Saturday, August 12 from 10am to 12pm.** Please come along to this. Bishop Jim will be in attendance, and **the conversations will be important** to determining the next steps in clergy appointment and diocesan involvement*



WHANGAREI
ANGLICAN

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN AOTEAROA, NEW ZEALAND AND POLYNESIA