Mobilising for Mission

Team Development

**Why are we doing this?**

It is a direct response to the ‘Listening to God’ process and is the development of our vision as a church.

More specifically:

* + One of our specified priorities was to identify people’s gifts and provide a platform for people to exercise them. Deeper than that, this represents a structural change that is geared to help us respond to God’s mission more effectively. The teams themselves will have an eye on all the other priorities in our vision and look to execute those priorities in their discrete area of focus.
  + We are not a vicar-centric church, but we want to develop further shared leadership. A lot will be invested in the leaders of these teams to develop their own leadership skills & character - this targets our priority about development & succession;
  + We want greater clarity as to what’s going on in the church and who is involved, especially for newcomers. There will be a built in limit to how many teams a person can be on.

**What does this look like?**

There are lots of possible models to how a mission shaped church that takes discipleship seriously can arrange itself. There is no one ‘right’ model. The quality of the relationships with God and with one another is what really matters. This structure is not rigid and it will ‘evolve’.

* The last thing we want to do is saddle more people with more meetings, and add levels of bureaucracy to the life of St John’s. A caricature of this contrast is a Committee is very task focused, has an agenda, takes minutes. It’s all about getting the job done.

A team on the other hand has discipleship of the team in its DNA. Prayer is more than afterthought, and growth of team members is part of their reason for being. They will be encouraged to be creative and explore new ideas because there is a ‘give it a go’ attitude, a permission giving culture which is more than just about getting the job done.

* We are using teams to try and connect people to those areas of mission/ministry for which they are gifted and have a passion, but on the understanding they will be aiming to help the rest of the church to grow in these things. They are facilitators, overseers. So if you have a prayer team, or a faith-sharing team, they are not the only people in the church who pray or engage in evangelism. Their reason for being is more about ‘how can we develop the life of prayer in this church’, or ‘how can we grow as a church in faith-sharing and what as a team can we do to facilitate that’.
* There will to be fluidity to the teams. A team will not be too large, but they may well have sub-groups made up of people recruited for a particular task for a set period – eg planning a holiday club. We don’t want people to feel trapped in long-term open-ended commitments. People can move in and out of the teams.

However it will bring sharper focus, as a specific group thinks about a particular area with mission glasses.

* The Plan is to have 2 leaders per team, so they can support each other. There will be close contact between them and the church leadership (PCC/vicar). The church leadership will share the vision for the teams and the church, and the team leaders take that understanding to their team, who then shape the particular vision for their team and area of focus.

The Leaders will be chosen by church members.

* These teams will be working most effectively when there is cross-fertilisation of ideas and practice across the teams. This will take time.
* The intention is that no one is involved in too many areas. This may involve some uncomfortable moments when we think something is falling by the wayside, but it is about deploying the limited resources we have effectively.

A team leader can only be part of one team. We are deciding whether the same restraint should apply to all team members, or the possibility of being part of two teams is appropriate.

**What are the teams?**

The PCC has done a fair bit of legwork thinking about what teams we want to establish and what exactly is their remit. It’s not as easy as you first imagine to work out where the lines fall when you talk about an area of the church’s ministry. They have tried to strike a balance between being specific enough so there is initial understanding as to a team’s remit, but not so narrow that we need 25 teams to cover what we’re trying to do.

We are starting with 7 teams, but the PCC made a shortlist of 9. To start the process we are sticking to 7 to make it manageable. It is not a closed list and teams can be added as we move forward.

Discipleship is not on the shortlist, but not because it is considered less important than some of the others that are. Rather, there is an understanding that discipleship is caught up in the whole concept of teams and their mission focus. That is not to say that we won’t have a team that considers this more directly in the future.

The names for the individual teams are not set in stone and a name for the whole team structure (eg Church Life Teams, Mission Teams…) is yet to be finalised.

**Where do we go from here?**

* We want everyone to pray about this, in homegroups, individually, as a church. Pray about the whole venture, and then pray specifically about the appointment of the team leaders.
* We will undertake the following process to appoint team leaders:

1. The church will pray for 3-4 weeks and we will have Sunday morning teaching on the qualities of leaders;
2. After this period, everyone in the church will be asked to nominate 2 people for each of the seven teams;
3. The nominations will be counted by PCC and a shortlist of potential leaders drawn up. These people will be approached to ask whether they would consider being a team leader if appointed. This will produce a final list of possible leaders.
4. The PCC will then vote for the leaders from this final list.

We are choosing to follow this process so that the whole church is involved and can take ownership of their choice of team leaders. It also avoids the vicar having undue influence and having a situation where the leadership team is a collection of the vicar’s friends.

* Down the road we will begin to draw in members to the teams, alongside an exploration of gifts and passions.