

TASK FORCE JUBILEE ACTION PLAN 2018 - 2024

The Jubilee Action Plan 2018–2024 is the first stage in realising Session’s Vision for High Street Presbyterian Church. It takes forward the long-term strategy of developing discipleship in the congregation as the basis for developing and sustaining mission and outreach in High Street’s catchment area. This strategy will grow the congregation and bring more people to Christ.

CONGREGATION

VISION: Congregation expanding steadily as people are drawn into a community of disciples of Jesus Christ who are committed to following the teaching in the bible and the example of Jesus Christ.

The congregation will grow and more people will be brought to Jesus by delivering the Action Plan outlined below. The key element of this plan, upon which all other elements depend, is the development of discipleship.

DISCIPLESHIP

VISION: Discipleship development undertaken by an increasing number of the congregation each year.

VISION: Committed folk in the congregation demonstrating a passion to share the gospel and encouraging others to come to faith.

The Task Force recommendations:

- Starting in the autumn of 2018, develop discipleship in the congregation through delivery of training, mentoring and ongoing support .
- Initially give priority to the 20-50 year age group.
- Utilise “Christianity Explored”, followed later by the more advanced “Discipleship Explored”, which are proven group-training courses that should suit High Street.
- Deliver the training internally through Rev McDowell, supported by trained disciples from the congregation, to achieve greatest impact and sustainability.
- Establish group support arrangements, based on the training groups, to provide long-term mutual encouragement, mentoring and ongoing development for the participants in discipleship development.
- Evaluate the programme annually to secure continuous improvement.

Note: As covered later under staffing, the Task Force recommends the appointment of a deaconess or other worker to assist the Minister in development of discipleship, pastoral care and other activities for families and young people.

VISION An expanded pool of active volunteers from the congregation developing and using their gifts to progress the Lord’s work.

The Task Force recommendations:

- Through discipleship development, foster a desire and willingness to contribute to the Lord's work and to help others.
- Become more proactive and intentional in identifying the church's skill needs and in identifying the contribution that individuals can make - particularly as demand for people to assist in mission and outreach grows;
- Often people are reluctant to volunteer – they need to be asked and encouraged.
- Strengthening of relationships is crucial in realising this aspect of the Vision

VISION: An increasing number of adults, particularly those aged 20 to 50 years, developing a sense of belonging through regular participation in fellowship opportunities.

At present only a small proportion of High Street's congregation is in the 20–50 age band and few of them participate in church activities outside Sunday morning services.

The Task Force recommendations:

- Starting in September 2018 consult the congregation, specifically including people in the 20-50 age band, to identify what activities and mode of delivery they would support;
- As soon as possible, and not later than early 2019, promote and pilot at least 2 of these activities on a short-term trial basis;
- By autumn 2019, evaluate progress and introduce / deliver activities according to demand;

Note: Not everything that is tried will work – flexibility and perseverance will be needed.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

VISION: High Street's profile in the community enhanced through addressing social and other needs of its catchment area;

VISION: Regular delivery of effective outreach events or initiatives, either working alone or with other churches and organisations.

High Street has become inward looking, rarely engaging in any mission or outreach activity. The wider community has little contact with us, knows little about us and probably perceives our church as irrelevant to them and their life challenges. To grow our church we must become much more proactive in seeking to serve our community.

As High Street currently has limited capacity to engage in Mission and Outreach, an important aim for Discipleship development must be to increase this capacity.

The Task Force recommendations:-

- Starting early in 2019, carry out research, including consultations with community and welfare organisations, to identify social or other needs in High Street's catchment area, which the church could help to address.
- Based on the results of this research, develop an action plan for a programme of mission and outreach and implement from 2020 onwards.
- During 2018/19, explore the potential for a limited programme, eg occasional breakfast or lunch for a particular social group with loneliness issues, or a homework club, and, if resources can be identified, deliver on a trial basis.
- Provide training in evangelism for youth leaders and others who may have opportunities to influence people in the community.
- Use every opportunity of engagement with the community to promote High Street as a caring family who would welcome their participation eg contact when offering tea/coffee to parents bringing kids to Holiday Bible Club.
- Continue to deliver occasional 'headline events' eg Kids Fun Day, and use them to recruit for other church activities.

PASTORAL CARE

VISION: All demands for pastoral care being satisfied, with High Street's reputation for being a loving, caring congregation significantly enhanced.

In High Street we have 1 Minister, a retired Minister providing vacation cover plus some pastoral visits and no other employed staff (excluding organist, caretaker and cleaners). This is a major constraint on what we can do. For the Minister to become more proactive in development of discipleship, some of his time has to be released from other activities. Other churches successfully provide much greater support for their Minister in the area of pastoral care.

The Task Force recommendations:

- In September 2018, establish a Pastoral Care Team of 5 or 6 people to manage and coordinate pastoral care throughout the church;
- This team should identify others, if necessary, to support them in their work and arrange training on counseling and issues such as bereavement, dependency and relationships.
- Progressively hand over the pastoral care role to this team, reducing the direct involvement of the Minister to the more needy cases.

Note: As covered under staffing, the Task Force recommends the appointment of a deaconess or other worker, who would lead on pastoral care for families and young people.

WORSHIP

VISION: Average Sunday attendance of adults steadily increasing as people experience the joy and fulfillment of worshipping God and the fellowship of engaging with like-minded people.

Task Group members attended 11 services in 5 churches, which have been growing and attracting younger people. In all cases the delivery, the format and the music were different to High Street.

The Task Force recommendations:

- Identify a small group of people who can support the Minister by delivering part of some services;
- Develop a pool of musicians, specifically including guitar and keyboard, and singers to support delivery of both traditional and contemporary services.
- During the summer of 2018, introduce new songs at morning services;
- From September 2018, introduce 2 modern contemporary services each month while retaining 4 or 5 services each month in the traditional format;
- In September 2019, consult the congregation about future development of worship in the church.

YOUNGER ADULTS, YOUTH AND CHILDREN

VISION: Youth and children's organisations growing steadily as young people and their parents recognise the rewards of becoming an active member of God's family.

The Task Force recommendations:

- Continue to focus, through the leaders of youth and childrens activities, on developing positive relationships with kids and young people through delivery of fun learning programmes, which excite and enthuse them;
- Be more proactive and intentional in using all available opportunities to recruit kids and young people (and their parents) eg through uniformed organisations, Holiday Bible Club, Kids Fun Day, encouraging existing members to bring friends, school contacts etc
- Learn from organisations like Young Life International, which have a strong track record of engagement with 'teens and twenties' and bringing them to Christ.

MANAGING AND RESOURCING DELIVERY OF THE PLAN

VISION: High Street has the necessary resources, effectively managed, to deliver the Jubilee Action Plan.

The Task Force recommendations:-

Leadership / Volunteering

- Hold an early election for new elders and every 2 to 3 years thereafter to bring in younger people to contribute to the leadership of the church and to learn from the experience of existing elders.
- As indicated in previous sections, be more proactive and intentional in identifying, encouraging and supporting people to undertake leadership and other roles in church and uniformed organisations.

Governance and Management

- Review the delivery of Action Plan at least quarterly;
- Develop a structure of small management teams, each comprising 4-6 people and reporting to Session, to manage key aspects of the church's work;

- From September 2018, commission 3 teams to manage Discipleship, Pastoral Care and Communication;
- By September 2019, review the performance of these teams and commission 2 further teams for Families and Young People and for Mission and Outreach.
- By September 2019, commission the preparation of an Operations Manual to provide guidance on all aspects of church management eg responsibilities of trustees, financial management, staff recruitment / management etc – much of this can be based on material prepared for PCI by Peninsula.
- In early 2023, begin planning a programme of events throughout 2024 to celebrate High Street's Jubilee on its current site.

Facilities Development

- As soon as finance permits, convert the room currently used by the choir and Junior Sunday School into a café/coffee bar with a wide entrance directly out of the church vestibule.

Note: The Vision Task Force believes that this facility will be in an ideal location to promote fellowship around Sunday services and at other times and would be widely used by many organisations.

- Continue to maintain all facilities in first class condition, as at present.

Staffing

- As soon as finances permit, engage a Deaconess or 'Youth and Family' worker to assist the Minister in developing discipleship and in delivery of programmes for families and young people;
- As soon as finances permit, engage a part-time member of staff to assist with church administration duties.

Finance

- By January 2019, develop a funding strategy by which the church becomes more proactive and intentional in raising funds for its work;
- At least twice per year, inform the congregation in an easily understood format about the state of the congregation's finances, in particular income compared to projected expenditure.

Training

- Identify and utilise external training programmes to develop people to perform roles within the church eg leadership skills, evangelism.

Communication

- Starting in September 2018, the Communications Team should begin to prepare proposals, for session approval, on use and management of web-based technology and social media for service delivery, internal and external communication and recruitment (to include revision of the web-site).
- By January 2019, begin delivery of the Communications Plan as approved by Session

