

Being Transformed by Jesus to see the Kingdom come



PCC Retreat Notes

Approved by PCC on 23.05.16

Date: Saturday 13rd April 2016
Venue: Carey Lounge, Trinity College
Chair: Paul Langham
Present: Helen Albon, Erica Bebb, Brendan Biggs, Alexander Creavin, Alice Denyer, Martin Freye, Melanie Griffiths, Derek Hadden, Janet Lee, Sian Lowe, Andy MacPherson, Tim Meathrel, Val Moore, Di Noon, Mark Parsons, Catherine Simmonds, Peter Smithson, Graham Stuart, John Troughton, Sara Wadsworth
Patrick Bolster arrived during the afternoon.

The following staff/ordinands were also in attendance: Dan ?, Roberto & Susanne Elvira.

Apologies: Leighton Carr, David Daniels, Mark Orriss

Conflict of Interests: None declared

Bible Reflection: Small groups looked at Bible passages and answered questions around the passage. The groups then prayed together.

The groups then took part in a team building exercise.

A MAIN ITEMS

VISION

PL led a discussion around Vision. The meeting were given a brief background on the journey so far. There have been conversations with representatives of each service, leaders meetings followed by the opportunity for leaders to then lead discussions in their groups. Individual members of the church family have also provided feedback. There have also been discussions in staff meetings and other churches have also fed into the process.

A document was circulated outlining the core values of the Vision as identified so far.

Core Themes:-

- **Mission** – this is the unchanging work of every church; specific to CC “to play our part in establishing God’s Kingdom in Clifton, Bristol and beyond”
 - Identity – could be “what the world around says of us”
 - Values – (how it feels to be us doing this)

- Vision (e.g. by 2020 CC doubled...) changes (Mission interpreted according to season (present time) etc.) Season needs to be God guided (varying length of times in Bible).

The meeting were advised that the PCC's work is to come up with 6 "we will" aims...

- Plan (how do we make that happen?)

Core Team met on 23rd March and felt the call was for us "be a people with a deep love for, intimacy with and understanding of Jesus" as being the key to unlocking the impossible. Sunday teaching from John 4 for next few weeks will unpack this further. There is a relative value of programme and presence. There is not a programme for identity but if we pursue being the people that we are called to be, programmes for specific areas of our church life will become apparent.

Also need to identify 3 values we have to communicate. Need to identify where the gaps are - keen for feedback from the PCC.

Members were asked to reflect on the paper outlining the Identity, Values and Vision that have so far been discerned and asked to :

- Think
- Write
- Share "what don't you get?"

Groups then met together to share. Records were kept of discussions. Questions raised will need to be answered together. Recognition that there is much more work required. It is also recognised that much of the vision as it stands and its longings are already present within CC but we may not always know how to achieve it. Theory vs the impossible becoming possible. Need of power.../ want to see it happening? Need to distinguish "good wishes" from the prophetic.

Note around "Unlocking the impossible"....everything to do with spiritual reality is impossible without Jesus who is the key.

"Inward looking" – encounter with Jesus turns an outcast into a witness....it was noted that this phrase could be seen as being pietism. Developing the faith and love for Jesus in reality would not be kept to oneself only.

Tradition/Change – if disseminated further then PCC would need thorough clarification and communication. Churches like CC are emerging from maintenance to mission.

Can we say we will measure our success by the health of the City? Some churches are no longer content to take comfort from its numbers and levels of charitable giving. A member advised the meeting that a Christian manifesto for Bristol has been compiled in relation to the Mayoral elections. The idea that we

can start getting the café set up in within the year may help to see this vision in a wider context of the City.

Reshaping the small group life – no specifics in mind. There may be a time for reflecting on how many aspects of church life will need to be interrogated.

Question around how does what we have already communicated around the vision (website etc.) relate to what we are doing now? Corporate intent was “building the church” but that was challenged that if we pursue the church you may not necessarily see the Kingdom. This led to the need for a theological shift which highlighted the need for a better knowledge of what is meant by this. We are completely revising the vision whilst working within the MISSION of “Being transformed by Jesus to see the Kingdom come”. The role of the PCC as a leadership has had to be clarified and remodelled to achieve a greater understanding of it’s purpose and the need for a more inclusive role of leadership. Sharing of power is key to success. We are now in a fresh season of coming up with the vision. Foundations are partly heritage principles of CC. There is however, a need to talk about the new season rather than looking back with longing.

Inclusivity – there are clearly lifestyles we cannot condone but getting the balance of sitting alongside people where they are. Building relationships within which it is possible to speak truth. However “inclusivity” is still a loaded wordAlso need to be broadened to include disability, children etc.

Tradition – given difficulties some people have had, perhaps the word is possibly emotive.

PL touched on the need for confidentiality and PCC being a safe place for anything to be said so that in order to glean the best ideas, all ideas are able to be communicated within a sensitive and accepting environment.

Encounter/Transformation etc. PL advised that part of why we meet together is to encounter God. The idea of meeting God is not necessarily understood by everyone within the services etc. Encounter is a word that is understood and which opens us up to the understanding of hearts being strangely warmed.

Need to vastly reduce the words and phrases so the aim is to radically reduce the key words

Absence of “Discipleship” ?

Need to allow our history to be used to educate us going forward. A member reflected that the need to continually look back has to be brought into tension with looking forward.

Identity – speaking about presence rather than programme. Could identify a need for discipleship (e.g.) and build a programme to achieve the goal. However, the absence of such a programme does not necessarily mean that

there are people who are daily achieving such goals within their own areas of influence etc. At the centre should be people's relationship with Jesus. A member reflected that in some churches of their experience the "perceived" lack of deep theological teaching was a cause for concern. However, some of the way the church had been organised was also a challenge. Into this situation came someone whose life was so transformed that it led them to a different realisation of God working in people's lives. Role or relationship evangelism/friendship etc. is paramount and seen to be the most effective. Meeting God is paramount.

Discipling is happening...

Need for a Values box "enabling"??

The meeting broke for lunch.

Afternoon session

PL commented that there is a challenge around leading in such a large group.

Identity needs to be looked at again.

Want to move from talking to action.

Meeting went back into groups and spent 20 mins on

- VALUES – how to reduce to 5? Are there any missing?
- VISION – come up with 3-6 statements telling stories, being descriptive "by 2020 CC will....." Imagine a friend moves abroad and in 2020 you are telling them what has happened in those 4 years...try to think outside the confines of the building but also include one statement focussed on people and one focussed on resources/building.

The meeting fed back:- (Notes will follow from Mark Parsons)

Election of Officers

Lay Chair – Derek Hadden is willing to be lay chair.

Secretary – Rosemarie Hall is willing to stand

Treasurer – Patrick Bolster is willing to stand

Electoral Roll Officer – Mark Parsons is willing to stand

All of the above were proposed by Graham Stuart, seconded by Janet Lee; carried unanimously.

Electing a member to the Standing Committee. MP outlined the purpose of the Standing Committee. There are three places for lay members which includes the PCC Secretary and Treasurer; this leaves one vacancy for a member of PCC. This will be discussed further at the next PCC meeting on 23rd May.

Dates for the coming year. These have been communicated to the membership.

What happens next? PL reflected that the meeting had enjoyed a good time together. Notes from today will be typed up and circulated, any amendments or comments to be communicated to RH/PL.

The SC will discuss further at their meeting ton 11th May. It was noted that the next PCC meeting is scheduled on 23rd May. However, to keep the current momentum, it was suggested that we look at a possible additional Saturday meeting. The majority of members advised that they are available on the morning of 11th June. An email will be sent out in due course to confirm these dates.

A time of prayer followed led by Roberto Elvira. Prayer for unity, discernment and protection.

Mark Parsons asked if there were any members interested in offering their skills or gifts in relation to the opening of the café to advise Paul or Mark.

The meeting closed at 16.16pm