

# Saint Michael and All Angels Parish Church, Bramcote

## Mission Action Plan Exercise: Discerning the will of God for Bramcote

Bishop Paul has proposed the following three key themes for mission within our Diocese: Deeper, Wider and Younger. They are listed below with a brief commentary from the bishop. In addition, two additional themes have been added to ensure that we are both outward looking and unified in our thinking. For each theme, space has been provided for you to perform a simple SWOT analysis and to suggest possible plans, priorities and actions for us to successfully implement each theme. The aim is always for us to discern what God wishes to do among us, and to act accordingly, obediently, humbly and sacrificially.

Diocese of Southwell		Saint Michael and All Angels Parish Church, Bramcote			
Theme	Commentary from Bishop Paul	Strengths	Opportunities	PLANS and PRIORITIES:	ACTIONS:
<p><b>Growing WIDER</b></p> <p>“The primary incentive for sharing the gospel comes from contemplating it with love, lingering over its pages and reading it with the heart”.</p> <p>Pope Francis</p>	<p>The Early Church grew from the outside in, wherein every disciple was a spirit-filled ambassador of the gospel through every possible means of outreach.</p> <p>Today, we need to discern the invisible barriers which prevent people from being included within our churches. The key to achieving this is by gathering people together for every natural reason and by boldly speaking the gospel into those occasions.</p> <p>“We need to draw people to Christ, not by discrediting what they believe, but by showing them a light which is so lovely they want with all their hearts to know its source.” MacLaine L’Engel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breadth of personalities and gifts within congregation.</li> <li>School contacts</li> <li>Excellent buildings.</li> <li>Wide variety of activities.</li> <li>Special services (Easter, Remembrance etc).</li> <li>Occasional Offices (Weddings, Baptisms etc).</li> <li>Homegroups</li> <li>Little Angels</li> <li>Silver Surfers</li> <li>Traidcraft connection</li> <li>Bells</li> <li>Existing traditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Church offering hope at a time of uncertainty.</li> <li>Making greater use of our Church Centre.</li> <li>Forging stronger links with the local Public Houses.</li> <li>Providing additional ‘Special’ events (eg, Pet services).</li> <li>Making use of the various school musicians in our regular services.</li> <li>Forging links with those of other faiths or none.</li> <li>Greater communication.</li> <li>Having a ‘Picture Board’ on Display within the Centre.</li> <li>Making more of our regular ‘Occasional Offices’.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[1] Build upon existing strengths.</li> <li>[2] Improve communications.</li> <li>[3] Live out the gospel in our everyday lives.</li> <li>[4] Deepen the spiritual life of all existing members so that they truly ‘care’ about the spiritual life of those who are presently outside of the community of faith.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the perceived real needs of the local community (eg, loneliness).</li> <li>Welcome those moving into the parish with a reinvigorated ‘Welcome Pack’.</li> <li>Actively build upon our existing strengths.</li> <li>Initiate ‘conversations’ with/within the local community.</li> <li>Develop our communications within/to the local community.</li> <li>Identify how best to help those who are ‘Strangers’ to the Church.</li> <li>Provide stronger links for people to transition from activity groups into mainstream Church.</li> <li>Display/Communicate what’s on to the wider community.</li> <li>Aim at reaching out to children, teens and early 20’s.</li> <li>Hold services outside of the church buildings (eg, Bramcote Hills Park, Pubs, Health Centres, Bramcote Leisure Centre, Sunrise services etc).</li> <li>Actively engage in ‘Walk and Talk’ activities (eg, Dog walkers etc).</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing age profile.</li> <li>A sense of lacking in energy.</li> <li>No plans to draw people through our doors.</li> <li>No connections with people living outside of the central Bramcote Village area</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing age profile.</li> <li>A sense of lacking energy.</li> <li>No plans to draw people through our doors.</li> <li>No connections with people living outside of the central Bramcote Village area.</li> <li>The negative perception of people outside of the Church Community.</li> <li>The negative influence of Sunday shopping and sporting events.</li> <li>Putting too much pressure upon those outside of the Church to join in</li> </ul>		

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<p><b>Growing DEEPER</b></p> <p>“God unlocks far more when Christians pray together.”</p> <p>Bishop Paul Williams</p>	<p>We need to develop a holy new economy, sharing our resources with everyone, for the Church in this age will be won within the poor, lost and disadvantaged areas of our Diocese – which is the key to reviving faith within the nation (<i>cf</i>, Acts 4:32-34).</p> <p>Compelled by the love of Christ, we should seek to welcome new disciples into His Church, commission new younger leaders and plant or graft new faith communities.</p> <p>Evangelism in the Book of Acts could be described as a series of times of prayer. Today, we all have to face the challenge of praying for the evangelisation of our nation (<i>cf</i>, Isaiah 54:2).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homegroups</li> <li>• Prayer Events: Monday morning’s, prayer walks, prayer labyrinths</li> <li>• Sermons that encourage the development of personal spirituality and growth</li> <li>• Variety of Worship (Music)</li> <li>• The church being open and available for prayer and reflection every day</li> <li>• The dedication of those who are actively involved in practical Christian ministry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved prayer life (Greater engagement with, and attendance at, all prayer events in line with Bishop Paul’s reflections)</li> <li>• Introduction of a prayer triplet scheme</li> <li>• Members attending various training courses (JIF etc)</li> <li>• Further Bramcote Lectures</li> <li>• Introduction of anniversary events and activities for those who have come to Church for Weddings and Baptisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>[1] Update the membership database (Especially details of homegroup member and non-membership)</li> <li>[2] Establish a ‘Beyond Basics’ course or homegroup for new members and families</li> <li>[3] Move away from ‘doing’ to being as a spiritual venture</li> <li>[4] Establish a new Prayer Triplet scheme</li> <li>[5] Develop relationship based community engagement (Encourage the congregation to contact other people – especially new members and families – on a weekly basis)</li> <li>[6] Publicise prayer events further afield than at present</li> <li>[7] Intentionally nurture and disciple people to a deeper personal faith</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make Prayer a much greater priority in the life of the congregation as a whole</li> <li>• Introduce a prayer triplet scheme</li> <li>• Providing training on prayer through the provision of a sermon series and homegroup studies</li> <li>• Establish a new members and family homegroup</li> <li>• Encourage the congregation to go even deeper in their spiritual journey by viewing faith as a ‘Whole Life’ venture rather than just one more ‘Leisure’ activity among many</li> <li>• Encouraging the sense that growth will never take place until the congregation as a whole goes significantly ‘deeper’ in its spirituality</li> <li>• Encouraging the congregation to</li> <li>• Encourage greater prayer support for other people – even by telephone - by adopting an attitude of “The moment is now”</li> <li>• Introduce a regular ‘Book Review’ slot in services</li> <li>• Introduce a regular ‘personal testimony’ slot within Outlook</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very poor attendance at prayer events</li> <li>• The significant lack of support for those who are actively engaged in practical Christian ministry</li> <li>• The limited outreach to new members and families by the laity as a whole (Failure to build meaningful personal relationships)</li> <li>• The apparent lack of engagement with Christian literature (reading)</li> <li>• The apparent lack of personal spirituality within the congregation as a whole (personal devotions)</li> <li>• A general sense of negativity and the belief that failure and decline are inevitable</li> <li>• The general focus upon what we do rather than who we are as God’s Church</li> <li>• The decline in those attending parish social and catering events (Parish lunches etc)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any continuation of the general sense of apathy within the congregation (Lack of motivation)</li> <li>• Any continuation of the lack of willingness to be/get involved in parish activities (Lack of engagement)</li> <li>• Failing to attract and keep new members and families</li> <li>• Decline in attendance at the Monday morning prayer meeting</li> </ul>		

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<p><b>Growing YOUNGER</b></p> <p>“84% of currently serving clergy came to faith before they had reached 25”.</p> <p>Statistics for Mission Church House</p> <p>“We need to become fully intentional in our mission and outreach to younger people”</p> <p>Bishop Paul Williams</p>	<p>Younger people are far less concerned with solely church matters and denominations than ever before. Some 99% of the under 30’s are failing to engage with institutional Church, with less than 0.5% engaging with the Church of England nationally.</p> <p>The average age of church membership nationally is now 62, and the average age of someone coming to faith under 21.</p> <p>For younger people to actively re-engage with the Christian faith will involve innovative thinking of our present culture(s) and what it means to be Church today.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday Club</li> <li>• Holiday Church</li> <li>• Messy Church</li> <li>• Links with local schools</li> <li>• Excellent welcome offered to new young families</li> <li>• Occasional youth events and activities (eg, Light Party)</li> <li>• Children and young people valued within the church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing a sense of community spirit by engaging further with that community</li> <li>• By providing additional activities for children, young people and the whole family</li> <li>• Greater involvement with our local schools through members of church going in to provide support (eg, after school clubs etc) and by talking and sharing life experiences in appropriate subject areas (eg, life in the war etc)</li> <li>• Developing links with the various uniformed organisations (eg, scouts)</li> <li>• Forging links with higher education establishments#</li> </ul>	<p>[1] Discern where the under 35’s are located and what their needs are</p> <p>[2] Move out into the community</p> <p>[3] Move from a model of ‘join us as we are’ to one of ‘meeting the real spiritual and practical needs of others’.</p> <p>[4] Intentionally get alongside and engage with children, young people and their families.</p> <p>[5] Intentionally nurture and disciple people towards a deeper faith</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discerning where those we wish to attract are located within the parish (eg, education, sports etc)</li> <li>• Intentionally coming alongside those who are currently under 35’s and seeking to mentor and disciple them as appropriate</li> <li>• Moving from a model of invitational outreach towards one of going into the community</li> <li>• By showing Christ to the under 35’s not only in what we say, but also in what we do</li> <li>• Providing a buddy scheme for young families and students</li> <li>• Providing training courses for areas such as parenting</li> <li>• Intentionally ask people to do things</li> <li>• Investigate alternate format(s) for the 10:45am service</li> <li>• Provide alternative format(s) for corporate prayer (eg, reflective, contemplative etc)</li> <li>• Provide an activities/events desk for people to seek out information after church services</li> <li>• Observe and learn from other local churches</li> <li>• Intentionally nurture and disciple people to deeper faith</li> <li>• Reach out to families as a whole</li> </ul>
		Weaknesses	Threats		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The church now competing with a host of other activities (eg, sport, work)</li> <li>• A far weaker commitment to the church by children, young people and especially their families</li> <li>• Lethargy and a growing unwillingness within the congregation to get involved</li> <li>• People feel too comfy with things as they currently are</li> <li>• Significant lack of support for corporate intercessory prayer</li> <li>• Growing reluctance to engage with necessary change</li> <li>• Limited events/activities for under 35’s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing isolationism within society at large</li> <li>• Failing to engage with children, young people and their families in suitable ways</li> <li>• The over busyness of modern family life</li> <li>• Those in leadership positions not receiving adequate spiritual and practical support for the task(s) ahead</li> </ul>		

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<p><b>Growing OUTWARD</b></p> <p>“We are totally outwardly focussed. We believe our community is a mission field. We do not exist for ourselves, but for the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbours.”</p> <p>Providence Church Hamilton, Ontario, Canada</p>	<p>The temptation is always for a church to look within its own four walls in order to maintain ‘what is’ rather than to discern ‘what could be’, if only. To avoid this, we need to adopt a ‘whole life’ rather than a ‘church life’ concern.</p> <p>We need to be deeply rooted within the local community, concerned with local issues such as of justice and peace, making connections between our faith and daily living, and responding to human needs through loving service.</p> <p>We need to face the challenge and cost of growth through change rather than avoiding them through the fear of potential failure.</p>				
		<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Threats</b>		
Theme	Commentary	Strengths	Opportunities	PLANS and PRIORITIES:	ACTIONS:
<p><b>Growing TOGETHER</b></p> <p>“Do the basics well: especially public worship, pastoral care, stewardship and administration, communicating our faith as being good news as a church which enjoys what it does and is relaxed about what is not being done.”</p> <p>Norman Warren</p>	<p>Growing together requires us to operate as a community or family rather than as a club or religious organisation, wherein deeply profound relationships are nurtured, so that people feel accepted and are helped to grow in faith and service.</p> <p>It also requires us to celebrate and utilise our differing gifts, talents and treasure as our individual spiritual experiences and faith journeys are valued and given expression within and beyond the life of the church.</p>				
		<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Threats</b>		