

# What does it mean to minister within our wider community?

*As we Embrace the Spirit of Christ in our time.*

The Anglican Diocese of Grafton

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## **FINDINGS OF IMAGINE US**

- \* Connect with the wider community in meaningful ways.**
- \* Be & do Church creatively.**
- \* Reach out through pastoral care**
- \* Work better ecumenically**
- \* Equip ALL people for their vocation**
- \* Increase opportunities for learning and education**
- \* Empower small groups.**



# Bishop in Council Workshop

## HARD CHOICE – NAMING OUR PRIORITY

Connecting

Learning/Education

Equipping

Creative Worship

Pastoral Care

Partnering

Empowering Small Groups



## DIOCESAN PLAN 2012-2014

### DIOCESAN VISION

We are Anglican communities of God's people embracing the Spirit of Christ in our time.

We are compassionate signs and channels of God's reconciling transforming mission in the world.

Embracing the Spirit of Christ in our time.

### MISSION STATEMENT 2012-14

**"We will encourage intentional and meaningful connections with the wider community, seeking to inspire transformation of life through faith in Jesus Christ."**

### Goal 1

Developing and resourcing innovative models of mission and ministry

Enabling mission and ministry

### Goal 2

Growing and resourcing our leadership capability

**VALUES: Christ-likeness, Discernment, Openness, Collaboration, Distinctiveness, Accountability**

# Belief

# MISSION STATEMENT 2012-14

**“We will encourage intentional and meaningful connections with the wider community, seeking to inspire transformation of life through faith in Jesus Christ.”**





# Connecting and Reaching Out

- Op Shops
- Schools
- Court Care
- Food parcels
- Soup Kitchens
- Toy libraries
- Play Groups
- Welfare Assistance
- Fete's
- Garage Sales

**BUT in most cases people across the Diocese noted that: “RELATIONSHIPS, MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WERE NOT BEING ESTABLISHED.”**

**REMAINED ACTS OF LOVING SERVICE. MOST STRUGGLED TO MAKE DEEP CONNECTIONS - OR FORM COMMUNITY.**

# A formative journey



Loving  
Service

Forming  
Community

Disciple-  
making

Church  
Mixed  
Economy

*“We will encourage intentional and meaningful connections with the wider community, seeking to inspire transformation of life through faith in Jesus Christ.”*



# So, how do we find out about our wider community?

Connecting with the people of our neighbourhood and wider community begins by understanding who lives there:

One way of doing this is by gathering the statistics of the community through:

- ABS data [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)
- NCLS Community Social Profile
- Local Council, Mayor, other professionals or agencies
- Town Planner – local library – historical society

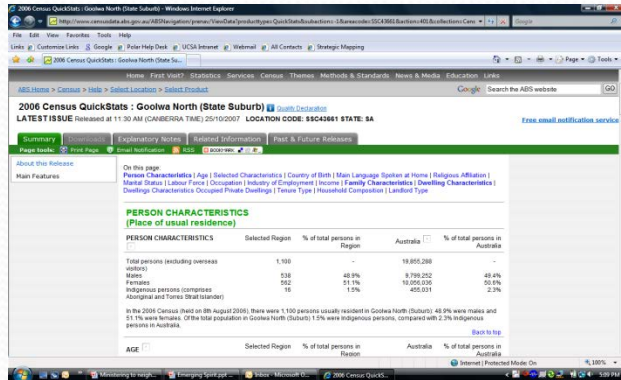
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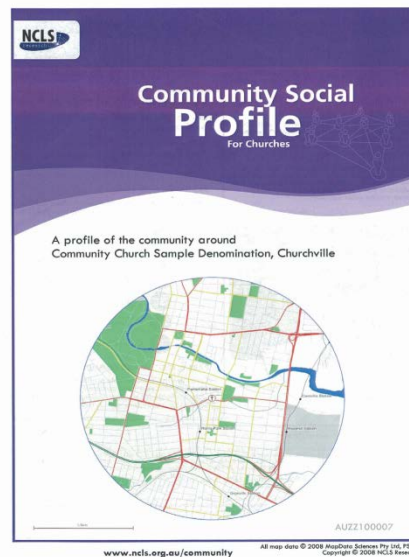
# Discovering our community – Head stuff?

## ABS data – Quick Stats

You simply enter the postcode.



## NCLS Community Social Profile



Housing, Education,  
Cultural, Housing &  
Income, Household &  
Families

# Discovering our community – attentive looking and listening.



***And ask them: “What does the Church  
have to offer this community?”***



**Conversation & Engagement**





# Discovering our community – listening to?

Pre – Schools Facilitators

Young Mums

Single people

Unemployed people

Homeless people

Business people

Indigenous peoples

Schools

Married people

Local MP's

Hospital groups

**Question: Can We build  
meaningful relationships  
with any of these  
community groups?**



# Discovering our community - looking?

1. As you travel around your community, who do you “see”? Where do they go? Where are their gathering points?
2. What do you discern is their deepest yearning?
3. How might you (and others with a similar passion) begin to respond to this yearning in a way that is appropriate for those in the community and as an expression of the gospel?



# Discovering our community - spiritually?

- For whom does your heart burst? (Tom Bandy)
- What is my holy discontent? (Bill Hybels)
- What is my prayer burden? (Ann Morisy)



# Spiritual reflection

Learnings from “God Next Door” (Simon Carey Holt)

- Naming the neighbourhood as spiritual – a place where we notice the imprint of God
- Exegetical walk – taking a critical look at neighbourhood – signs of life, hope, despair, community, alienation, beauty, neglect
- Neighbourhood parties – street parties, build relationships, celebrate Spirit’s presence, become neighbourhood priest”
- Helping communities flourish – nurture a more fully human environment
- Pointing the way to Jesus – every encounter with neighbour is an encounter with God’s presence



# So, how might we connect?

What next? Make sense of your findings/reflections.

- Pray for discernment.
- Collate your information into a single document.
- Look for recurring themes.
- What are key needs in your community which are not being met and which excite your ministry unit?
- Can you scratch where the community is itching?

# So how might we connect?

- What contribution to the community are we attempting to make?
- What might the community would be looking for from us?
- Can we partner with other organisations to respond to this particular need?
- Can we sustain this new undertaking?
- **Are there ministries which we are currently undertaking that we should consider putting into recess?**



# So how might we connect?

For each ministry initiative, the following questions need to be discussed:

- Who has the gifts, skills, passion to undertake this ministry?
- Have these people the availability, and willingness, to be involved? (free from other responsibilities)?
- What other support do they need e.g. space, finances, training ?
- Is there an opportunity to recruit a person from somewhere to undertake this?



# Preparing ourselves.

Every healthy congregation needs to be connected to its community in at least two ways:

- By one or more mission activities through which church members are in **relationship** with those beyond the church in ways that give expression to the presence of God.
- By providing or addressing those qualities and activities which people are looking for when they do come to us.

# Preparing ourselves.

- How do we give expression to the “presence of God?”
- How can people see the transforming work of God in you and in your community of faith?
- What values does your ministry unit need to embrace so that your “Christ-likeness” shows?
- What do we need to address in our public worship services to accommodate people from beyond the Church?



# Forming Community – creating a sense of belonging

The first community of Christ displayed a sense of belonging:  
Acts 2:42-47

How does that sense of community come about?

Loving relationships – people not programmes.

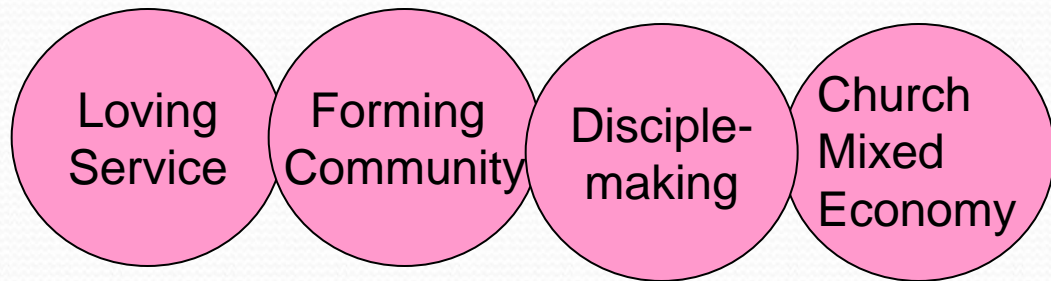
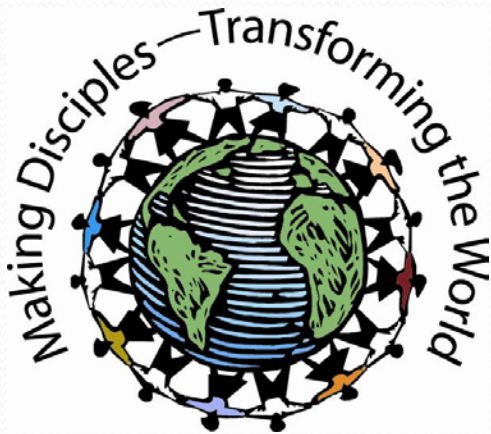


# Forming Community – creating a sense of belonging

- Positive Attitude (Christlike)
- Welcome ALL people
- Speak a common language
- Discourage exclusive behaviour.
- Make a personal investment – community takes time.
- Engage – Get to know peoples names, ask about their families, interests etc – mindful of boundaries. Take an interest.
- Give people a voice – encourage story telling & sharing.
- Integrate – help people to “fit in.”
- Create a place of safety.
- Discover peoples gifts and values.
- Encourage participation
- Be fair, honest, trustworthy, and courageous.
- Used shared interests/activities/sport to build upon connections.

# Implementing a Mission Project

## Intentional & Meaningful Relationships



**Transformation of life through faith in Jesus Christ 2012-2014**



# Create a sense of belonging

## Prayer and Support

**Loving  
Service**

- Godly Play
- Mainly Music
- Play place
- Op Shop

**Sense of belonging  
Community**

Foster Care  
Messy Church

**Model behaviour  
Discipleship**

**Mixed economy**



# Some stories

Fireside Chats

The Heretics

The Order of the Black Sheep

Not 8.00am Sunday's but are  
CHURCH

## Worship

A mistake when seeking to plant a fresh expression is to begin with a worship service and then try to attract people to it. There are a number of dangers which follow..



Any serious attempt to start a new expression of Church has to begin with listening & be incarnational & culturally appropriate for the people who you are trying to reach. But the time will come when a pattern of worship will need to be established. There is an art to this because it involves being glocal – the combining of a global faith with a local context: the bringing together of two worlds.



# What next?

- You have been made aware of some of the ways in which we explore our local communities – seeing them through new eyes – and a wider lens.
- You have been invited to look at yourselves – name your gifts, your passions and your hopes.
- Our Synod has offered to facilitate this process & assist Ministry Units across the Diocese in our missionary endeavours to “Connect with the Wider Community” e.g. this presentation, A Toolkit for Mission, & the on-going work of the MDO/Mission Companion.

# How will you respond?

- Will your Parish Council set up procedures for you to honour our mission statement 2012-2014?

**OR**

Will you enter into a covenant with MDO to assist you in our missionary endeavour?