

Daring to live God's promises



Anglican Parish of Applecross
Mission Action Plan
2010



Introduction

An important quote appears in the early pages of this document from the 1995 publication, *Building Missionary Congregations*, it says this:

The world and our society continue to change at a rapid pace. The church's task is not simply to understand and to learn to adapt to whatever changes are taking place in the world in an attempt to survive, but to participate in the shaping of what is emerging.

This strategic plan for our parish of Applecross has been produced for a number of reasons. Firstly it is a response, a response to the God who loves us unconditionally and wants us to be the best that we can be, as individuals and as a community of faith. It is also a response to our Diocese who produced a Mission Plan for the Diocese of Perth in 2008 and challenged parishes to connect and engage with that document. Finally we believe that it is important to plan for the future, to be focussed in our attempts to live a Christian life as witnesses to our risen Lord Jesus Christ.

The plan is both practical and visionary. Practical in that it recognises where we are at present, both in our effectiveness and in our limitations. It is visionary in that it seeks to imagine a future where we are better connected and able to serve the needs of our local community and more effective in our communication of God's love. This plan is also about regaining our confidence as a community of faith. As the quote at the top of the page makes clear, this plan is not about survival or attempting to fill our church buildings. It is about being confident in the knowledge that what we have to offer the local community and the world is significant and valuable.

Faith and people of faith continue to play a significant part on the world stage. At the same time it is distressing that a growing fundamentalism within all faiths clouds the purposes of a loving God. The importance of strong, inclusive and imaginative communities of faith will become ever more crucial in a world where literalist and fundamentalist attitudes damage and distort the message of the Gospel.

The process of producing this Mission Action Plan has been long and occasionally painful, but our efforts have already born fruit within our community and beyond. I hope that within these pages each of us will find ideas and proposals that energise us and our faith as we journey together into the future that God has prepared for us.



Andrew



Who we are

The Parish of Applecross includes the worshipping communities at St George's and St David's in Ardross. We are united in the Parish of Applecross as part of the Perth Diocese and the worldwide Anglican Communion. We seek to be a church community where every member is nurtured and encouraged to develop her or his Ministry.

We acknowledge that the Parish of Applecross is part of the country cared for by the Whadjuk people of Noongar peoples. Their ancestors walked these lands for many thousands of years and we welcome Whadjuk and Noongar people to continue their relationship with these lands as members of the Parish of Applecross. Many of us who are part of this parish are a people of migration. We have come to this land over the last 200 years and are proud of the diversity that this brings to our community of faith.

Called to Mission

The primary focus of any community of faith is to demonstrate the Good News of Jesus Christ in all that it does. As a community we seek to be incarnational in our approach to mission.

We read in our scriptures that '*God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.*' (John 3:16). God's mission to the whole of creation is already up and running and has been for some time. We find our meaning and purpose by discerning and participating in this mission.

As a missionary congregation we seek to take our identity, priorities and agenda from participating in God's mission in the world. This agenda comes not from a desire to exert any external authority, but rather as an attempt to recover the servant nature of the missionary endeavour in the contemporary setting.

The world and our society continue to change at a rapid pace. The church's task is not simply to understand and to learn to adapt to whatever changes are taking place in the world in an attempt to survive, but to participate in the shaping of what is emerging¹.



Our journey and context

From the work of the Congregations of the Applecross Parish, the Parish Council and the Mission Committee, we have discovered that:

- Applecross has often been a parish of 'firsts' leading the way in creating new churches, establishing planned giving programmes, supporting the development of clergy, and support for Anglican outreach and groups.
- The Parish has been blessed with some great leaders and active, involved families who created an exciting and welcoming Church community.
- The pioneering parishioners have established a reputation for Applecross as a forward looking and important contributor to the life of the Anglican Communion in Perth.
- Our founding parishioners have aged and the congregations of young families, teenagers and young adults are fewer than in former years.
- St David's and St George's churches remain important to our community and are filled with worshippers at Christmas and Easter and other times of celebration.
- Overall 22% of the local community identify themselves as Anglicans; that is 3,600 people including 420 Anglicans aged under 14 years of age.
- We continue to receive significant numbers of children for baptism and have an increasingly rich cultural mix within the community.
- We have a range of facilities including a Parish hall which is used on average for 350 occasions each year by people from within and outside the worshipping community. In addition the meeting rooms and the churches are used for events and meetings during the year.
- We live in a society where regular involvement with church is diminishing. We seek to make all people welcome and comfortable in our events, activities and worshipping communities.



What we value

Secure in our Christian Faith through the vitality of our Anglican heritage we are empowered to live meaningful lives of relevance to our community both in Applecross and more widely. We wish to remain a diverse, inclusive and loving church, sharing, helping and growing in our Christian mission.

Our Mission

Creatively Listening and Telling the Good News of Jesus (PROCLAIM)

Share the richness of God's love for humanity and to empower our people to share the Good News of Jesus Christ for Applecross.

Building Vital Worshipping Communities (WORSHIP)

Build vital worshipping communities inviting and welcoming newcomers, sustaining and nurturing the journey in faith of parishioners.

Reaching Out in Loving Service (SERVE)

Be a Parish lovingly involved in our community, our country and prayerfully attuned to the needs of our world.

Enabled by:

- Inspirational Leadership
- Life Giving Systems and Structures



Creatively listening and telling the good news of Jesus

Our Parish Mission

Share the richness of God's love for humanity and to empower each other to share the Good News of Jesus Christ for Applecross

Our Vision

Seek to find out what God wants, discerning the Spirit's leading rather than trying to please everyone

Vision: develop and communicate a shared sense of where it is going

Sacrifice: able to make personal and corporate sacrifices in bringing about the above and living out the faith

Have fun together: Living a 'whole life' faith and enjoying each other's company

Mission Actions

- Develop a Liturgy and Worship Working Group to review the current pattern of worship at both churches with an awareness of those who do not currently attend
- Encourage families @ five
- Develop a fully supported Children's and Youth Ministry with its own funds, people, training and resources
- Have learning /study groups for Christian formation
- Encourage each member of the congregation to see themselves as part of the mission.

Our Daring Dreams

- Have a full time Children's ministry and/or a youth worker
- Be a resource for the training and development of clergy and lay leaders in the Diocese
- Have a varied and exciting range of Bible study groups, speakers, workshops and learning events which provoke better knowledge, commitment and enrich mission
- Convene a group to discuss new ways of being church, exploring 'Fresh Expressions' and 'Emerging Church' resources.
- Strengthen our relationships with all local school communities
- Explore partnerships with other churches

The Mission Powered Future

We want to be a parish that is:

- An energised community attuned to the Spirit's leading
- Active in prayer, Bible study and worship
- Confident in evangelism and mission
- Inspired by our preachers and teachers to develop into a faithful community that knows the bible, is theologically literate, and can communicate it vividly to others



Building Vital Worshipping Communities

Our Parish Mission

Build vital worshipping communities inviting and welcoming newcomers, sustaining and nurturing the journey in faith of parishioners

Our Vision

To be contemporary in our faith and worship, yet moulded by our traditions and history

- Be outward looking
- Be deeply rooted in the local community, working in partnership with other denominations, faiths, secular groups and networks
- Be passionate and prophetic about justice and peace, locally and globally
- Make connections between faith and daily living
- Making room for all by being inclusive rather than exclusive
- Have church buildings that are open every day and therefore seen as a resource for the local community
- A household of faith where children and young people are helped to belong, contribute and be nurtured in their faith
- A Church where different social and ethnic backgrounds, mental and physical abilities and ages are seen as a strength

Mission Actions

- Improve the areas for children and continue to support the local children's ministry through the Young Disciples, crèche teams and Families @ Five
- Continue our support for Applecross Senior High chaplaincy
- Support the local schools and seek to be more involved in each other's events and activities.
- Make the grounds and the church buildings more welcoming
- Wide range of social activities – music evenings, garden parties, progressive dinners, picnics, balls, dances, themed parties
- Establish a sustainable earth policy for the Parish and its buildings- advocate and use fair trade products, use only environmentally friendly products, recycling, etc
- Develop our individual and corporate vocations through prayer and the study of scripture
- Have parish study days, quiet days and retreats
- Recreate the worship space to make a more flexible inspirational and comfortable worship place. Explore changing from pews to chairs
- Encourage an active engagement of the Parish with the Anglican Carbon Emissions Reduction Scheme to accelerate the adoption of renewable and energy efficient strategies in the Parish, homes and businesses in our community
- Support and engage with the work of Anglican Children and Youth Ministries Commission
- Strengthen our support for the Anglican agencies notably Parkerville, Anglicare and ABM
- Build on the strong historic partnership with ABM
- Continue to meet with the City of Melville to identify mission opportunities

Our Daring Dreams

- To explore rebuilding church and community
- Have the Parish run a local wine bar
- Be a resource for the Diocese for the training and development of clergy and lay leaders
- To have culturally and linguistically diverse people, including those of Australian Aboriginal heritage, involved in ministry

The Mission Powered Future

We want to be a Parish that is:

- Inclusive in our worship and as a community of faith
- Developing and expanding its patterns of worship taking into account the needs of those inside and outside the current worshipping community



Reaching out in Loving Service

Our Parish Mission

Be a Parish lovingly involved in our community, our country and prayerfully attuned to the needs of our world.

Our Vision

- Be alive to God's call to us to be active in Christian service to our community
- Encourage and support social justice advocacy in our community, within the Perth diocese and in the international Anglican communion
- Support Anglican Chaplaincy
- Tread gently on the earth and expand our Parish commitment to sustainable and environmentally responsible action

Mission Actions

- Initiate more conversations about our service in the community and more widely
- Identify the needs in the local area through regular contact with the City of Melville, Social and Community Development and other agencies
- Seek to raise awareness of social responsibility in our community by inviting people to develop a Justice and Peace Working Group
- Assess the impact of our Parish on the earth and plan improvements to our sustainability as a parish
- Work with the Anglican Carbon Emissions Reduction Scheme to accelerate the adoption of renewable and energy efficient strategies in the Parish, homes and businesses in our community
- Increase our awareness and support for Christian communities around the world, seeking active partnership and engagement
- Build on our support for ABM in PNG and Australian Aboriginal communities in WA
- Become significant supporters of the Parkerville programmes for children and youth
- Be active partners with Anglican Children and Youth Ministries
- Develop a Communications Team to raise the profile of the Parish in the local community
- Identify and adopt an annual major Parish Project for prayerful support, fundraising and service
- Build a strategy for the development of pastoral care within the Parish
- Make St David's the south of the river centre for public lectures and discussions on topical subjects
- Move towards becoming a Fair Trade community

Our Daring Dreams

- Take our willing hands to work for God in disadvantaged Parishes in WA, rural Australia or overseas
- Aim to give a percentage of our annual income to designated projects whilst seeking to build a long term relationship between our parish and the projects
- Locating other services and groups on the Church site

The Mission Powered Future

We want to be a Parish that is:

- Actively serving our community and our world
- Dynamically linked with other churches and projects in Australia and overseas
- Actively engaged in partnerships with Anglican agencies and community organisations
- Treading gently on the Earth, ensuring a sustainable environment for our community



Inspirational Leadership

- Develop the role for Parish Council as a leadership group which sets the strategic direction, co-ordinates, guides and supports the activities of the various committees
- Encourage the development and support the work of lay leaders within our community of faith
- Give training and support to those people who will drive the Mission Action Plan
- Encourage parishioners to live their baptismal faith and develop their understanding of mission
- Support their faith formation through studies, education and support in small groups
- Develop leadership which is built from the scriptures and prayer
- Identify leaders of every age. Use our resources and those of the Diocese to develop ministry for young people
- Support the work of the clergy while enhancing the ways for lay leaders to contribute to the mission of the parish
- Nurture groups of every size so that people feel accepted and are helped to grow in faith and service
- Ensure that the different gifts, experiences and faith journeys of all are valued and given expression in and beyond the life of the Church
- Discover where there is energy and passion within the congregation and offer support to develop ideas
- Ensure that the lay and ordained leaders continue to work as a team to develop locally appropriate expressions of the 7 marks of a healthy Church¹



Life Giving Systems and Structures

- Enable the Church Council to see its responsibilities as a Leadership team to facilitate change within the parish
- Establish a parish Executive Committee to support the work of the Church Council and Rector
- Establish a network of sub-committees who drive areas of our mission and report to the Church Council, including:
 - A Liturgy and Worship working party
 - A Social committee
 - A Children and Youth committee
 - A Faith Formation and Ministry development group
 - A Pastoral Care committee
 - A Communications team
 - A Maintenance and Planning group
 - A Justice and Peace working group
 - An Eco Care committee
- Develop the capacity for long term planning
- Identify 'participation points' within our community life and to consider strategies for encouraging and developing these points for further engagement
- Conduct an audit of our buildings and sites as we plan for the future
- Investigate the long term financial sustainability of our parish, examining different income streams and utilising the land that the Church owns
- Consider whether our buildings are adequate for the needs of our community both currently and in the future

7 Marks of a Healthy Church

- **Energised by faith:** rather than just keeping going or trying to survive
- **Outward looking focus:** with a 'whole life' rather than a 'church life' concern
- **Seek to find out what God wants:** discerning the Spirit's leading rather than trying to please everyone
- **Face the cost of change and growth:** rather than resisting change and fearing failure
- **Operating as a community:** rather than functioning as a club
- **Make room for all:** being inclusive rather than exclusive
- **Do a few things and do them well:** focussed rather than frenetic

Building Missionary Congregations – Robert Warren, Church House Publishing 1995

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