

Parish Planning Summary

February 2019

Introduction	2
Feedback	2
Session Format	2
Participants	3
Major Themes	3
Introduction, Q&A	3
Worship	4
Introduction	4
Written Feedback	4
Spirituality	5
Introduction	5
Verbal Feedback	6
Written Feedback	6
Social Action	7
Introduction	7
Written Feedback	7
Community Engagement	8
Introduction	8
Written Feedback	8
Staffing	9
Introduction	9
Written Feedback	9
Repair, Renew, Reorder	10
Introduction	10
Written Feedback	10

Introduction

This is a summary of the Parish Planning sessions held on Sunday February 10th and Thursday February 21st. The purpose of these sessions were:

- To discuss ideas to serve our Dunbar community based on mission and engagement that build on our tradition of being open and welcoming.
- To reimagine ourselves as an Anglican church that could also be a Centre for Spirituality and Social Action by exploring the key areas of:
 - Worship,
 - Spirituality,
 - Social Action,
 - Community Engagement, and
 - Repair / Renew / Reorder

Feedback

Care has been taken to capture the feedback in a concise way that reflects the thoughts of the participants. Note that the original comments submitted on post-it notes are in separate appendices and the author wants to hear if you feel your comments were not properly reflected in this summary.

Note also that a very limited amount of what people said, but did not write down, was captured. Planning for our future is an ongoing process and leadership wants to engage directly with parishioners as we map out our future together. Please add to this ongoing conversation.

Respectfully, Craig Wilson.

Session Format

Each planning session consisted of:

- An Introduction and Q&A period
- Forming 5 discussion groups. Each group spent time discussing and then recording their thoughts on post-it notes for each of the following topics:

Discussion Topic	Hosted by
Worship	Debbie Matheson
Spirituality	Charlotte French

Social Action	Penni Stock
Community Engagement	Stuart Hallam
Repair, Renew, Recorder	Craig Wilson

Participants

The number of participants was approximately:

- **40** parishioners on Sunday February 10th. Note that some people left early when it started to snow; after the Q&A but before attending all 5 discussion groups.
- **14** parishioners on Thursday February 21st.

Major Themes

The major themes expressed so far are:

- A desire to preserve the worship we have today
- A willingness to consider additional worship options relating to “Soul Space”, “Messy Church”, and an “Iona Service”
- A desire to engage with the community
- Enthusiastic support for Lay-Participation in services
- A thirst for learning together and with experts (touched on in discussions around Worship, Spirituality, and Social Action)
- An interest in the Arts (no specific suggestions; should explore)
- A love of our music and a desire to see it broaden in styles, both within our worship and within our music presentations
- The discussion regarding the chairs is ongoing and not ready to bring to a conclusion.
- Support for repairing our buildings

Introduction, Q&A

The introduction was given by Stuart followed by a Q&A session moderated by Diana Bragg and with questions being answered by Stuart and the Wardens (Craig Wilson, Diana Bragg, Debbie Matheson, and Charlotte French).

Worship

Introduction

In addition to the three wonderful services that we currently provide, we would also like to introduce three additional services, to serve our community's needs:

1. **Messy church** - aimed at parents of young children, messy church has become a staple for mission and evangelism. While the children play and do activities, parents come together to find friendship, form community, and discuss faith.
2. **Soul Space** - aimed at those who would call themselves spiritual, but not religious, particularly young people, students and the younger of heart! This 'service' draws inspiration from a wide range of spiritual practices, (Christian meditation, mindfulness, etc)! Stuart has done similar things successfully before and feels it would work well in our context. This would happen on Sunday evenings each month alternating with...
3. **The Iona Service** – The spirituality and worship of the Iona Community is based on social justice and care for the environment.

Written Feedback

There were 86 comments regarding **Worship**, touching on the following themes.

Worship: Soul Space, Messy Church, and Iona Service

- All **35** comments regarding these new services were supportive. The thoughts were that this could be a great way to attract new people and that we may want to advertise at UBC and other institutions serving young adults.
- 1 comment emphasized the importance of flexible worship space.
- 1 asked "Could Messy Church and Soul Space be in the Fireside Room?"

Worship: Music

- There were **10** comments regarding music. Praise for the current music, requests for a Children's choir, support for public music events, requests for more evensong services, and requests for different music forms.

Worship: Ideas

- **2** suggesting a Godly Play / Godly Say session at the 10 AM service.
- **7** other suggestions touched on: Indigenous Anglican worship; trying other varieties of Anglicanism (invite other ministers to preach); Environmental centred theology; Interdenominational services; a request to bring back some of the sung Matins, especially the Te Deum; try alternative 10 AM services on the months with a 5th Sunday.

Worship: Lay-Participation

- **6** comments requested more lay participation in Worship: invite Children and Youth to write the prayers and questions or to express, preach, and explain; parishioners give sermons or deliver a 'thought of the week';

Worship: Preserve what we have

- **6** comments requested that we preserve our current worship; some of these comments also mentioned supporting the addition of new and different services or reaching out to the community while maintaining what we have.
- Author's note: there has not been any thought of removing existing Worship services.

Worship: Connecting with our Community and Each Other

- There were **8** comments supporting the thought of connecting with the community, including wanting to find out what the community wants. There was **1** comment that spoke directly to 'Connecting with each other': "Would love to see more interaction between youth and older members, eg discussion groups."

Worship: Other themes

- **4** requesting **Retreats** for everyone. Not just Youth. In a monastic style?
- **3** requests to "Bring back **old testament** reading; we miss part of the theme..."
- **2 Lord's prayer**: like singing, but spoken occasionally; why change to "sins" instead of "trespasses"?

Spirituality

Introduction

Three areas of engagement to consider expanding are:

1. **Music for the Soul** - To re-label and expand our music presentations to attract a wider audience. Michael is currently exploring this and hopes to bring flamenco and folk music to St. Philips very soon!
2. **The Labyrinth and other spiritual practices** - With a reordered church, we could provide space for more people to experience spiritual practices such as a labyrinth, noting that our current Labyrinth fits in the Gym but is too large for the Church.
3. **Spirituality and the Arts** - We have many talented people in St. Philips who are involved in the arts and culture - artists, potters, writers, actors, cultural attachés, who, if given the resources and the appropriate space would love to offer their talents to help others engage and explore their spirituality.

Verbal Feedback

In addition to the written comments submitted, additional concerns were voiced during discussions regarding the introduction of 'other spiritual practices' and subsequent changes to the worship space. Concerns expressed included that rather than drawing in new parishioners these changes may alienate existing members.

Written Feedback

There were **79** comments regarding **Spirituality**, touching on the following themes.

Spirituality: Music & Art

- A total of **39** comments touched on music and art; the Music Committee may want to look at the specific comments in the Spirituality appendix. These broke down further as follows:
- **12** comments suggested **widening the variety** of music to attract people and included ideas for our current community and inviting or booking others to add to the music.
- **10** comments touched on Art and Music as a way to **connect with the community**.
- **7** comments touched on specific Art & Music ideas
- **6** comments requested more participatory music
- **4** comments said that the music we had now was sufficient

Spirituality: Education, Confirmation, Retreats and Camps

- **21** comments touched on these topics. Several wanted to revive the "Anglicanism 101" lectures; 2 comments called for the "Draw the Circle Wider" series; and other comments touched on Confirmation classes (for both Youth and Adults), parish retreats, and speakers on topics similar to physician assisted dying, and support groups or topics around caregivers and caring for aging parents.

Spirituality: Meditation & Prayer Practices

- **7** comments were evenly distributed between supporting the Labyrinth, more intimate worship / prayer / meditation in small spaces like the Chapel, and using the Church for meditation classes.

Spirituality: Flexible Worship Space (one each)

- Remove first 9 rows of pews to enable gatherings in a different formation of this space.
- Renew the chapel with chairs and make it accessible
- Relaxation of structure [interpreted by the author as Flexible Worship Space]

Spirituality: Specific Suggestions or Comments (one each):

- Need more examples that we can all relate to
- Fantastic organ and music director

- Adult Teen Baptism
- Connecting hearing aids to the sound system (a LOOP system)
- Summer day camp at St. Philip's
- Walking / hiking group to connect with nature
- Open up the chapel to the bigger space, but keep it intimate inside
- Church should be open & accessible during rummage sales and Christmas Fair
- Messy Church - Yes Please!

Social Action

Introduction

As Social Action is part of what we do already, it would make sense to make social action the focal point of our discipleship as a church community. We propose exploring three areas of engagement:

1. **Just Faith** – a regular study group that will engage us in Christian discipleship focused on issues of Justice, Non-Violent Practice and Social Action. Each program lasts for eight weeks, the first, 'Living Compassionately - Caring for the Poor', will form the basis of our Lent reflection. Two further study programs, 'Living Justly - Caring for Each Other' and 'Living Simply - Caring for the Earth', will follow in the summer term and in the fall.
2. **Truth and reconciliation** – Meaningful engagement with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations is an essential part of us committing to be a good neighbour to our indigenous brothers and sisters. Some of us have already taken part in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise and we plan to do it again later in the year, so that more people can take part too. The Anglican Church of Canada is fully committed to this process, and we need to take the lead within our community.
3. **Outreach** – We currently support a large number of charities - local, national, and international. If we partnered with a handful of charities, we could engage them in a more meaningful relationship, one which would not only transform them, but also transform us.

Written Feedback

There were **43** comments regarding **Social Action**, touching on the following themes.

Social Action: Local, Partner, Direct (17 comments)

- 7 comments saying "Ask community what can we do to help?" or "Deal with the world at our doorstep."
- 9 thoughts about giving time, direct action, or partnering with the community.
- 1 asking how to connect to the Musqueam Nation; partner with Immaculate Conception?

Social Action: Truth & Reconciliation (9 comments)

- 7 comments requested more education like the Kairos Blanket Project or spoke of a desire to connect with the Musqueam.
- 1 comment wondered “What about Truth and Reconciliation for the Japanese in BC and the men from India in 1910s?”
- 1 comment “Truth and Reconciliation: not so sure, it is a subject that creates issues.”

Social Action: Education & Speakers

- 5 comments touched on this category. From bringing in speakers to hearing from those in the parish about our outreach, anti-racism, poverty, and abusive relationships.

Social Action: Just Faith & Disco Soup

- 3 comments supporting Just Faith
- 2 comments suggesting Disco Soup:
<https://www.slowfood.com/what-we-do/international-events/world-disco-soup-day/>

Social Action: Specific Suggestions

- 1 suggesting that PWRDF could help with overseas work
- 1 partner with Immaculate Conception to connect with the Musqueam Nation.
- 1 stewardship of the planet via a community cleanup

Social Action: Questions

- 2 asking “Is Outreach a core part of our mission? Decide”
 - Authors Note: I would say the majority say “yes”; perhaps more communication is required and greater visibility of the Outreach budget would be useful.
- 1 asking “Are we spreading our efforts too far around?”

Community Engagement

Introduction

We could take more of a lead in our community. In partnership with other groups such as the Dunbar Residents Association and the Dunbar Business Association, Stuart is keen for us to initiate a ‘Dunbar Community Leaders Forum’ which would help build community, increase social cohesion, empower our community in decision making and be a strong voice to advocate for our community.

Written Feedback

There were **41** comments regarding **Community Engagement**, touching on the following themes.

- **10** suggestions to partner with other community organizations or those using our space.
- **8** suggestions to partner with, engage, or **run** the Preschools, including “Invite preschools to Messy Church”
- **8** suggestions for ESL or Mandarin support
- **4** suggestions for an open house or movie nights
- **3** suggestions regarding “Parishioner Networking” to invite people
- **2** suggestions for Seniors
 - Coffee & tea. Cook a meal together to eat, share or take home to freeze.
 - More varied events for seniors: cooking groups, grocery shopping trips, book club...
- **6** specific suggestions:
 - Sunday School Bus
 - Fiscal Responsibility
 - More advertising in local publications to say who we are and what we do
 - Music stories; desert island discs
 - After-school care is an area of opportunity
 - Again, invite the community to participate, rehearse and perform a musical

Staffing

Introduction

Staffing may need to increase to support new initiatives for Worship, Spirituality, and Community Engagement.

Things to consider?

- We would need to hire staff to work alongside Stuart, whose focus would be on Community Development and Mission.
- Our Director of Music post may need to become full-time.

Written Feedback

- **Staff** - There were 2 comments suggesting that we need to add staff.

Authors Note: Staffing was not a separate presentation during the sessions and as a result did not receive many comments, but is a critical part of the resources discussion.

Repair, Renew, Reorder

Introduction

In order to achieve this vision, we need a flexible church space. A proposal is to replace the pews with high-quality, comfortable and stackable chairs. Derek Simpkins has researched and sourced the two chairs you will see in church. These chairs are used in St. Paul's Cathedral and many other cathedrals and churches. They are comfortable, durable and they stack very easily - 40 of these chairs stack just 4 feet high! Replacing the pews for these chairs will allow us to, not only put on our usual Sunday Services, but allow us to introduce new forms of worship, as well as expand our music and art programs.

Things to consider?

- New chairs are expensive, but so is renovating our current pews.

Written Feedback

There were 22 comments regarding **Repair, Renew Recorder**, touching on the following themes.

- **Chairs** - There were about 22 comments regarding chairs, 16 comments were supportive, while the other 5 comments made varying suggestions:
 - 4 - the selected chairs were not comfortable
 - 1 - keep existing chairs for other activities
 - 1 - requesting examples of how they would work
- **Supportive Chair suggestions** - from some of the 18 comments:
 - 3 - replace chapel pews with chairs. Also 1 request to keep chapel pews.
 - 2 - look for options supporting storage of books
 - 1 - take out only ½ of the pews in the Church
 - 1 - look for chairs from Canada
 - 1 - invite people to donate chairs
- **Repair** - There were 7 comments about the buildings, 6 suggesting priority should be given to repairing the buildings, 1 requesting fixes to small items (gutters, locks, etc). There was also a suggestion to look at redeveloping the Gym and Office buildings.
- **Examples Requested** - A request for examples of other peoples experiences with things like Messy Church.