

2020 VISION

A ten-year strategic plan for
St Andrew's Roseville prepared by
the Minister and the Parish Council

*DRAFT FOR CHURCH-WIDE
CONSULTATION*

October 2010



Contents and executive summary

INTRODUCTION FROM THE SENIOR MINISTER

A church strategy document should explore how we can better serve the Lord and the wider community and prepare ourselves to receive God's blessing on our efforts in fresh ways. It must not be a crass exercise in telling God what he ought to be doing in our midst.

1 SIX ASPECTS OF CHURCH GROWTH: a theory of how God expands his church *(page 4)*

The key factors of church growth—found in the Bible and human experience—set the framework for thinking about our future steps. God grows his people through the quality of church life itself, the preaching of the gospel, prayer to the Lord of the harvest, proactive community service, profile raising in society and infrastructure. Each of these areas must be given due attention as St Andrew's seeks to fulfil its mission.

2 THE OPPORTUNITY: the size and nature of our task *(page 11)*

Within a radius of a ten-minute drive of St Andrew's there are approximately 100,000 people. The vast majority are wealthy, professional, living in families and do not attend any Christian church. Without encouraging 'transfer growth' from other churches, St Andrew's ought to be trying to reach out to the entire community in which God has placed us. We no longer live in villages; we are no longer a village church.

3

2020 VISION:

a new direction for St Andrew's (page 13)

The key thought is deceptively simple and has significant implications: *St Andrew's prays to become a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for the mid North Shore.* We will 'lower the drawbridge' and offer the people of our region a place to belong, a network of friendship and social care, an experience of worship, a rallying point for doing good in the world, and much more. The plan is staged over 3, 5, and 10 years.

4

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

What we should be focusing on now (page 16)

Six things will occupy the focused attention of the Parish Council and the Minister: gathering the right staff for the future, the redevelopment of our physical site, family and children's ministry, community engagement and analysis, developing a spirit of volunteerism across St Andrew's, and aligning all systems and activities with the 2020 Vision.

5

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

activities and proposals in pursuit of the 2020 Vision (page 19)

Some of the proposed initiatives in pursuit of the vision (over the next ten years) include: establishing a 'resource bank' of social goods, training a team of evangelists, reinstating parish prayer meetings, appointing a coordinator of volunteers, establishing a 'street choir', expediting the work of the property committee, expanding our marketing approach and budget, exploring the feasibility of an onsite counselling service, fully utilizing our newly established charitable trusts, and much more.

APPENDIX 1. 2020 VISION: A SNAPSHOT (page 27)

Introduction from the senior minister

Dear friends,

I am generally sceptical about ‘vision and strategy’ documents produced by churches. Sometimes they can be little more than wishful thinking at best and prayerless activism at worst. I sincerely hope that what follows breaks both moulds.

At one level, the Bible itself provides the mission and the method for being a church in the world. But our specific cultural context, demographic profile, gifts and resources cannot but help give a particular shape to our aspirations for God’s glory in Roseville and beyond. That is precisely what a good vision document ought to be: a description of what aspiring to bring God glory will look like in this particular time and place. And ‘strategy’ is little more than thinking about practical steps we might take in order to express these aspirations.

Some of us are naturally wired to embrace change. For a couple of months now some of you have said ‘Bring it on’—without any knowledge of what ‘it’ might be! I am sure this document will be loads of fun for such ‘early adopters’. Others dislike change. The known brings comfort; the new is viewed with suspicion. After all, if St Andrew’s isn’t broken—and it certainly isn’t—why attempt to ‘fix’ it? The answer is simple. It is precisely because St Andrew’s (or any decent church) is an oasis of community, truth, compassion and the knowledge of God that we must always assess whether we are effectively sharing these blessings with those outside the church. The fundamental mission of God’s people, stated at the beginning of the Bible, is that they will not only *receive* God’s grace but become a *vehicle* of that grace for all: “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you ... and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2-3). Being blessed is only one half of the equation; becoming a blessing to ‘all peoples’ is the true fulfilment of what it means to be God’s people in the world.

St Andrew’s is a wonderful church with a rich history. However, we are a mere 400 people in an immediate area of more than 100,000 (within a ten minute drive of St Andrew’s). Sadly, we are also one of the largest churches in the area; and ninety per cent of the population does not regularly attend any church. What follows is a plan to be a blessing to the majority of the mid North Shore who know little of Jesus Christ’s relevance, mercy, eternal life, credibility and community.

The Parish Council and I welcome your constructive feedback, concerns, complaints, fears and so on. But I ask you to let this be your *second* instinct. As you ponder the direction and ideas in this document, please try *first* to be daring and innovative. Ask yourself: Will these ideas take the blessings of St Andrew’s to those who need them most? And then ask: How might I contribute to this project? I take comfort in the comments of social researcher Hugh Mackay in last week’s *SMH Spectrum*: “It’s one of the great paradoxes of the human psyche: we want to be left in our comfort zones and yet we thrive on the experience of being taken out of them ... [E]ven among the most settled and comfortable of us, there’s a lurking desire for something to happen.” Finally, as you read this document please remember that this is a ten-year plan. The changes proposed will be implemented in an incremental and responsible way. There is no need to panic (just yet).

Warmly,

John Dickson, Senior Minister



1 Six aspects of church growth

We all have a ‘theory’ of how churches grow, whether we are conscious of it or not. The simplest way to discern your theory, if you aren’t aware of it, is to ponder the things you think ought to be done in and through church. Your emphases reveal your assumed theory.

What follows is a conscious, six-part account of how I think God—humanly-speaking—grows a modern church. It sets the *framework* for thinking about the 2020 Vision in section 3 and about our strategic priorities and activities in sections 4 and 5. Of course, St Andrew’s has been active in all six areas for many years. This paper is about opening up a fresh conversation about how we can build on our strengths to maximize our effectiveness.

The six aspects of church growth, as I understand it, are: Church Life, Gospel Preaching, Prayer, Proactive Community Service, Profile Raising and Infrastructure. Let me take each in turn.

1.1 CHURCH LIFE

Acts 2:43-47. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

The first human factor in church growth is the church itself. Unless we are becoming the thing God wants us to be corporately, our mission to the wider world will be flawed. Just as businesses modify their product until they have it just right, so the church should endeavour to be all that God asks it to be. There are three broad areas of Christian corporate life, beautifully encapsulated in Acts 2:43-47. They are worship, community and mission. These could be described as the three 'values' of our church.

Worship: The most basic part of church life is our devotion to God. We are not, first and foremost, a social gathering. We are members of God's family, and we surrender everything to him (worship) as our Father. Without this vertical dimension, church is not church and our efforts to reach others are meaningless. Above everything we must aspire to be a community that reveres God himself, heeding his Word, singing his praises and praying to him for our needs. We must be God-ward before other-ward.

Community: Devotion to God as Father will inspire devotion to one another as family. Community is basic to Christianity. Sharing our lives with one another, which will include both spiritual and social fellowship, is just as important as growing numerically through mission.

Mission: Knowledge of God ought to move us to take that knowledge to others; we are beggars letting other beggars know where we found bread. We are blessed in order to be a blessing. I pray that we will never be shy about inviting friends and family to church and reaching out to others with the gospel in relationally appropriate ways.

The passion with which St Andrew's embodies this three-fold life—of worship, community and mission—determines not only the health of our church but also the extent to which we will endeavour to try new things to impact the wider community. Innovation flows from passion—passion for God, his people and the world. Like Jesus and Paul, the passionate church cannot rest on what has always been done but pushes forward toward richer and more relevant expressions of worship, community and mission. The thing that Hillsong or C3 Oxford Falls has over most churches I have worked with is an *abandonment* to God, to one another and to the evangelistic mission of Christ. The key to their phenomenal growth, in my view, is not their music, technology, 'gospel-lite' or any other superficial factor; it is their devotion to this three-fold nature of Christian life. St Andrew's will never be a 'Hillsong'—that is not my point—but I do believe we have much to learn from such churches about passion for God and a resulting willingness to do anything for his glory.

'Balance' is also key to this threefold church life. Too often individual churches or denominations have exaggerated or downplayed important elements of what it means to be a worshipping community in mission. Instead, I hope to see us continue to be zealous for God and his kingdom but eminently practical, strong on evangelism but committed to practical care, theologically conservative and socially generous, deeply knowledgeable and deeply loving, activist yet prayerful, striving for excellence in music, technology and the arts but always centred on sound Bible teaching, vibrant in our social life but loving God above all else. These are not mere slogans but attempts to describe a church that, while passionate and innovative, avoids extremes and distortions.

Part 5 of this document will explore strategic initiatives designed to enhance our 'church life' of worship, community and mission.

1.2 GOSPEL PREACHING

Romans 10:14-15. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

We must never forget that God grows his church through the gospel—the message of Christ's life, teaching, death and resurrection for our salvation. While there are many factors that contribute to people embracing the gospel, *declaration* of that message is fundamental to church growth. The gospel is the necessary and sufficient cause of Christian conversion. It is necessary because no one can become a Christian without knowing the gospel; it is sufficient because understanding the gospel is entirely adequate to inspire true faith.

God's people as a whole are called upon to *promote* the gospel in all that they do. This involves prayer for evangelism, financial support of gospel work, giving an answer for Christ in daily conversation and so on. Christ has also given some to the church—not just globally but also locally—who are evangelists (Eph 4:11-12). It is crucial to find such people, prepare them in appropriate ways and then set them to work telling the gospel in a focused way in our wider community.

Part 5 of this document will explore strategic initiatives designed to enhance the promotion and proclamation of the gospel through St Andrew's.

1.3 PRAYER

2 Thessalonians 3:1. Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.

While prayer can be thought of as a part of our worship, community and mission, I want us to think of it as a distinct feature of how God grows his church with human involvement. The New Testament is adamant that prayer *works*, that the Lord hears the pleas of his people for more workers (Matt 9:37-38), for the success of those workers (Eph 6:19-20) and for evangelistic growth (2 Thess 3:1).

Lack of prayer will not hinder gospel work viewed *globally* but it may diminish the success of God's work through us *locally*. In an activist culture, where many of us are used to doing things ourselves and quickly, prayer does not come naturally. This has to be redressed through teaching, example and structural change. I cannot emphasize this enough.

Part 5 of this document will explore strategic initiatives designed to enhance a life of prayer at St Andrew's

1.4 PROACTIVE COMMUNITY SERVICE

Matthew 5:14-16. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Jesus envisaged that his followers would be the saving light of the world through their *deeds* of (in context) meekness, peacemaking, mercy, non-retaliation, love and practical charity. The church throughout history has powerfully enacted this program, establishing aid programs, hospices and hospitals, schools, universities and campaigns of social justice. This is the true heritage of Evangelical Christianity from Augustine to Wilberforce, from George Whitfield to Tim Keller. Inasmuch as community service *shows* the message we preach, the Lord uses it to grow his church in the world.

Strands of contemporary Evangelical Christianity have drifted to become an almost entirely 'mental faith', where the Christian life is about believing the right things, attending church (to hear truthful sermons), joining a Bible study, having 'quiet times' of private Bible reading and prayer, and then passing on the content to non-believers. Furthermore, ministers are trained for just one job, that of teaching the word of God (whereas the New Testament, e.g., Rom 12:3-8, and the Anglican Prayer Book, e.g., the deaconing service, envisage different types of ministers). This is an inadequate vision of Christian life. While a 'mental faith' might be attractive to certain segments of the population, it is problematic to many others, who rightly begin to wonder, "What's the faith really about?", "Why doesn't Christianity make a difference in the world?" To the wider community this 'mental faith' version of Christianity seems

irrelevant to daily life. Whereas becoming a Christian once looked like being swept up into a social movement, now it looks like attending a philosophical club, where you think and talk a lot but do precious little of human significance. Churches used to function as centres of community—places of education, social care, crisis accommodation, dispute resolution as well as of worship and evangelism. Now, if a church disappeared from its local suburb (leaving only its buildings), I doubt the wider community would even notice. The criticism is apt: “They are so heavenly minded, they are of no earthly use.”

True Christianity is socially active. It enacts now what the future kingdom of God will establish for eternity. That is what the Sermon on the Mount is about. It is the values of the coming kingdom rolled out as a program here on earth as a *sign of the coming kingdom*. The thought is captured well in the Lord’s Prayer at the centre of the Sermon on the Mount: “Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth as in heaven.”

Proactive community service is not just about caring for one another as a Christian family; it is about serving the wider world. Many modern churches are mere fortresses in the world. There may be plenty of good things going on inside the walls but it is mostly unseen to the outside world. We have a lovely ‘product’ that is *invisible* to all but those who already own it! We must lower the drawbridge. We must take our community—with its mental and social dimensions—into the wider community. Nothing else fulfils Jesus’ words to be ‘a city on a hill’ or a ‘light on its stand’. If a Christian church disappeared from its area, it ought to leave a gaping hole in the life of the wider community.

Part 5 of this document will explore strategic initiatives designed to lower the drawbridge and enable St Andrew’s to become visible, present and active in the wider community. This is the key thought of our proposed 2020 Vision.

1.5 PROFILE RAISING

Profile raising is a forgotten bridge between church life and the wider community. Once you get involved in a church, an illusion occurs. Because you are excited about what goes on in St Andrew's you begin to assume that the whole of Roseville has at least some idea of who we are and of the wonderful things we stand for. The reality is the wider community has almost no consciousness of our existence, let alone of what we do. I believe significant money and effort should be dedicated to *raising the profile* of St Andrew's in the wider community. This is not simply crass advertising; it is an attempt to lift the consciousness of the public about what kind of community St Andrew's offers.

It is common for businesses and not-for-profits to spend between 3-7% of revenue on marketing and advertising. In a disparate, non-village life this is the only way to raise the consciousness of the wider public, to make their organization or goods a possibility in the consumer's mental field. It is not so much about making a direct sale. It simply puts the brand on the map so that when the consumer wants to buy—a soft drink, gym membership, a vacuum cleaner, or whatever—they think of that brand as a credible option. There is a valid analogy here to church life. St Andrew's has historically spent less than 3% of revenue on advertising and marketing, I think because we are under the illusion that the wider community already knows about us. We could do better in this area.

There is a spectrum of profile raising activities.

- a) Some activities involve simple advertising. For the *God Science* series, for example, we produced attractive brochures and had them delivered to nearly 8000 homes. Some people came to the events solely because of the brochure, but just as important is the 'drip effect' of such interesting, high-quality advertising. Over time people will associate St Andrew's with professional quality activities and stimulating topics. The *God Science* brochures cost us 33c each (from design to delivery). To leave people with the impression that St Andrew's is doing interesting things that is a bargain! It is said that every second dollar spent on advertising is wasted; we just don't know which dollar it is!
- b) At the other end of the profile raising spectrum are community activities. There is some crossover here with 1.4, Proactive Community Service. The difference is that profile raising community activities are not principally designed to meet human need but to show ourselves as a vibrant part of the life of the wider community. The Clanville Cup is a good example, as is the recent coffee and bacon-and-egg-roll on election day (our involvement with the Salvos that day made this 'community service' also)

Part 5 of this document will explore strategic initiatives designed to raise the profile of St Andrew's in the wider community.

1.6 INFRASTRUCTURE

One thing no minister is ever trained for is infrastructure. Much is hindered in church life because the systems, staffing, buildings and resources are inadequately matched to the needs of the church. Infrastructure must not be thought of as a worldly, 'secular' adjunct to (or distortion of) the holy life of a Christian community; it is little other than making sure the proper material elements are in place so that nothing gets in the way of vibrant church life and growth. There are three main parts to infrastructure:

- a) Staffing. Typically, our theological colleges train just one kind of person, the man who will be a temporary 2IC preacher until he can become a 1IC somewhere else. Many graduates come to churches wanting to be mini-rectors over their own congregation. We thereby perpetuate the one-man-band paradigm. The New Testament emphasizes a huge gift-mix in the body of Christ—teachers, mercy ministers, administrators and so on. Rarely, if ever, is it envisaged by the biblical writers that one individual will embody the range of things required for effective ministry. My own model of staffing has a three-fold executive and a wide range of other key staff appointments. The executive consists of: Senior Minister, primarily responsible for preaching, staff formation and strategic leadership; Executive Pastor, primarily responsible for the smooth running of all business and ministry systems of the church; Senior Associate Minister, primarily responsible for pastoral care and training. Other key staff over the long term will include assistant ministers, children's workers, youth workers, pastoral assistants, administrative assistants, evangelists, counselors, site managers, student ministers, and so on.
- b) Buildings. Property matters *matter*. Currently, we have a greatly inadequate community building. Built over fifty years ago, it served us well for several decades. It is now tired, run down, non-functional, inappropriate and a hindrance to ministry. It gets in the way not only of current programs—children's work, morning tea and supper—but, in particular, future programs. I regard our physical site as a crucial factor in our calling to be a vibrant Christian community on the mid North Shore.
- c) Money. As an entity, St Andrew's is generous. The 25% of revenue that we give away to outside mission and aid is a testament to the historic soft-heartedness of the parish as a whole. That said, a church of our size in our demographic could easily double its revenue from \$600k to \$1.2m without putting members in financial strain: the current *average* giving per adult is about \$30 a week (of course, this figure masks the fact that some give vastly more and others much less). Money is the great lubricant of ministry—it allows all of the critical parts of church staffing, buildings, advertising, etc., to function without constraint.

Part 5 of this document will explore strategic initiatives concerned with St Andrew's staffing, buildings and financial resourcing.

2 The opportunity

The Lord has given us a *particular* task. Our mission is the same as every other church but our sphere of ministry is a specific location with a specific demographic profile. This will influence what we do.

2.1 A NEW 'PARISH BOUNDARY'

Parish boundaries were established at a time when most people lived in 'villages'. The general assumption was that the boundaries of a parish would be 'walking distance' to church. It was the 'corner shop' mentality. This makes little sense today.

People think nothing of driving ten minutes to the shops, to the kids' school, to the gym or to the café. Our mental 'village' has hugely expanded. This is not just a theoretical reality; it is a practical reality at St Andrew's already. As many people come to our church from outside the traditional parish boundary as from within it. We draw from as far away as Lane Cove and St Ives.

If people happily travel ten minutes for school, gym and the shops, we should think of our parish boundary along similar lines: a radius of a ten minute drive from St Andrew's. As a *rough* guide this includes as far south as Northbridge, as far west as Lane Cove West, as far north as St Ives and as far east as Killarney.

2.2 DEMOGRAPHY OF OUR AREA

At the last census (2006) there were 124,284 people living in the 19 suburbs of our immediate area—probably 130,000 by now. (Many thanks to Dr. Anne Eyeland for preparing the aggregate figures. Anne's full report and data are available from our office)

Overwhelmingly, it is a 'family' region; that is, a large proportion of dwellings contain an adult or two (between the age of 35-59) with dependents. 41.6% of households contain couples with child(ren), whereas 24.8% of households contain couples without any children. The average household size is 2.73, slightly above the Sydney average of 2.66.

Age structure of our area: 0-17 yrs, 24.4%; 18-34 yrs, 20.1%; 35-59 yrs, 36%; 60+ yrs, 19.5%.

We are a wealthy, professional area. 38.7% of people have Bachelor or Higher degrees (the Sydney average is 20.9%); 38.8% of households earn \$2,500 per week (the highest income category recorded) compared to a Sydney average of 19%. 57.3% of workers are Managers or Professionals compared to a Sydney average of 38.4%.

25.7% of people in our area come from Non-English speaking backgrounds (compare that to the make-up of our existing church family). Because we are on the edge of Chatswood, many families in our region have an Asian background. This must affect how we do ministry. If these people are in our 'parish', we must find ways to serve them in Christ's name. I believe this is an exciting part of our future work.

2.3 CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN OUR AREA

The weekly church going population of our area is difficult to establish. The national average is about 8%. The figure for the North Shore of Sydney is probably slightly higher. For example, the four churches of Roseville have a combined weekly attendance, including children, of approximately 800 (St Andrew's 400, Uniting Church 200, St Barnabas' 130, Presbyterian 70) or 10% of a population of 8000. If something like this holds for the entire region, it means that 108,000 people (90% of 120,000) within a ten minute drive of St Andrew's are *not* in Christian community each week. The opportunity is enormous.

Since 2006 St Andrew's Roseville has enjoyed an average weekly attendance of approximately 400 (340 adults + 50-60 children) with little fluctuation from year to year. Currently, we are about 50 adults at 9am, 90 at 10:30am, 110 at 5pm and 90 at 7pm.

2.4 'TRANSFER GROWTH'

I will not encourage 'transfer growth', where committed members of one congregation move to ours because of convenience or preference. Of course, there are sometimes *good* reasons for changing churches—moving into a new area, relational breakdown in the former parish, seeking more effective ministry for a spouse or children, finding spiritual refuge in times of doubt or anguish, and so on—but I hope and pray that we will grow mainly through new people finding Christ afresh.

That said, because of the huge numbers of people in our area who remain unreached (100,000+), we should not fret if ten, twenty or even fifty believers from nearby churches drift into our community. Even if one hundred local Christians transferred to us (God forbid!), that would still be a mere 0.1% of our area (one-tenth of one percent). If that is the accidental effect of our efforts to reach 100,000 people, so be it. In the record of eternity, it will not rate a mention.

Be assured, I will make it a priority to keep healthy lines of communication open with the other ministers in the region; and I hope we will work together in this enormous task. Fortunately, most church leaders no longer think in terms of 'parish boundaries'. What once would have seemed scandalous—encroaching on someone else's 'patch'—is now generally accepted as (a) a reality of non-village, regional life, (b) a necessity given the huge numbers of people outside of Christ and (c) an expression of gospel innovation and entrepreneurialism for God's glory. Communication, not a reduced vision, is the key to maintaining Christ-like, humble relationships with other churches in our catchment.

3 2020 vision

Let me briefly state the 2020 Vision we are proposing for St Andrew's. It flows from what has been said so far in this document and has significant implications for all six aspects of church growth (as I will explain in sections 4-6).

3.1 A CENTRE OF COMMUNITY FOR THE MID NORTH SHORE

St Andrew's prays to be a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for the mid North Shore.

This statement is not meant to be a catchy logo, 'mission statement' or byline; It is a short description of a new orientation for our church life. It is deceptively simple and has significant implications if taken seriously. A 'centre of community' is not just a glorified 'hall for hire' — having people on our site doing jazzercise once a week will not further our mission. Many churches rent halls to the wider community. That is not what I am describing.

First and foremost a (Christian) 'centre of community' is a place where people know they *belong*. Unless our regulars feel that St Andrew's is a loving family, there is little point opening up our 'community' to the wider population. Spiritual formation and Christian relationships are the foundations of the community centre 'feel' I am proposing.

A 'centre of community' is somewhere the general community gravitates towards for meaningful input and activities. I can envisage a time when the St Andrew's people and physical site will be a locus in the wider community for the most significant things of life—friendship, creativity, social action, health, intellectual engagement and, of course, the knowledge and worship of God.

A Christian 'centre of community' meets the real needs of the wider community. I look forward to St Andrew's providing financial assistance to local people in need, counselling for families in trouble, seminars on wise living and much more (a pre-school or long day care centre perhaps?).

A Christian 'centre of community' can be a rallying point for doing good. Many in our area already do great good. Many others wish they could. St Andrew's can become a *portal* for a multitude of great causes that resonate with people's hunch that our lives are meant to make a positive difference in the world. Our recently established charitable trusts (one of which is dedicated to Necessitous Circumstances) will prove highly significant here.

3.2 THREE YEAR INTENT

By the end of 2013 we pray that we will have:

- established an ethos and aligned our activities towards becoming a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for the mid North Shore
- commenced (2012) and completed (2013) a site redevelopment designed to enable us to become a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for the mid North Shore

3.3 FIVE YEAR INTENT

By the end of 2015 we pray that we will have:

- begun to fully utilize our redeveloped site
- thus enabling us to be a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for the mid North Shore

3.4 TEN YEAR INTENT

By the end of 2020 we pray that we will have:

- established St Andrew's as a Christian centre of community widely known and deeply valued by the people of the mid North Shore
- established offsite church services, including Sunday gathering at, for example, the theatres of the Chatswood Civic Centre or UTS campus
- established a fresh model of church life that proves helpful to other Anglican and non-Anglican churches in Sydney. (I want evangelical Christianity to reclaim its heritage as a centre of community in society; hence, while we must always pursue humility, I have no embarrassment about wanting to influence the wider church)

3.5 WHAT ABOUT NUMERICAL GROWTH?

All evangelistic growth is *God's* to manage not ours. Nevertheless, we must ask ourselves: Is it healthier to hope and plan for stagnation or for expansion? The answer must be expansion. The Lord delights in numerical growth if that growth consists of people from the wider community discovering afresh God's majesty, mercy and relevance.

But what is a plausible expectation of numerical growth at St Andrew's? Between 2000-2003 we experienced a growth rate in weekly attendance of approximately 10% per annum (276 adults in 2000, 294 in 2001, 304 in 2002 and 360 in 2003). It is reasonable to hope that the Lord will bless our prayerful efforts at least as *much* as he did in recent memory.

A growth rate of 10% per annum is not a 'target', like a company's bottom line, because the ultimate factor in lasting church growth is the blessing of God not the strategies of his people. But (again) it is surely healthier to expect and prepare for growth than to plan for nothing.

10% annual growth in church attendance would result in the following pattern (starting at 400 in 2010):

- By 2013 we would have grown to a weekly attendance across all services of 530+
- By 2015 we would have grown to a weekly attendance across all services of 640+
- By 2020 we would have grown to a weekly attendance across all services of 1000+

Preparing for such growth will involve significant ministry and logistical adjustments. It will also heighten the importance of our small group ministry as the principal vehicle of communication, community and spiritual formation.

4 Strategic priorities

What follows are six areas I believe need focused attention in the short-to-medium term in order to reorient St Andrew's toward becoming a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for the mid North Shore. There is some overlap between the *strategic priorities* below and the *strategic initiatives* that follow in section 5, but the former are designed to give shape and order to the latter.

4.1 STAFFING

I would like to have the three-part executive of the church in place as soon as possible (we await the opportunity to employ a Senior Associate Minister for pastoral care and training). Until all three are on board, staff will be working 30% of the time in their highly-effective areas (or 'sweet spot') and 70% in their less-effective areas. The new staffing model is designed to invert that ratio. The efficiencies that will emerge are significant. (NB. This model makes good sense whether the Senior Minister is part-time or full-time.)

4.2 SITE REDEVELOPMENT

Some of us have perhaps grown used to our physical site. The church building itself is mostly lovely and functional. The rest of the site is below par for any public building, whether a library, school or council chambers, and is inadequate even for current ministry, let alone for future directions and growth. I hope we will speedily redress this, as ministry is hindered, humanly speaking, with every delay. This will, of course, involve a large capital expenditure. But divided between 400+ adults and paid down over time, it is readily achievable. Fifty-five years ago a daring St Andrew's community took the decision to demolish an existing community hall and build the current one. We are the ones who now need to make a similar contribution to the next half-century of ministry in our area.

4.3 FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Families (adults dwelling with their dependents) are the largest demographic in our region. This alone calls for our focused attention. Families are also the most 'networked' part of any modern population, with a large web of relationships through school, dance classes, sporting clubs and so on. If you reach a family, you potentially reach the kids' friends, the parents and grandparents of those friends and plenty of other adults in the family's network of relationships. This is less true of other demographics. We will not neglect other groups in our community but *families* ought to be the strategic priority as we seek to reach out to our region.

4.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

As a priority, I want us to start thinking of ways we can be *present* and *useful* to the wider community. I think we also need to do some more analysis of the demographics and of the real needs of the area. This will occupy a lot of my attention over the coming months, and I look forward to your contribution.

4.5 VOLUNTEERING

The specific vision and emphases I am proposing will demand a much higher proportion of non-staff involvement. Without broad buy-in and an increased spirit of volunteerism across our church, these hopes will be impossible to realize. Becoming a *church that offers a centre of community for the mid North Shore* is the ultimate example of a lay-led (and, conversely, lay-thwarted) vision for church life. The role of the paid ministry team is similar to that of a coach/manager of a sporting team. Our job is to help the players (you) hone their skills and do their best on the field. Against the tide of our 'out-sourcing' culture, Christ calls each one of us to do what we can, given our personality, circumstances and gifting, to serve each other and to reach out to the people of the North Shore. Please consider afresh what you can do and give to the work of St Andrew's. If we can break the 80:20 rule (where 80% of the work is done by the same 20% of people), an increase in volunteerism will actually result in a decrease in individual busyness.

4.6 ALIGNMENT

Increasingly, St Andrew's is a 'busy' church—in September 2010 alone we had the Praise event, Life of Jesus, God Science, Back to Church Sunday, the Ladies' High Tea, Clanville Cup and a major School Holiday program. Activity is not always a good thing. A major concern beginning 2011 will be to make sure that activities are aligned, i.e., that they fit *strategically* within our core ministry goals, *chronologically* within a busy church calendar, and that they strike a balance between our internal life as a church and the external or outreach goals of St Andrew's.

5 Strategic initiatives

Strategic initiatives are actions we can take in pursuit of our vision of becoming a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for the mid North Shore. It is important that actions are strategic not random. They ought to reflect both the six aspects of church growth described in section 1 and the priorities laid out above in section 4.

Below I offer a large number of strategic initiatives, but please note a few things. First, by definition, a list of ‘strategic initiatives’ makes little reference to the many things we are already doing well—small groups, music, etc. Secondly, just because an initiative is listed below does not mean it will necessarily be acted upon. The Parish Council and staff will be working closely to implement initiatives in a timely and thoroughly costed manner. Thirdly, it is important to realize that we are talking about a ten-year plan. Throwing a lot of ideas into a single document can give an impression of moving too far, too quickly. In fact, spread out over a decade most of our changes will feel incremental rather than dramatic.

Most importantly, fourthly, I want the whole church, together with the Wardens, Parish Council and other staff to ‘fill in the blanks’. In my experience, while consistently good ideas often come from the leadership, *the very best ideas* usually come from the broader church community.

The strategic initiatives are grouped below according to the six aspects of church growth described in section 1.

5.1 CHURCH LIFE

How can we better become a passionate church of worship, community and mission?

- Establish leadership teams for each congregation (active already at 7pm) with individuals tasked with the coordination and facilitation (rather than the delivery) of the following ministry areas: Newcomers, Community Fostering, Mercy Ministry, Aesthetics, Mission, Small Group Support and Promotion, Children's Ministry (1030am / 5pm) and Volunteering.

Established by December 2010.

- Establish a system for assessing and approving all proposed church events *long in advance* so as to avoid 'busyness' and enhance alignment.

Established December 2010.

- Appoint a (volunteer) Coordinator of Volunteers who, in consultation with the congregational leadership teams, can inspire a spirit of volunteerism across the parish and coordinate volunteers for particular events and projects.

Appointed December 2010.

- Establish a balance in the public Bible teaching between intellectual / theological rigour and the practical call to worship God, serve in community and reach out to others with the gospel.

Effective February 2011

- Establish the 'Resource Bank', a fabulous initiative (almost ten years in the making) designed to match St Andrew's human resources with the needs of the church and wider community.

Trial first quarter 2011.

- Work to see the entire church complete the superb first subject of Moore College's Preliminary Theological Certificate (PTC), *Introduction to the Bible*.

Commence first quarter 2011.

- Employ Senior Associate Minister (Pastoral Care and Training) who will work to enhance a sense of intimacy and care across all congregations and strengthen the small groups as the principal vehicles of communication, community and spiritual formation.

Employed February 2011.

- As part of our unique *raison d'être* as a wealthy Christian community I believe we should be moving toward giving away as much of our church revenue as we responsibly can without hindering our calling to the mid North Shore. We currently give 25% of revenue to outside mission and aid. I propose that we increase this to 50% over time. Preliminary costings of the entire strategy suggest this is achievable by 2020 with only a small annual increase in members' average giving (6%).

Scaled increase to 50% (target: 2020).

5.2 GOSPEL PREACHING

How can we more clearly and effectively advance the gospel?

- Significantly ramp up our involvement in local SRE teaching, including common hour teaching at Roseville Public.
Established first quarter 2011.
- Twice yearly outreach cycles: huge advertising push for a three-four week evangelistic/apologetic sermon series, followed by Simply Christianity / Life of Jesus courses and then small group follow-up (e.g., God Science series).
Commence first and third quarters 2011.
- Senior Minister to train a team of 'evangelists' to focus on telling the gospel to others through Simply Christianity / Life of Jesus courses, one-to-one and at events.
Commence training July 2011.
5% of the adults of the church (approximately 17 people) selected trained and active by January 2013.

5.3 PRAYER

How can we become more prayerful, individually and corporately?

- Establish church-wide and/or congregation-specific prayer meetings once a quarter where all evening Bible study groups close to meet together for concerted prayer. This may be the most important initiative in the entire document.
Commencing December 2010.
- Edit (and republish) the existing Church Prayer to make it briefer, more aligned to the 2020 Vision and more usable in public and private settings.
Reproduced February 2011.

5.4 PROACTIVE COMMUNITY SERVICE

How can we 'lower the drawbridge' and engage more fully with the wider community through practical care?

- Establish a committee to research the real needs of the community, identify local community roles which church members might fill (such as local boards, councils, charities, etc.) and make recommendations to Parish Council.
Established first quarter 2011, reporting second quarter 2011.
- The 'Resource Bank' will have significance here
Tried for wider community third quarter 2011.
- Revive 'Think' seminars for the real benefit to the wider community.
Effective second quarter 2011.
- Parish Council to explore the feasibility of an onsite day care centre.
Report to church and Property Committee July 2011.
- Establish a visiting team to offer conversation and friendship for elderly people in homes and nursing facilities.
Active December 2011.
- Devise a strategy for a major, onsite ESL program which builds on our current ministry.
Developed 2012.
- Parish Council to explore the feasibility of an onsite professional (Christian) counselling centre focusing on family therapy and mental health for church members and the wider community.
Report to church June 2012.

5.5 PROFILE RAISING

How can we give the residents of the mid North Shore a strong 'impression' of our church?

- Revive public carols event at RPS, Clanville Oval, or elsewhere.
Effective December 2010 (or 2011).
- Establish a 'Street Choir' or 'Urban Choir' mainly for the evenings of Christmas week singing in the Chatswood shopping area—but also for other events throughout the year.
Established December 2010.
- Increase annual expenditure on advertising to approximately 3% of revenue.
Effective 2011 budget.
- Engage branding and advertising expert to consider appropriate ways to raise the public's consciousness of St Andrew's and the Christian faith.
Initial meetings February 2011.
- Establish a working group charged with proposing and facilitating high-profile events in which we can engage the general public (e.g., Christmas in July feast, Mother's / Father's Days events, Anzac Day events, public street carols, etc).
Established Feb 2011.
Report to staff and PC May 2011.
- Regularly make free coffee for local residents in a variety of contexts (on the way to work, at sporting events, at school functions, etc.)
Tried second quarter 2011.
Purchase mobile 'coffee cart' January 2012.
- Establish a 'Fit for Good' club at St Andrew's—skilled trainers offering fitness, Pilates, running/walking groups, health advice, etc., for the church and wider community at a reduced rate with proceeds given to (for example) World Vision.
Established August 2011.
- Create St Andrew's 'public tagline' based on our church motto (*Following Christ for Good*) but which is used to give people outside the church a pithy, positive 'impression' of what we stand for without trying to say too much (similar to Nike's *Just do it*). It should be the sort of thing we could print on our takeaway coffee cups or on certain advertising. Something like **St Andrew's—Living for Good** or even simply **St Andrew's—For Good** are more positive, memorable and easily verbalized by those who do not yet believe than the overtly spiritual 'Following Christ for Good'. Church members, of course, know that '(living) for good' has the double meaning of *doing good* (through social care and evangelism) and *living forever* (through Christ). A tagline, remember, does not describe a vision; it simply conveys a 'vibe'. I envisage that the 'for good' theme will find its way into all manner of public engagements—*Fit for Good* (a fitness group), *Sing for Good* (a public choir), *Love for Good* (a marriage enrichment course), and much more. Our principal motto can remain *Following Christ for Good*.
Effective immediately (upon approval).

5.6 INFRASTRUCTURE

How can we ensure that buildings, staffing and money enhance our ministry?

- Fully realize the functionality of www.standrews.net.au for community-building, promotions and as a resource library (print, audio and video).
Engage website service to review needs/uses November/December 2010.
Relaunch website March 2011.
- Employ a fulltime Office Manager & PA (currently three days a week) responsible for supporting the administrative work and research of senior staff, preparing weekly service slides/sheets, answering phones and correspondence, organizing funerals and weddings, inputting financials and administering the website and sermon library.
Employed January 2011.
- Fully utilize the newly established charitable entities/funds (Music and Arts, Necessitous Circumstances, Building/Education, Library, etc.)
Established Sept-Dec 2010.
Communicated to the parish December 2010.
Begin utilizing February 2011.
- Implement three-fold executive: Senior Minister (strategic leadership, teaching, staff care), Executive Pastor (ministry operations), Senior Associate Minister (pastoral care, training).
All appointed February 2011.
- Maintain the same Parish Council for at least 2011. There is a lovely working relationship and real momentum in the current PC. We will have limited strategic continuity if there is change. I strongly urge the church to nominate and re-elect all of the current members of the PC.
Effective February 2011.
- Expedite the work of the Property Committee in discerning the best redevelopment of our site (including expanded worship area, foyer, small sports hall, multiple Sunday School / seminar rooms, café, church staff offices, Day Care centre, etc.).
Initial report to PC and church March 2011.
Parish consultation April-June 2011.
Fundraising begins August 2011.
Commence work 2012.
Complete work 2013.
- Establish a fundraising working group charged with exploring appropriate levels and ideas for raising money for ministry and buildings.
Established March 2011.

- Employ multiple 'Student Ministers' from Moore College (and elsewhere) in order to serve our people, benefit the students and influence the diocese with the model and character of our ministry.
One in 2011.
Scaled to ten by 2020 (@ \$9000 per person).
- Appoint Congregational Pastors for each congregation who, once we have reached critical mass at the relevant service, can be the 'face' of that congregation, share in the preaching and pastoring of that congregation and provide daily oversight of the weekly service (Note: Congregational Pastors report to the executive team which oversees the systems, preaching, vision, pastoral care and training of the whole church family).
7pm Congregational Pastor January 2012 (the unique, 'young adults' demographic of 7pm requires a dedicated pastor sooner than for other services). I am hoping that Matt Stedman's role will change from general assistant minister to the 7pm Congregational Pastor.
9am Congregational Pastor (part-time) January 2013.
10:30am and 5pm Congregational Pastor (Families Pastor) January 2014.
- Employ fulltime Youth Minister (we are currently able to afford only a part-time youth minister).
Employed January 2012
- Employ fulltime women's pastor (or two part time)
Employed January 2013
- Reintroduce a ministry Interns program— allied with existing Australian programs— designed to support ministry here and influence ministry elsewhere.
Commence January 2013.
- Explore an alliance with at least one Moore Theological College faculty member/family to be part of our church community.
Effective 2013.
- Employ part-time site manager
Employed January 2014
- Employ fulltime evangelist
Employed 2015
- Employ a professional Christian counselor specializing in family therapy and mental health for church and community members.
Employed 2016.

Please add your own ideas

5.1 Church life

-

-

-

5.2 Gospel preaching

-

-

-

5.3 Prayer

-

-

-

5.4 Proactive community service

-

-

-

5.5 Profile raising

-

-

-

5.6 Infrastructure

-

-

-

Appendix 1

2020 Vision: a snapshot

As we pray to be a community of Jesus Christ offering a centre of community for the mid North Shore, I imagine **by 2020** we will:

- be **widely known** on the mid North Shore as a locus of friendship, social care and action, diversity, creativity, events, health and fun—grounded in a confident, well-articulated conviction about the lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life
- be meeting on a fully **redeveloped site**, featuring an enlarged worship space, staff offices, youth hall, seminar rooms, café and possibly a day-care centre
- have over **1000 people**, many of whom are new believers, meeting for church each week
- have close to **100 small group Bible studies** meeting each week (80% of the regular church members)
- have a **staff team of eight** fulltime workers (or part-time equivalent)
- have a significant **interns program** designed to serve the wider church
- have a total **income of more than \$2m** and be **giving away over \$1m** to mission and aid throughout the world
- be offering **professional Christian counseling** services to church members and the wider community, specializing in family therapy and mental health
- be a **praying** church
- have begun to **assist other churches** to become centres of community for their regions
- fully reflect the **multi-ethnic demographic** of the mid North Shore