

HOLY TRINITY CLAYGATE

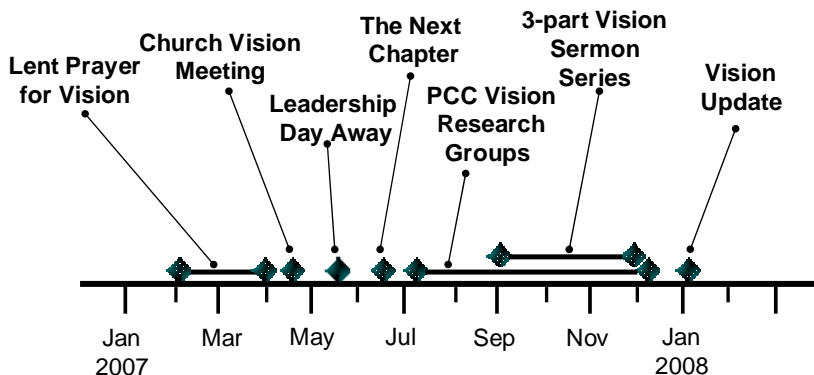
VISION UPDATE – JANUARY 2008

INTRODUCTION

This booklet sets out the results of the vision process thus far and describes some of the path for 2008.




THE STORY SO FAR

Key dates in the vision process so far include:



THE KEY QUESTIONS

Throughout the autumn the PCC and the Ministry Team have been working on how to achieve the vision objectives identified in The Next Chapter:

-  **More Followers of Jesus** – how can we create more space for growth? (pages 4&5)
-  **Deeper Followers of Jesus** – how can we help all to grow as disciples? (page 2)
-  **Closer Followers of Jesus** – how can we better model a community of faith? (page 3)



Deeper Followers of Jesus

– how can we help all to grow as disciples?

We identified three ways we could encourage the church to grow as disciples of Jesus:

● **Small Groups** – In November the PCC endorsed the vision for small groups from a research group headed by Linda Morgan. One of the key recommendations is that HTC move from being a church *with* small groups to being a church *of* small groups. This vision is that every member of the church be encouraged to be a member of a small group. A small group may be an existing homegroup, or it may be different (e.g. a men's Saturday morning group, a daytime group for Mums or a group coming together to lead worship).

In the New Year, this vision will be progressed by:

- Tom Darwent, who will lead training for existing and future small group leaders, as it is recognised that leadership is crucial to the effective running of small groups.
- In January Mike Harle will take up an unpaid part-time role as Small Groups Co-ordinator, working with Tom.

Plus

- Two new post-Alpha small groups will be starting in January 2008

● **Enhanced teaching opportunities** – through the Autumn we have been piloting Christian FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) to help Christians think about the issues that affect life in the modern world. These have gone well and will continue in the New Year.

● **Encouraging training** – Tom will oversee all areas of adult discipleship including encouraging people to undergo training. Church members have already attended conferences on youth ministry, children's work and pastoral care. The 2008 budget reflects an increased commitment to training across the life of the church.

Also

- The pilot Growing Leaders course has started well (20 participants), and we anticipate running this again in Autumn 2008
- Three members start diocesan training as Pastoral Assistants in 2008



Closer Followers of Jesus

– how can we better model a community of faith?

This is an area which is harder to quantify, but we identified two specific areas to work on:

- **Internal Communication** – A report to the PCC in July made a number of recommendations in this area, many of which have already been implemented. Key areas include:
 - Launch of a termcard with details of services, teaching and activities.
 - Revamped newsletter with clearer focus on information and prayer.
 - Development of website as popular resource for many church members, now with 2000 visits a month.
 - Well-received parish-wide Christmas card.
 - Successful implementation of projection system already used for prayer, worship and teaching.

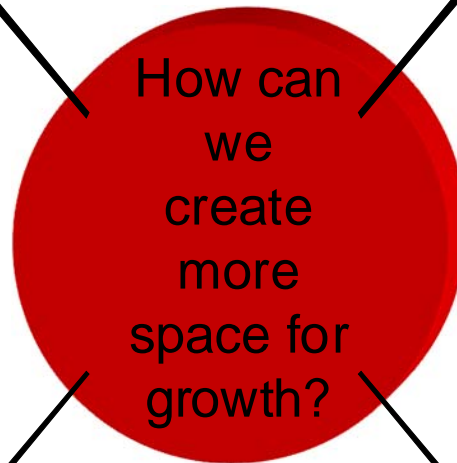
- **Welcome and Integration** – This area will be reviewed in February. It was great that over 150 church members participated in the trial Come Home for Lunch Sunday in November. This will be repeated in the New Year – although it is hoped that more people will invite each other home for lunch before then!



MORE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

Back in June we recognised that in order to see more growth we would have to expand our current provision for worship and meeting together. A PCC working group conducted extensive internal research (questionnaires etc.) and external research (visiting other large churches) on the paths open to us. In December the PCC approved a plan to expand the current provision in the following ways:

MESSY CHURCH - a midweek service for children and parents/ carers. Successfully piloted at other churches. Designed to appeal to those who come to Holiday Club. Expected start date: Q2 2008; Frequency: Monthly.



ADDITIONAL SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE – by replacing the 10am service with two services at 9:30am and 11:15am. Other churches have seen significant growth through this route. Whilst broadly similar to the 10am service, the earlier service would be more informal while the later service would have a greater proportion of traditional music and a more formal feel. The main children’s provision would be at the 9:30am service, although further consultation will take place. Expected start date: September 2008.

YOUTH CONGREGATION – held on a Sunday evening to enable expanded provision for more young people to worship and learn together. Growing out of existing YF and Pathfinder provision, and accessible to young people from different backgrounds. Expected start date: Q3 2008; Frequency: Weekly; Probable Venue: Emmanuel Hall.

REVIEW OF 6:30PM SERVICE – In the light of the extended morning provision, with the addition of a more traditional service at 11:15am, the PCC recognised that development of the 6:30pm service to include a wider range of music and worship styles would be attractive to a large number of the potential congregation, including those involved in children’s work in the morning. Further consultation to take place. Expected start: September 2008.

Plus the last few months has also seen two fruitful evangelistic courses:

- Alpha: 30 guests, a number of whom professed Christian faith for the first time
- Hub 2: 25 young people hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and responding

MAKING IT HAPPEN – ORGANISED TO FOLLOW JESUS

Getting the right members of staff will be a key part of achieving the vision. With this in mind, and in the light of Asa’s and Stuart’s departure, the PCC has approved three appointments:

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY: this appointment is full-time. We will be seeking a person with proven youthwork experience to develop and implement our vision for young people, including building towards the start of a youth congregation. In line with the practice of other churches we will be providing suitable housing within the parish. With interviews in mid-March we hope that the successful candidate will start before the beginning of the summer.

INTERIM YOUTH MINISTRY ASSISTANT: Matt Knight has been appointed to this post. He has been helping with Hub 2 over the past term and has strong youthwork experience in South Africa. Matt will be in the UK for a further six months and during this time will work with Andrew Cowie to develop the varied work among 11-18 year olds.

SMALL GROUP CO-ORDINATOR: Mike Harle will start in this role at the beginning of January, working with Tom Darwent. Mike’s is an unpaid and part-time position, but one that is crucial to the development of small group ministry.

These new appointments fit into a revised leadership structure where the Ministry Team comprises those with specific areas of responsibility as set out below:

Philip Plyming	Tom Darwent	Valerie Bagley	Andrew Cowie	TBD	Linda Morgan	Janet Watkins
Director of Evangelism	Director of Discipleship	Director of Pastoral Care	Director of Children and Families Ministry	Director of Youth Ministry	Director of Worship and Mission	Director of Central Support

The PCC retains its role as the key policy-making body of the church.

MAKING IT HAPPEN – THE CHALLENGE FOR US ALL

To achieve our goals of more, deeper and closer followers of Jesus will require increased commitment from across the church. Each person will be called to deepen their own discipleship as a follower of Jesus Christ, and this will impact on that most precious commodity: time. This will be demanding on us as individuals, but the net benefit will be transforming. Here are some specific examples of ways to increase involvement:



More Followers of Jesus

- Be committed to one of the new congregations
- Bring a friend to the Alpha course starting on 10 January
- Commit to pray for a friend or neighbour to come to know Jesus



Deeper Followers of Jesus

- Join a small group or start one up yourself
- Come to the small group leaders training
- Discuss with Tom what will help you grow as a Christian



Closer Followers of Jesus

- Commit to the monthly prayer meeting – Together in Prayer
- Invite people to your home for meals - Sunday and other times
- Use the newsletter for regular prayer about the church & world

GIVING

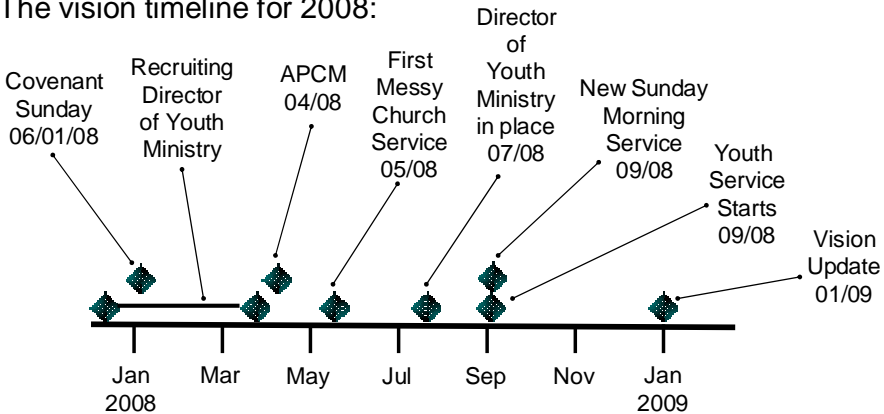
We will need to consider the financial implications of this work:

- Pledged income for 07/08 has remained flat, whilst operational costs have risen; we will lose some recoverable Gift Aid tax through the tax changes from April '08.
- Our anticipated income is £36,000 short of meeting the estimated costs of the PCC's prayerfully prepared plans for HTC.
- This shortfall has been described by the PCC as a "Challenge to Fund". Clearly, it is the hope that church members will indeed be challenged to fund the PCC's plans by reviewing the level of their giving for 2008.

WHAT NEXT?

We are clearly moving forward in our vision process. It is true that in 2008 there will be significant change. Some may find that daunting, while others find it exciting. While the changes are not going to happen overnight, they will take planning and demand commitment from us all from this point onwards. However, as we respond to this challenge, I believe we will see more followers of Jesus as we grow as deeper and closer followers of Jesus ourselves.

The vision timeline for 2008:



PRAYER

Prayer continues to be vital for everything we do. Please pray for:

- the PCC as they consider and make decisions
- every church member to be inspired to take a role in the vision
- the right person to be chosen for the Director of Youth Ministry
- other new appointments (Mike Harle, Matt Knight) to feel at home
- Philip, for wisdom as he oversees the vision process

CONCLUSION

The vision process has brought us to an exciting place of opportunity; I am tremendously grateful to God for the unity and encouragement that has been a hallmark of this process. My prayer for 2008 is that we will live by faith and step out into where God is taking us.

Philip Plyming
January 2008