



St Swithun's
ANGLICAN CHURCH
PYMBLE

Ministry Plan
(2024-2028)

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1. Introduction

This is the second iteration of our five-year rolling parish Ministry Plan. We refresh our Ministry Plan every year, especially looking to what we think can be achieved in the next five years. This document, therefore, considers the years 2024-2028.

The Plan is a statement of priorities and direction. Under God, it reminds us of what we most want to be doing and how we will achieve that. It is primarily written for the leadership of our church, including Parish Council, key ministry leaders, and as a reporting tool for our Annual General Meeting.

Parish Council will be asked to adopt this document as a statement of policy, guiding the direction of our church for the forthcoming year.

2. Vision

(a) Welcome | Nurture | Serve

St Swithun's is committed to being a healthy church that *welcomes* all, *nurtures* them in the Christian faith, and *serves* one another and our wider community. This Vision, previously articulated, is embraced by this Ministry Plan as a useful statement of the kind of ministry we prayerfully intend at St Swithun's.

(b) Values

Because we seek to be a 'Welcome, Nurture, Serve' *kind* of Church, we uphold the value of the following ministry initiatives:

(i) Outreach

We build authentic and compassionate relationships with our neighbours. In this context, we make the gospel of Jesus Christ widely known, through actions, words and invitations.

Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:42-47.

(ii) Belonging

We warmly connect newcomers into our distinctively Christian community. Our community will be marked by love, unity and diversity; centred around the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8; 1 John 4:11-12.

(iii) Maturity

We foster life-long ‘learning of Jesus Christ’ in others and ourselves. This discipleship will be marked by transformational activities such as bible reading and prayer.

Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 2:2-7.

(iv) Care

We practically love the vulnerable and the hurting among us, as well as generously showing God’s compassion for the needy and the lost.

James 1:27; Acts 4:32-35.

We intend to embody these values in all our ministries and relationships. We ensure this by asking a member of staff to lead a Ministry System that develops and advances outreach, belonging, maturity and care in every area of our church—whether congregations, Home Groups, Children’s and Youth ministries, etc.

3. A Ministry Plan

(a) Purpose and Scope

This Plan identifies the priority initiatives that will best enable us to advance our Vision and Values over the next 5 years. In this way, our Ministry Systems and Programs will be congruent, coherent, and coordinated.

(b) Review and Reporting

We will hold ourselves accountable to this plan and report progress at our Annual General Meeting. The plan will then be reviewed and updated annually, stretching forward another year. It is a rolling 5 year plan.

4. Priorities 2024-2028

These are the initiatives, activities, programs or outcomes that we believe will have **the greatest impact in reaching our Vision** in the years 2024-2028.

a) Prayer

Prayer is our first priority because God is the one at work in and through us as his people. As we depend on him in prayer, he will build his church and change lives. Prayer is to be central, across all our Ministry Systems, throughout all our Ministry Areas and programs.

From time to time, we want focus our prayers specifically on the growth of our church, on the community in which we live, and on our mission partners across the world. We will do this in Combined Parish Prayer Meetings once a term, as well as at an off-site Prayer Retreat. These will be in addition to our regular weekly online prayer meeting.

b) Belonging to a living community

We want to be an open Christian ‘village’ that shares our lives together. This is the overarching theme that brings together all of the other initiatives that follow. We are convinced that an experience of meeting Jesus Christ, amidst the living community of his people, is transformational and life changing. That’s why Jesus said that his people would be known by their love (John 13:34-35).

Our being a Jesus-centric and loving ‘village’ will connect with the families of Pymble who yearn for an inclusive community, where everyone is known and valued—including people from every culture and sub-culture, every kind of family units. **The key to being this ‘village’ is the quality of our relationships, energised by Christian love.** We will be personally known, nurtured, and connected across generations in a ‘goldilocks’ sized church (not too big, not too small).

In this way, St Swithun’s will present itself as a place of cross-cultural opportunity and community. It is to be *the* place to connect with new friends, to belong to a ‘village’ of families, to learn, and to find a new sense of ‘home’ in Pymble.

Prioritising our sense of belonging shifts priority away from the timing, quality and content of our Sunday Services. Instead of appealing to a ‘market’ of potential church-goers we will build relationships of Christian love and invite others join this same network. We will be happy for many to belong before they believe.

Over the next five years our emphasis will move from ‘attracting’ to ‘inviting’ new members into relationship; with us and with Jesus Christ.

i) Program

While it is impossible to program for a certain ‘quality of relationship’ the priority, nature and culture of our gatherings will support our living Christian community. The nature of our outreach will also change.

The following initiatives are to be promoted, trialled, evaluated as regular ministry programs:

1. **Hospitality.** Informal meals and hospitality outside of Sunday Services are to be modelled and encouraged. These are settings in which the qualities of Christian love become evident in our relationships.
2. **Shared hobbies,** holidays and activities are to be nurtured and promoted. This might include trips away together of all kinds: camping, skiing, golfing, foodies' weekends, cultural outings, bus trips and educational expeditions.
3. **Mystery Meals.** This initiative aims to build our sense of 'belonging'. Members of St Swithun's will be invited to share a meal together, in groups of 8 or 9. These will all take place over the course of a weekend. Those who volunteer to host such a meal do not necessarily need to provide any food. Instead, guests are invited to bring a part of the meal. Guest lists are assigned by the Organiser with the intention of building cross congregational and inter-generational relationships as well as connecting new members in new relationships. 'The Mystery' is the identity of other guests to the meal!
4. **Combined Morning Teas.** This opportunity for socialisation and friendship across services will continue as part of our Sunday timetable, between the end of the Traditional Service and the beginning of the morning Contemporary Service. It is important that our 'Combined Morning Teas' be hosted by members of both services (rubbing elbows in the kitchen is part of the process). This was tried twice, with good success, in 2023. We plan to do this once per term in 2024 and beyond.
5. **Missional Home Groups.** Our existing Home Groups, and newly created groups, will be helped to engage in warmly relational outreach activities. Although Home Groups are often seen as the 'end of the welcoming process', they will also be helped to be the beginning of the process. Home Groups can become another doorway into the life of St Swithun's for friends who may not be ready to attend a formal meeting. This is part of what it means to be an 'inviting' church instead of an 'attractional' church.
6. **Equipping Everyday Missionaries.** The journey towards life-changing Christian faith usually begins with a friendship. Someone engages with someone in an everyday relationship—and in that context, God does his work of transformation. Sometimes this is slow. Sometimes it is fast. The key features of this process are prayer, intention, and a readiness to share important life stories. St Swithun's will supply training in this process of being an 'everyday missionary' at the shopping centre, at the golf club, the school gate, the bridge group, or wherever we find ourselves in everyday life.
7. **Everyday English Classes.** This existing program of language learning already embodies many of the qualities envisaged by our aim to build a sense of belonging to a living community. Emerging challenges must now be addressed in order to facilitate continued growth. Possible developments include:
 - i. **More teaching spaces,** which would require reviewing other ministry activities taking place on Thursday mornings.

- ii. **More teachers**, are required with the following qualities: a love for people and community, an interest in new cultures, good communication skills, (some) teaching experience, trustworthiness, reliability, and a willingness to learn. Training is provided through the Anglicare Training Program.
- iii. **Strengthening links**, from the Everyday English course to our evangelistic programs such as Alpha (Mandarin) and our Friday Mandarin Bible Study. A new Thursday Mandarin Bible Reading group, following on after Everyday English, is planned for 2024. This will require us to identify and equip 'link volunteers' and continue the development of leadership for our Mandarin speakers.
- iv. **Translation** at church services. A Mandarin translation team, headed by Betty Chan, has been operating at our 10:30am congregation. The number of Mandarin speakers taking up this service tends to be seasonal, with many returning to China during our summer season. When school returns, we anticipate the demand for our live translation (the whole service, including songs, liturgy and sermon) will resume. A written translation is currently available each week.
The addition of translation services to our regular Sunday congregations is premised on our previous decision to pursue non-language-specific congregations.

Many of these programs and activities are envisaged as 'belonging' rather than 'evangelising' activities. This is intentional as our focus in 2024. We want to be engaging our 'fringe' members who participate in church life only occasionally. We pray that they will discover in us a living Christian community worth belonging to. We pray that they will very soon feel that they also truly belong to the body of Christ at St Swithun's.

This experience of belonging is intended to open up gospel conversations, which eventually form a pathway leading into a focussed evangelistic program such as Christianity Explored, Alpha, etc. This highly relational approach to outreach seems best suited to our context, and will be our focus in 2025. We want to be intentional in our relationships, while prayerfully depending upon the Holy Spirit to open up many to the gospel.

The other distinctive of this 'belonging to a living community' approach is that it is inter-generational. Everyone is welcomed into relationships which span age groups. Surrounded by some very large and dynamic churches in our area, we want to distinctively be a 'village' of families where people of all ages interact together in our following Jesus Christ.

c) Growing Kids into Leaders

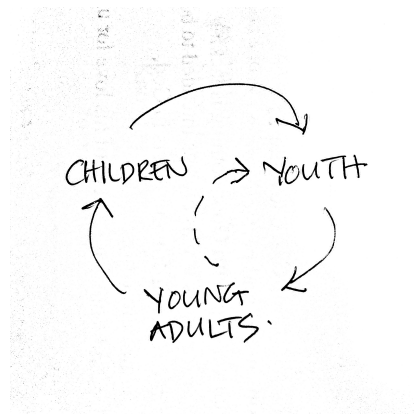
We want to ensure that every young person at Swiz is personally nurtured as a disciple of Jesus Christ and integrated into the life of the whole church family. Rather than just copying the programs of Children's and Youth ministries at other churches, our 'goldilocks' size affords us the opportunity to invest in each individual. This happens along a sequential pathway from the youngest ages, all the way through until they are ready to lead and serve others in Christian growth as young adults. Each step requires focused discipleship tailored to each age, as well as wider church family and socializing experiences. We want to become one big church family under Jesus Christ.

Fun, engagement, friendships and relationships with more mature Christians are central to this pathway of intentional discipleship. Ultimately, we pray that every child will be nurtured to become the kind of mature Christian that wants to love others along that same pathway to maturity. This overall aim could be described as 'growing kids into leaders'. The use of the word 'leadership' in this sense refers to an influence and impact in the lives of others. It does not necessarily mean 'out front' or 'speaking' or taking responsibility for a group. Instead, we want each young person to develop a Christian concern for others such that they live with an intentional desire to see others 'moving to the right'¹.

The importance of partnering with each of our church families, as parents disciple their own children, is central to our thinking. St Swithun's is only one part—a unique part-- of a much larger nurturing network that centers on the home.

'Growing kids into leaders' brings together Children, Youth and Young Adults under one ministry area, under the leadership of a specialist staff member-- our Children's and Youth Minister. We recognise that young adults are critical to leading and modelling this highly relational discipleship ministry; and that these same young adults will likely leave the Pymble area once they 'leave home'. This reality requires a 'recruit and train' culture which engages each young person and empowers them to serve as each one matures.

¹ The expression 'moving to the right' borrows from the language of *The Vine Project*, by Col Marshall and Tony Payne. It embraces the lifelong process of growing in Christian maturity, from conversion to glory.



As with any ‘virtuous circle’ we need to support the areas which start the wheel turning. In the short term, we will look to encourage ministry minded young adults to partner with our church to initiate this program. The focus, however, must be a longer-term investment in building incrementally from the bottom up; from children, into youth, into young adults.

i) 2024 Program

Our program has three strands, each of which provide a structured pathway of Christian experience, growth and fellowship to complement each family’s home life of discipleship.

a) Church

Belonging to a regular church service with one’s own family is integral to Christian growth. Praise, prayer, biblical teaching and lively fellowship stretches and encourages every Christian. With this in mind, our Sunday 10:30am Church service is set up to serve families with dependent children and youth, with concurrent age-specific programs for creche through to Junior High School.

In the development of young adult Christians, there comes a time when they feel the need to ‘branch out’ from their families. Transitioning to a church experience shared with other young adults and in a style particularly suited to their tastes is an important step in ‘owning their own faith’. With this in mind, our 6pm NightChurch congregation will be leaning more in this direction throughout 2024. While it will still retain a strongly inter-generational flavour, the character, tone and ‘vibe’ of the service will embrace those in Senior High School and above. The Senior High youth leaders will also be members of this congregation.

b) Sunday Ministries

We encourage families to commit to being part of the St Swithun’s (big) family every Sunday. Sunday Ministries aim to complement Church attendance with an age-specific curriculum of Christian teaching and life-integration. In 2024, concurrent with the 10:30am Service, we will continue to offer Creche, SwizKids, and Junior Youth (years 7-10) programs. To accommodate the continued growth of SwizKids, this year we aim to offer three sub-groups within SwizKids: (i) years K-1, (ii) years 2-3, and (iii) years 4-6.

Although students in Years 11-12 have many pressures and commitments, we will offer opportunities for relaxed and relational fellowship in the hour prior to NightChurch on Sunday afternoons. This will provide a great break-out from study and ease the pathway into full participation in the evening service.

Please pray that God would raise up the leaders and carers that we need in order to facilitate this expansion in our program.

c) **Mid-week Ministries**

Mid-week Ministries aim to nurture friendships and to build a deeper and more relational discipleship than is possible in a shorter Sunday meeting. Additionally, mid-week ministries provide an excellent pathway into St Swithun's for children and youth whose families do not yet belong to our church.

A significant development in this part of our 2024 program will be the creation of some new ministries which will allow greater focus on smaller groups of children and youth. These tailored ministries also recognize that, across the year groups, social needs and school commitments vary greatly.

We plan to offer the following mid-week ministries in 2024:

1. **Swiz SPARK** (years 4-7)
Fridays during term time, 5:30pm – 7:00pm.
Swiz SPARK comes together to play high energy games, to build friendships and introduce kids to the Christian faith by digging into Jesus' story. Our SRE teachers will especially look to invite children at Pymble Public School to join in this new program. We hope that our existing Swiz families will also feel comfortable to invite new friends along.
This ministry is strategically important, linking our Pymble Public School SRE program to a focused outreach activity at St Swithun's. It is also sustainable for the leadership we have available to us on Friday afternoons.
2. **Youth Fellowship / House Hives** (years 8-10)
At the beginning of 2024 we experienced a significant loss of leadership available to us on Friday evenings. Additionally, we recognized that all the hard work, over many years, in our Friday Night Youth Fellowship had not resulted in youth leaders staying at Swiz. Consequently, we have been spread very thin trying to maintain a Friday Youth program catering for a very broad age and maturity range. In the short term, we have decided to pause this program until we have all the resources required for an effective and sustainable Friday night program for High Schoolers.
During this 'pause' we want to work with families and parents to provide social and activity-based 'events' outside our focused Sunday morning Junior Youth program. These aim to build relationships and engage in informal discipleship.

3. **Senior Youth Home Group** (years 11-12)

Weekly on Wednesday evenings with Emilia and Tim Oslington
This is a continuation of a very successful weeknight Home Group, allowing the more mature youth to explore their faith in greater depth. It also provides a rich context for discussing the many challenges faced by upper high school students. For those with opportunity to do so, leaders will offer one-to-one bible reading and discipleship for members of this group.

4. **T48 Gym**

Friday afternoons for High Schoolers, Sunday afternoons for 18+.
For those wanting to blow off some steam, get fit, and enjoy meeting Christians from other churches, T48 Gym will continue to run on Friday and Sunday afternoons.

ii) Beyond 2024

The 2024 developments in our children's and youth ministry programs will need to be assessed before future developments are confirmed. We have broadly formed ministry groups around existing friendship groups. As new members join each group, we may tweak the age-groupings addressed by each ministry.

iii) Facilities

During 2024-2028 the PACE Centre will be converted into the focal point of our children's and youth ministries. This might include the remodelling of the yard space facing Bungalow Ave, including the backyard of 4 Merrivale, to include children's play equipment, a basketball hoop, outdoor seating, and a BBQ area. The PACE Undercroft is currently being used successfully for the T48 Gym and Men's BBQs. The Junior High Youth are also using this space for games on Sunday mornings, before meeting upstairs in the PACE Centre for their study and discussion time.

The possibility of enclosing this Undercroft space to provide additional 'year round' ministry space (subject to Planning Consent) remains. In the years ahead, the Ridley Smith room would move from being a 'blank canvas' to being a child-friendly ministry space. Other mid-week uses (eg Easy English) would not be precluded, but the space would prioritise children and youth.

Sunday morning logistics would need to be carefully resolved to make this work. Some of the implications would be:

- a) Morning Tea for the Traditional Service would be moved to the Hall and Lounge Areas.
- b) Morning Tea / Lunch after the Contemporary Service would be served in the PACE Centre, where parents would also 'collect' their children. The Contemporary Service, rather than the Traditional Service, would need to manage the crossing Merrivale Road. Child drop-off by parents at the PACE still requires resolution (Class teachers cannot be responsible for children crossing the road).

- c) The Creche remains unchanged on Sunday mornings due to proximity to the parents in the Contemporary Service.

The church office and staff area would remain unchanged, although staff offices may be used as break out spaces or conference rooms on weekends.

Such a significant repurposing of our existing facilities would take some time to fully implement and involve considerable cost, but should be completed during the 5 year span of this Ministry Plan.

d) Care for all of life

St Swithun's will extend compassionate pastoral care to all members of St Swithun's, whether at home or in care, whether able to attend services or not. We will do this by developing teams which connect people together in a network of practical compassion.

Our pastoral care will also look beyond the current members of St Swithun's to local people in challenging circumstances, who may be ready to connect with God through their difficulties. We will especially reach out to families in transition (relocating countries and/or changing jobs, families in crisis), offering practical Christian love.

i) Program

Much of our day-to-day Pastoral Care takes place in the context of our Home Groups—which is appropriate where everyone has a role to play. Spiritual nurture and practical care, proactively supplied by trusted friends, is able to meet the challenges of many life situations. But sometimes greater levels of expertise, experience or professional care are required. The St Swithun's Pastoral Care Team will continue development under the leadership of Christina Hollister.

The Pastoral Care Team has trained and commissioned representatives in each congregation who are alert to those with particular needs. Coordination of this ministry throughout our church network depends upon trusted and clear pathways of communication between the Team, Home Group Leaders and members of Staff.

Further equipping for this vital ministry will be offered through accredited courses in Pastoral Care, offered onsite at St Swithun's. Men and Women, across all age groups, are encouraged to participate.

This will enable appropriately trained volunteers to engage in pastoral visitation to both hospitals and homes.

Further initiatives will include:

- Expanding the reach of our Meals and Care program.
- Re-introducing our 'Baby Care' packs for new born members of St Swithun's.
- Introducing a digital 'check-in' system at all regular church services so that sensitive follow up for both our Pastoral Care team and our Belonging team is supported by accurate attendance data.

e) Introducing Jesus to our Community

We want to connect with our community, and connect them to Jesus. To the outsider, Churches can sometimes seem like a medieval castle, with high walls and a moat. And with the draw-bridge closed. At St Swithun's we want to reverse this perception such that we are deeply embedded in the life of Pymble and its surrounding networks. We want Swiz to be well known as being 'good' for the community, providing a hub for care and open activities available to all.

This openness provides the opportunity for many to experience first-hand belonging to living community—a Christian community characterised by love. It is this context that allows us to authentically introduce others to Jesus. We will therefore transition from trying to *attract* 'those people out there' to *inviting* those already known to us here: we want to become an inviting church.

Our Outreach Ministry System will assist in this journey into relational outreach. This will begin with training us in building new relationships and sharing our faith. We will also look to expand our existing relationships among retirees and create new relationships with those moving into our area.

Tools such as the Hope Explored and Christianity Explored courses will continue to be offered, along with new programs and initiatives.

f) Nourished by God's word

We will enrich and deepen our engagement with God, through his word, in community. We want this to be a transformational experience, impacting our 'heads', 'hearts', and 'hands'. This will occur through our Home Group bible studies, our sermons, teaching and personal devotional bible reading. In this way, we yearn to know God in ways which are life-changing, rather than merely academic-- while maintaining intellectual credibility in the public square.

We will be taught by gifted and trained men and women; who also provide rich resources for personal reflection and edification, so that we become mature Christians able to also teach one another.

i) Program

In addition to current biblical preaching, teaching and discovery programs in our weekly services and Home Groups, the following are to be implemented through 2024-2028.

Growing Disciples:

Growing Disciples is an online personal discipleship program, providing bible reading notes and video-format daily devotionals. Throughout the year, participants cover the entire bible, from Genesis to Revelation, at whatever depth they choose—from 'just the highlights' through to reading every verse of the bible in a year. The program launched

at St Swithun's Pymble in 2023, having previously been developed at St Andrew's Roseville. At the end of 2023 the program had approximately 200 daily subscribers.

Following a program review and interaction with a group of 20 users (the Growing Disciples Soiree), 2024 will see the expansion of the course into three strands.

- (i) **The Bible Narrative Stream** continues the existing program, this will provide a guided interaction with the narrative of the bible, from Genesis to Revelation, in a year. Daily video devotionals will be supplemented with bible readings, prayer projects and growth exercises.
- (ii) **The Studies Stream** will provide self-guided interactions with the full library of Growing Disciples resources. Additional 'deep-dive' studies in some books of the bible or biblical themes will be provided from time to time.
- (iii) **The Starters Stream** is for those new to reading the bible on their own and provides tools and guidance for reading through the gospel of John. This module will be translated into other languages.

Home Group Leaders Training:

Our Home Groups are the most highly valued ministry at St Swithun's across all age groups². The recruitment, training, equipping and encouraging of our Home Group Leaders is foundational to the enduring success of these groups. Four training seminars per year will be offered for existing Home Group Leaders. Further, we will develop a leadership pipeline for future leaders, provided tutelage under the care of existing leaders and with specialist training.

For groups which prefer a shared model of leadership, where members take turns in leading the study each week, opportunities for training 'within the group' will be offered. This training will have the effect of growing a leadership pipeline organically.

PTC course:

We will investigate offering one unit of the Moore College Preliminary Theological Certificate each year. This may be offer in conjunction with other local Anglican Churches.

Lecture series:

We desire to enrich our knowledge of God's word, and our engagement with our wider community, through an annual lecture from a prominent author or speaker on a topic of current debate or interest.

g) A quality Traditional Anglican Service

We will build upon our current strength to offer an excellent and inspiring traditional style of Anglican service, widely known throughout the northern region of Sydney. Unique in our area, St Swithun's will further develop our traditional services with excellent choir and organ music, Bible-based and Christ-centred teaching, authentic use of Anglican liturgy and a lively Christian community. Growing this reputation further will appeal to those who prefer a traditional style of worship, which is hard to find within a 20 minute drive. We aspire to offer Sunday services that are memorable and draw newcomers back again and again.

The creativity and energy needed to achieve such outstanding services week after week will require prayerful guidance from regular planning meetings, which may lead to more variety within the framework of the Morning Prayer and Holy Communion services. A 9am Service Planning team will meet quarterly to creatively develop our Service Leading, Bible Reading, Payer, and Liturgical plans. This will ensure each service is fresh and not set in a formulaic rut.

Demographically our Traditional Service should appeal to those moving into the "over 55s developments" which are becoming increasingly common in our area. Reaching out and connecting with new members moving into our area will assist in renewal for our existing membership and volunteer base.

² NCD Survey, 2019. NCLS 2021 rated it second, behind 'Traditional Music and Worship Style'.

The COVID pandemic required us to begin recording and broadcasting our services – something never envisaged in the church’s previous strategic plans. Presently we connect with about 160 screens each week, and so we conclude that church membership via technology is here to stay. We plan to continue offering our services online. Further development opportunities include:

- Building pastoral relationships with our ‘regulars’ and supporting them as we do others who come on site.
- Investigate a pastorally focussed online ‘postlude’ to the service to build a greater sense of connection. This might take the form of a pre-recorded ‘take out’ from the Senior Minister or the Preacher for the day.
- Technical development of skills and equipment so that we offer a similarly “outstanding and inspiring” standard of service online.
- Upgrading our on-site technical infrastructure to include 2 new pan-tilt cameras and better lighting in the sanctuary area to complement the new lights which profile the lectern area.

h) Excellent music, across multiple styles and formats

We will enhance and grow our reputation for musical excellence, creativity and joyful praise; across multiple styles -- including choral music (both traditional and contemporary), contemporary praise and worship music, and whatever other styles of music transcend cultural boundaries.

Rather than blending musical styles together, the unique characteristics of each will be respected and celebrated. However occasional “combined” services may feature music from different genres.

We envisage:

- A continued choral programme of Evensong, Cultural Foundation events and choir tours. Our Choir’s 2023 Salisbury Tour was a great success. Future tours may be more accessible if destinations required shorter travel distances. Opportunities within Australasia will be investigated in the 2024-2028 period.
- Establishing mutually beneficial relationships with the choirs of local independent schools. Although this may bring several challenges with it, exploring the possibilities with the schools may bring about creative solutions.
- Continuing our organ scholar programme
- Improving our advertising and invitational approach for seasonal music events such as Lessons and Carols, Cultural Foundation concerts, Evensong etc
- Contemporary Music Praise Nights, up to 3 per year.
- Profiling contemporary music at our Bannockburn Oval Carols and other public events
- Developing our contemporary bands through midweek rehearsals and the inclusion of ‘Junior Members’.

5. Sunday Program

i) Rationale

The current St Swithun's Church building feels full at about 140 people, with parking becoming problematic (and a limiting factor) when a congregation reaches about 120.

The congregations in our church building start to feel a 'comfortable momentum' over about 60. Our optimal weekly congregation size is therefore 60-120. After that, we need to plant new congregations.

Our 9am Traditional service is healthy, has rebounded post-Covid, and seems to have established a baseline attendance of about 105. Although some of this growth is the result of transfer from other churches, this is a service which should continue to grow and so we propose the relaunch of an 8am Holy Communion to 'create space' at 9am. This would take place only when 9:00am reaches an 8 week rolling average of 120.

The current 10:30am Contemporary Service has now entered a steady growth phase, with a refreshed approach to children's and junior youth ministry. This has been greatly supported by excellent Morning Teas with ongoing 'fun' for kids, meaning that several are lingering on at church until 1pm on many Sundays. Radical change for this service could therefore cruel the 'green shoots' of growth now visible.

The 10:30am starting time for this service is often not met, due to a compressed transition and set up after the 9am congregation. During 2023 a delayed starting time of 10:45am was trialled, in conjunction with a 'Combined Morning Tea'. While the 'Combined Morning Tea' was very successful, the 10:45am start time was not. The 10:30am start time for the Contemporary Service will therefore be retained, with more work being done on a timely transition between the services.

ii) Proposed Program

8am Holy Communion. A 45 minute prayer book service of Holy Communion.
(commencing when 9am Traditional has an average 120 attending)

9am Traditional Service. Following our existing pattern of Holy Communion and Morning Prayer.

10:30 am Contemporary Service, with Kids and Youth up to year 10, followed by a 'sit-down' lunch (one per term)

6pm Night Church, attractive to Youth above year 10, their parents, and Empty Nesters. This service is intended to provide future expansion capacity for older families of the morning contemporary service. This service would be followed by a 'sit-down' evening meal once a month.

The timing of the implementation of any changes to our existing program of services is subject to further consultation and broad agreement.

6. Appendix A: Report on our 2023 Ministry Goals

At our 2023 Annual General Meeting our staff presented their detailed implementation plans for the broader ambitions of the 2023-2027 Ministry Plan. The following annexure reports on the outcomes of our 2023 Ministry Goals provides our staff's self-assessment in five categories—Goals which were:

- (i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented,
- (ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again,
- (iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps,
- (iv) deemed not practical now but may be re-visited in the future, or
- (v) not yet acted upon.

St Swithun's Ministry Plan 2023 - Ministry Goals

	Specific Goal	Outcome
<i>what exactly will you achieve?</i>		
Outreach Ministry System		
Christianity Explored / Hope Explored	Give people regular opportunities to explore the Christian faith through a well-structured course.	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again,
The Word 121	Raise up joyful bible sharers and loving page turners.	(v) has not been acted upon
Blokes' beginners group	Disciple men who are very new to Christian faith.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented,
Sharing your testimony	Help people share their testimony with confidence.	(v) has not been acted upon
Swiz street library	Give our community free access to good Christian books.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented,
Outreach ministries	Support/encourage various outreach ministry leaders.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented,
Fernbank Friendship Hour	Share the gospel with elderly residents.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
Outreach Team	Liaise with Parish Council.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
Belonging Ministry System		
Belonging Ministry Team	Recruit an expanded Belonging Team that encompasses members from all services	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
Events	Create and populate a calendar for Belonging Team events for the second half of 2023	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
Elvanto Check-In to Services	Complete implementation of welcoming software and follow up system	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps
Maturity Ministry System		

St Swithun's Ministry Plan 2023 - Ministry Goals

	Specific Goal	Outcome
Growing Disciples Course	An increase in the number of people having a meaningful and transformative devotional life, through bible reading and prayer; using the Growing Disciples course.	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
Home Groups	Develop our Home Groups as places of intentional disciple-making by: 1. clearly and persuasively articulating the vision of Home Groups	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
	2. training and encouraging existing leaders;	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
	3. providing effective bible study materials to all groups;	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
	4. developing a leadership pipeline for recruiting, nurturing and training new leaders;	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps
Pastoral Care Ministry System		
Overall	To meet the pastoral needs of all parishioners over the three services and those people who attend our activities and groups at church but do not attend services. Also to care for those people who are shut in or resident in local nursing homes.	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again

	Specific Goal	Outcome
Pastoral Partners Program	Create a structured and ordered system to prevent anyone in need of any kind, "falling through the cracks." The pyramid system provides for a large number of people, at the base, who will be able to identify pastoral concerns and refer them to two of their number ("Pastoral Care Coordinators") specifically charged with reporting to the "System Leader" at the top of the pyramid. Reporting will be done on a monthly basis.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
Pastoral Partners Program	Gather a large group of people, representing the three services, and to equip those people, by way of a training session, with basic skills in pastoral care to enable them, and give them the confidence to love and care for their fellows in their respective services.	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
	Commission all Pastoral Care Team members and Coordinators at the Sunday services immediately following the training sessions.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
	Good communication for all Pastoral Team members	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
Youth Ministry		
Leadership	Develop a Recruitment Training Pathway by the EOY to assist us in growing the youth ministry. 1. JNR leaders 2. Youth leaders 3. Friday night service roles	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps

	Specific Goal	Outcome
Families	<p>Developing a Culture of Partnering with Families.</p> <p>1. Parent Fellowship nights</p> <p>2. Parent Partnership (homegroups, Friday night/sunday)</p> <p>discipleship over the next 5 years to assist us in helping parents to know how to disciple their young people & grow relationships with family units.</p>	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
Build an 'outstanding' Traditional Anglican Service (9am)		
	Harness creativity and boost energy by Creating a 9am Service Planning Team	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps
	Fix operational issues e.g. sound, projection etc	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
	Promote 9am and 8am services to north shore (within 20 minutes drive)	(vi) deemed not practical now but may be re-visited in the future
	Hymn selection: Minimise singing of "irrelevant" hymns	(ii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps
	Service leader selection and training	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps
	Sing or chant a psalm in Morning Prayer occasionally	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps
	Consider different ways to read the Bible lessons	(v) has not been acted upon
	Consider different ways to pray the intercessions	(v) has not been acted upon
	Encourage congregants (and those watching the live stream) to use the downtime during the administration of communion to best advantage	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
	Revisit livestreaming	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented

St Swithun's Ministry Plan 2023 - Ministry Goals

	Specific Goal	Outcome
	Overall assessment	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
Grow 'Excellent' Music across multiple styles and formats		
	Ensure organ and choral music is of excellent standard and choices are appropriate for the season / service	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
	Contemporary bands development	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
	Continue organ scholar program	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
	Contemporary music Praise Nights	(v) has not been acted upon
	Consider establishing a children's choir	(v) has not been acted upon
	Establish mutually beneficial relationships with choirs of local independent schools	(ii) attempted, evaluated and will be tried again
10:30am Church		
Tech and Logistics	Develop smoothly operating systems that enable the congregation to focus on worship, God's word, prayer, and loving one another.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
Training	The leadership of all aspects of the service promotes engagement with God, in word, prayer and song; in a friendly and welcoming setting.	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps
6:00pm Church		
Tech and Logistics	Develop smoothly operating systems that enable the congregation to focus on worship, God's word, prayer, and loving one another.	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
Culture	Develop a cohesive plan to engage the Senior Youth of our parish at this congregation such that they will feel 'they belong' at this service.	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps

St Swithun's Ministry Plan 2023 - Ministry Goals

	Specific Goal	Outcome
Training	The leadership of all aspects of the service promotes engagement with God, in word, prayer and song; in a friendly and welcoming setting.	(iii) partially implemented, will be evaluated before next steps
Administration Team		
	Accuracy of Elvanto membership records	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
	Improve data integrity of Elvanto records	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented
	Approval process for staff expenditure on the office debit card	(i) fulfilled and will continue to be implemented