



CHURCH ASSESSMENT

Prepared for

Holgate Methodist Church

Draft 1: 13 February 2017

by

Victoria Etherington

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Construction on Holgate Methodist Church was started in 1909 and the chapel was opened in September 1910. Although membership has fluctuated over the years, the congregation at Holgate Methodist church has steadfastly offered witness and mission to the local community for more than one hundred years.

Holgate Methodist Church has a lot to be proud of; as well as supporting a number of charities it maintains an outward focus, serving as a centre for many community based activities. It houses a preschool and is used extensively by uniformed organisations. More recently it has become home to a monthly Spanish congregation.

There are worship services at 10.30am every Sunday, during which a crèche and young church is offered to any family or young person who wishes to participate. Approximately once a month there is an All Age Worship and the uniform organisations are invited to join the regular congregation. There is a thriving Messy Church which runs once a month on a Saturday evening. From this congregation a family away weekend has developed.

The Reverend Andy Lindley became minister at Holgate Methodist Church in 2012. He is well liked and valued by the congregation, benefits from the support of a strong lay team and there are plans to recruit a lay pastoral worker in the next month.

During interviews and in casual conversations during the preparation of this report church members used the following words and phrases to describe their church, “welcoming,” “warm,” “family orientated,” “inclusive,” “traditional,” and “friendly.”

Holgate Methodist church has a history of strong youth and children’s work. However, over the last few years this has declined and there is a struggle to maintain a critical mass in the Sunday morning and youth group provision. As several people remarked “we attract the young families to Sunday morning, but they don’t seem to stick.” The rolls show a deceptive picture of health, but attendance is low.

Finances at the church are tight; but this does not seem to be causing much anxiety amongst the congregation. Most of those interviewed were confident the church could raise the money for the right projects.

The church has a strong leadership team and in the Methodist tradition is led through committees and the church council. There is an awareness and anxiety amongst the congregation that the same small group of people are currently staffing these committees and that this is not a sustainable position. This report was prepared in response to this situation to consider how the church might take a long range view of its current ministries and volunteer and leadership needs. During the preparation of this report over 30 people contributed their thoughts and perspective regarding the current position of the church through formal interview or email. Many more contributed via casual conversation. A number of themes emerged which are reflected in the writing.

HOLGATE IN CONTEXT

One way to think about any church ministry is perception; for most people perception is reality. There are three critical perceptions of ministry; numbers, impact and energy. In churches where these are aligned there tends to be latitude for creativity, risk taking, and experimentation with innovative ideas. For those where there is misalignment there is often distrust, second-guessing and discouragement. These perceptions are both individual and corporate; perception is infectious and quickly becomes reality for a church.

NUMBERS: A significant percentage of members and attendees need to be visibly participating in some aspect of the church's life. It is important for this target number to be clearly agreed on by the minister and the church council. Ironically it is when target numbers are not established, that the church's overall ministry is typically *more likely* to be judged by numbers than if the target numbers are clearly established.

The numbers perception is misaligned at Holgate Methodist church. There is a perception that runs throughout the church that it is run by a small group of people and that participation overall is limited, with the notable exception of Messy Church and possible exception of the Spanish congregation.

IMPACT: In order to build up the trust to experiment with changes, the leadership of the church needs to provide the congregation with a few visible, effective services and programs that give congregants and families something to talk about.

The perception of impact is aligned at Holgate Methodist Church. All Age Worship and Messy Church are visible and successful. These are welcomed by the majority of the congregation and are a source of energy and enthusiasm.

ENERGY: A joyful enthusiasm and positive attitude in the church staff and volunteers are essential to building trust between the leadership of the church and the congregation.

The perception of energy is being eroded. Church members and attenders are ready to do something new, but anxiety about the leadership shows up in almost every church meeting or gathering.

Aligning these perceptions will not ensure an effective or faithful ministry, however, they are often the most immediate evaluation tools used by leaders, volunteers, staff and the congregation at large.

THINKING ABOUT CHANGE

Many books on systems and change use the language of building or renovation. This is quite a helpful analogy as there many similarities: things need to be done in a certain order, it is messy, it seems never ending and there is a point at which it seems easier to give up than to keep pushing on!

The foundation of a structure is what connects it to the ground and serves to spread the load. Foundations offer stability; no matter how good our ministry it will collapse without good strong foundations. Pimlott¹ describes the foundation as the why – why do you do what you do, what is the motivation for your work or ministry? Whereas DeVries² regards it as the structures and systems which support the ministry. Both are right; our motivation and how we go about ministry will shape the results.



So, building strong foundations will ensure the future effectiveness of a church or ministry. However, for many of us engaged in ministry, we are so busy doing it that we struggle to find the time to work on the ministry. The challenge is how do we maintain the current ministry in a way that builds the enthusiasm of the volunteers, staff, leaders, congregation and visitors whilst building the necessary foundations for it?

ASSETS

Strengths to protect in the current ministry

Open Doors and Willing Hearts: Holgate Methodist Church is very attractive place to be. Church members are very welcoming, and there is a willingness to connect meaningfully with all kinds of different people. Members used words like “open,” “welcoming,” “accepting,” “community,” and “family” to describe Holgate. This feeling is something that church members want to protect; and a number of them said they are trying to work out how to be invitational without being pushy. There is however, an anxiety that many young families come to Holgate Methodist Church but don’t stay. A number of people commented that despite the welcoming atmosphere it can be difficult to join the community.

Worship: For many people the quality and diversity of worship was a factor in their membership and attendance at Holgate Methodist Church. The Methodist system of itinerant preachers is both a strength and a weakness in this; the range of preachers offers diversity, yet lack of connection with the church can lead to poor or inappropriate worship. This is especially noticeable in the All Age Worship with the uniform organisations. There was also a concern regarding the lack of professionalism exhibited by a number of visiting preachers. This is most often exhibited as lack of preparation and poor use of the available technology. The challenge is maintaining both diversity and quality.

¹ Nigel Pimlott, *A Model For Christian Youth Work*. (Cambridge: Grove Books Ltd. 2015)

² Mark DeVries, *Sustainable Youth Ministry* (Illinois: IVP Books 2008)

Music: This held an importance for almost all those who participated in the interviews. The only dissenting voice came from the musician who expressed a desire for greater diversity!!

Family Provision: There is a real love for young families at Holgate Methodist Church. Children and all the noise and disruption they bring are embraced and welcomed by the congregation. This love has been manifested in the development of a thriving Messy Church and Family Away Weekend. The intentionality of the congregation in creating these intergenerational ministries is both refreshing and inspiring. This has involved a sacrificial giving of the time, energy and financial resources of members of the church. As the children involved in these ministries grow older the congregation faces the difficult question of finding suitable provision for them.

Strong connections with the uniform organisations: The building is used extensively by the Scouts and Guides. These organisations are largely led by members of the congregation. Despite this, other than the All Age Worship services, there is little contact between the church and the children and youth who attend these groups. Many members of the congregation expressed a desire for more interaction, but there remains a question as to the form such a contact might take.

Openness to new ideas: The family ministries and Spanish congregation bear witness to a church that is willing to support new ideas. This offers Holgate Methodist Church the freedom to consider creative change and means that it is likely to survive into the future.

Dissatisfaction: This may seem a strange thing to have listed under the assets section. However, dissatisfaction is an extremely important component in considering changes in church. This type of dissatisfaction can best be described as an eagerness for change. Church members expressed a consistent vision that they hoped and dreamed for more than what was currently offered to their youth, children and families. They want to offer a safe place for youth and children to grow in their faith, connect with all adults in the church, and form close meaningful relationships with the other teens in the local and wider church.

Outward looking: Holgate Methodist Church has a history of looking into the community and endeavouring to meet the needs of those living around the church. This has created a church which seeks to serve the community in which it exists. However, a number of people expressed the concern that the church is now perceived as little more than a community centre for many of those who live in the Holgate area. There are many good things going on at Holgate, that the community may not even be aware of. Marketing is a difficult word for churches to embrace or even understand. A better word might be storytelling. Some storytelling is needed if visitors are to be drawn into the ministries that happen at Holgate. The church needs to establish an identity and unashamedly share it with the surrounding community. "Who are we?" and, "What makes our church unique?" These are important questions to wrestle with.

CHALLENGES

Obstacles to moving the church strategically forward

Volunteer Recruiting and Equipping: There is a shortage of volunteers in all areas of ministry throughout the church. Many of the same church members seem to be involved in everything. "It's the same core group of people volunteering" one person shared. Over and over, the need for new volunteers was mentioned. Most interviewees asked, "How can we get them to step up?" This is exacerbated by the number of ministries Holgate church maintains. A system must be established to recruit and equip volunteers in order to provide a sustainable structure for every area of ministry. This needs to be a priority for the church.

Strong Lay Leadership: Holgate is blessed by a number of very competent, capable and experienced lay leaders. This should be an asset for the church, and in many ways it is. Yet at the same time these leaders discourage others from stepping forward. Comments such as “I can’t do it as well as they can”, or “I would be too nervous” were very common. There are also high levels of anxiety about what will happen when these leaders decide to step down. Alongside establishing a recruitment process, celebrating these leaders’ achievements and then resourcing and supporting them to become trainers needs to be a high priority for Holgate church.

Collaboration: As noted previously Holgate benefits from the experience of a number committed and faithful volunteers. The church is further blessed by the many differences of personality and approach represented in this group. However, possibly because of the level of responsibility shouldered by this group, they are struggling to work well together. This creates an unhealthy atmosphere which drains the joy from their service to the church.

Committee process: Every person interviewed and many others engaged in casual conversation expressed the opinion that the committee/meeting structure currently in place at the church is unsustainable. This is making it difficult for those volunteering to get decisions made or to move on in their ministries. It was also cited as a reason not to volunteer “I don’t mind doing the work, but don’t want all the meetings” was a sentiment expressed by more than a few people.

Communication: A significant number of people outside the core central group spoke about the difficulty of finding out what is going on at church. Although this has improved since the installation of the screen advertising events digitally there is no evidence for the existence of a strategic plan for collecting and sharing vital information about the church with the wider church community.

Before and Beyond the Door: It was shared that people, especially young families, are visiting Holgate Methodist Church but are not necessarily getting connected. “There are people who come and visit but don’t always come back. I wonder what we’re missing here. Something is missing that they don’t latch on to.” Another person shared, “We’ve got to find a way to get young families in the church. They haven’t been involved and don’t realize what the church can do for them.” Holgate does a good job of being the welcoming face as visitors walk through the doors, but it was generally expressed that the church is not doing everything they can to transform visitors into integrated members of the church. The church needs to consider:

A church becomes home when visitors find a group to connect with, as well as a place to use their gifts.

Implementation of a systematic follow-up on visitors, members and regular attenders to make them know they are valued and wanted. This process will also provide valuable information concerning the ministry needs of those attending church.

Facilities: Many church members expressed frustration with the physical fabric of the church; many people clung to the idea that if the facilities could be changed or somehow upgraded then the church would grow. A focus on new facilities can be an easy rallying cry to get the congregation excited but, my experience has been that the first focus must be on building the ministry. Only then can a facility be built that can complement the ministry, not the other way around.

Successful past: Holgate has a venerable history of successful youth ministry; many of the young parents now associated with the church are previous graduates of the youth programme. These successes are shaping the approach to youth ministry today. The challenge here is to celebrate the past and recognize the value and benefit of these previous ministries whilst also recognizing that the future might need to look very different.

Spiritual depth: The spiritual depth of those interviewed was truly inspiring; this is church of seekers. However, many people struggled to articulate this faith and what it means in their life. It is important for the adults to find ways to share their faith journey along with all the highs and lows. What the youth need to hear and have modelled for them is the lifetime of faithful service displayed by the adults at Holgate Methodist Church.

Disconnect between minister and congregation: Andy Lindley expressed his affection for the congregation at Holgate, but he is of the belief that they need gifts other than the ones he brings. His perception of his ministry with Holgate is that he is a passenger on their journey and has no input into the direction they are taking. In their turn congregation members expressed their affection and appreciation for Andy and sadness that they did not get to see much of him, whilst understanding his commitments elsewhere. It would appear that there is a fundamental misunderstanding between minister and congregation. Sitting down together and establishing where Andy's gifts can be best used is a conversation long overdue.

Pastoral care: A large number of those interviewed said they had not seen their pastoral visitor for a significant time. Holgate is planning to employ a lay pastoral worker in the next few months, which should improve this situation. As they begin work it will be necessary to review the pastoral needs of the key volunteers in the church and consider whether these, need to establish a pastoral relationship outside the church for example with a spiritual director. This will be doubly important for those who have been involved in the church for many years, for whom, change however much desired will involve an element of pain and grief.

Age concerns: The congregation includes a number of older adults for whom Holgate has been their spiritual home for many decades. These people have previously contributed in practical ways and now find they lack the energy or physical ability to maintain their previous level of involvement. They are grieving for these losses and feel loneliness, isolation and a sense of uselessness; "we are on the scrap heap."

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Reframe the next 24 months (at least) as a time of discernment, goal setting and infrastructure building for Holgate. Name February 2019 as the target date for ministries to have sufficient infrastructure and support to provide long-term stability, while enjoying incremental successes along the way.
- 2) The first step in this is to begin a period of focused prayer and discernment as a congregation, I recommend at least three months. Resources that could be used by the church during this period include:

Discernment	Henri Nouwen
Immortal Diamond	Richard Rohr
Appreciating Church	
<small>(This was recommended in "the Week ahead" I haven't read it yet)</small>	
Emotionally Healthy Church	Pete Scazzero
<small>(A valuable resource is you can cope with the American tone!)</small>	
7 Marks of healthy church	Preaching series used elsewhere in the circuit.
- 3) Present this report to the church council, requesting that they endorse a 24-month strategic plan.
- 4) Create a church prayer team to pray for this time of discernment and strategic development, and share this timeline with them.
- 5) Recruit and empower an implementation team, who report regularly to the church council and minister, to focus on the recommendations below. These non-anxious, goal-oriented people will free up the minister and key volunteers to focus on providing day-to-day ministry.
- 6) Authorise Victoria to:
 - Work with the minister and key volunteers to ensure the achievement of the outcomes outlined in the timeline, and
 - Assist the church to overcome the obstacles that are certain to arise in the process of restructuring and fine-tuning.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this report fall into six major categories:

- **Climate Change**
- **Ministerial responsibility**
- **Leadership Development**
- **Create stable foundations**
- **Discipleship plan**
- **New Ministry Initiatives**

A brief summary of the needs in each category is contained below with more detailed recommendations named in the following section of the report.

Climate Change

Summary: Change and growth can be difficult to create or maintain in an environment that was variously described as pressured, unhealthy, anxious and confused. It is important to present a consistent message of excitement and hope about any proposed changes.

Ministerial Responsibility

Summary: Misunderstanding has arisen around the areas of need and motivation between minister and congregation. It is time to talk about the gifts Andy brings and how these can be best employed in the overall ministry at Holgate church.

Leadership Development

Summary: New ideas are not likely to take hold until the current leadership model changes. New volunteers are needed, and current volunteers need to become trainers and partners for these people. The church must change the expectation that the current (very gifted) volunteers are the geniuses in the room. These volunteers must become genius makers and empower the ministry of others.

Create Stable Foundations

Summary: There are a few key areas where the foundations appear to be unstable. These areas include a ministry map, directories and databases, volunteer needs and recruitment, job descriptions and communication strategies. Ensuring that those behind-the-scenes matters are firmed up will empower and streamline the ministries undertaken by the church.

Discipleship Plan

Summary: There is a need for a coordinated effort for age specific ministries as well as the current intergenerational events. Special attention needs to be given to both the youth ministry and adult discipleship. An overall discipleship plan needs to be put in place.

New Ministry Opportunities

Summary: Many exciting ideas for new ministries and growth were mentioned during the interviews. It would be great to collate and explore these. However, before anything is done it is important that Holgate spend time in prayer and discernment listening for the still small voice of God.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM TASKS:

Specific initiatives to achieve the five strategic goals

CLIMATE CHANGE

- **Change the Climate:** We cannot force people to change, but leaders can adopt a few new practices to change the overall message that people hear and perceive. These five new practices are described below:
 - Deliver Results - leaders need to identify a small victory, a visible result, and chase it. A small victory can begin the process of climate change. Then, sustaining such a change requires a pattern of little victories tied together by the climate-control elements below.
 - Instil Stories and Metaphors - to create a climate of transformation, it is important to create a story for Holgate church and its ministries. For every positive result, the church needs to develop winsome stories – stories that include people, emotion, and victory.
 - Embrace Rituals and Traditions - these have the power to create and sustain a climate that feeds personal transformation. They can be simple acts, like handing a compass to all new leaders, reminding them that they are leading the church somewhere new and exciting.
 - Import Joy – Furrowing the eyebrows, tightening the muscles, and working harder is seldom the answer. In fact, seriousness and anxiousness can work against us, sabotaging our efforts at making progress.
 - Trust the Process - Moving from where we are to where we want to be takes time - so much time, that it is very tempting to take short cuts. If we're going to engineer a climate of transformation, we will not do it by stepping in with guns blazing. Sustainable change happens when leaders recognize the power of incremental evolution, the power of one small change after another, until the incremental changes result in exponential change.
- **Clarify the Vision:** Invite leaders to participate in a process of envisioning the future with Victoria resulting in a review of the current mission statement and the development of the following documents which will direct the ministries and support the church's vision:
 - A statement of core values
 - A set of goals for the next one, three and five years
- **Own the Vision:** Upon completion of the visioning process, make sure the vision and goals are shared with the wider congregation. Invite all church committees and ministry teams to reimagine and write their unique purpose statements, core values, and three to four ministry goals in light of the broader church-wide mission.
- **Marketing and Branding:** Create a written plan that addresses how Holgate will celebrate the good work God is doing within and beyond the walls of the church. Create an intentional strategy that is consistent with marketing approaches (logos, graphics, etc.). Develop a brand that the church is proud of sharing with others.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- **Celebration of gifts:** Invite key leaders to participate in a facilitated process of considering how the gifts Andy brings can be best utilised in ways that benefit the church and bring joy to Andy in his ministry.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- **Leadership Clarity:** Create results-based job descriptions for all volunteer positions in the church. Over the 24 month period work with volunteers to review and ensure the job descriptions accurately match the work being done and needs of the ministry.
- **Leadership Evaluation:** Clarify to whom each volunteer is accountable, and provide mechanisms for ongoing evaluation for all involved in ministry at Holgate Methodist Church.

Evaluations should provide an opportunity for self-reflection and input from others and should be done in a way that leaves volunteers feeling supported, encouraged, and positively challenged.

- **Leadership Launch:** Schedule and implement inspiring leadership-training events for all volunteers at the beginning of each year.
- **Sustainable Pace:** Help each staff member develop healthy working pattern which includes a Sabbath and time to work on rather than in their ministry.
- **Volunteer Care:** Build in time for team-building exercises, collaboration, scheduling and finally, having fun together.
- **Charge Committees and Ministry Teams with the Following Tasks:**
 - **Identify All Volunteer Ministry Positions:** Create a complete list of ministry opportunities in every area, from weekly to monthly to annual opportunities.
 - **Create Results-Based Job Descriptions for Each Position:** Work with staff, committee leaders, and ministry volunteers to create an exhaustive list of roles. Get input on what every volunteer role does. Develop each results-based job description utilizing a template that includes:
 - How the position contributes to the church's mission
 - Job duties/expectations
 - Time commitment and schedule
 - Gifts and skills and any other factors important in the role.
 - Team leader
 - Training required
- **Intentional Recruitment Process:** Equip the team leaders in each ministry to employ intentional volunteer recruiting and equipping strategies and procedures.
 - **Compile lists of needed volunteers and job descriptions** as above.
 - **Work with Victoria** to create an intentional volunteer recruiting process and train individual ministry team leaders to use and evaluate the process in their areas of ministry.
 - **Develop a Process** for recording who is serving in which ministries.
 - **Consider using a form of personality testing** to help individuals explore their gifts and discern which ministries they are best suited to and will enjoy most.
 - **Recruit volunteers** to positions that match personal gifting with the volunteer needs of the congregation.
 - **Develop Follow-up** to track the contentment of volunteers in their ministry.

CREATE STABLE FOUNDATIONS

- **Internal Communication:** Develop a plan for internal communication at Holgate. Include systems that bolster communications between the following groups and populations:
 - Committees communicating with other committees
 - Committees communicating with the church staff
 - Committees communicating with the congregation
 - Committees communicating with the Church Council
- **Streamline the Calendar:** Carefully review the special events of the church. Decide the purpose of each event and whether or not it meets the needs of the church.
- **Document Development:** Maintain a church-wide 18-month calendar and publish a 12-month calendar, create event notebooks for every area of ministry to help volunteers succeed, generate a preventative maintenance calendar that schedules behind-the-scenes activities for each month (Example: October – Order candles for the Advent wreath, First Week of March – Order the palms for Palm Sunday, etc.).

- **Visitor follow-up:** Develop a plan for welcoming visitors who visit Holgate. Craft a plan for following up with adults and families that have become loosely connected to the church. Commission a ministry committee to systematically reach out to these members of the church family.
- **Create a Ministry Map:** Create a list of all the ministries that Holgate is currently engaged in or which the church supports.
- **Leadership Directory:** Develop a yearly leadership directory that lists all ministry teams and leaders for all committees and groups.
- **Develop databases:** Create databases for all aspects of church membership. Label these databases to facilitate effective communication and follow up with church members.
- **Ministry Manuals:** Develop Ministry Manuals, including the most recent directories, a 12-Month calendar, results-based job descriptions for staff and volunteers, compliance documents, budgets, a preventative maintenance calendar and notes for every major church event.

DISCIPLESHIP

- **Children and youth:** Design and implement a children's ministry that meets the needs of today's families.
 - Consider the Sunday morning provision.
 - Determine the number of classes needed. If combining ages, decide which ages will be grouped together
 - Consider whether young church remains the best way to meet the needs of church children and youth.
 - Choose a curriculum that does not require intense preparation on the part of the teachers. Purchase the curriculum and equip the teachers to use it for the coming school year.
- **Youth:** consider roles that the youth might be able to take on during worship
- **Adults:** Evaluate the current small group ministry and consider the resources in use, how do these encourage the adults at Holgate to articulate their spirituality?

NEW MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

- **Define a discernment period:** Hold a defined period of individual and corporate discernment, supported by resources used throughout the congregation.
- **Collate a list of possible future ministries:** This list should include the idea of visitor follow up, but no work should begin on anything new until after the period of discernment. It is important to recognise that implicit in any "yes" is a "no."
- **Hold a consultation period:** during which members of the congregation can feedback and discuss their discernment and prayers. At the end of this the church should decide as a body which ministries it will continue or end.

PRESSURE POINTS

In order to create a healthy climate conducive to change, it is important to address the most pressing needs in the first four to six months of the timeline.

The following timeline outlines an intentional and strategic approach to implementing the recommendations listed above. The recommendations section is a list of recommendations for the church, but they are not presented in any order or priority. Over the next four to six months, Holgate should consider addressing the following Pressure Points:

- **Designate a discernment period.**
- **Ensure that all church members have the opportunity to feedback regarding their discernment.**
- **Undertake some team building and honest conversation to facilitate the healthy collaboration of the current key volunteers.**
- **Communicate with the wider congregation about the need for change.**
- **Work with Andy to establish his involvement in the church.**
- **Establish a group to research and investigate possible ministry provision for the older children involved in Messy Church and alternatives to the current Sunday morning provision.**

PROPOSED TIMELINE

The following provides Holgate with a timeline that could serve as a blueprint for the development of sustainable church ministries.

March 2017

Focus: Starting Well

Desired Outcomes:

- This report has been presented to the church council. They voted in support of adopting and following the strategic plan and timeline.
- A discernment period has been defined.
- The process for change has been communicated to the wider congregation.
- A church prayer team has been invited to pray for this process. They have received a copy of the assessment report and timeline.
- A shared visioning experience has been scheduled and promotion of this event has begun.

April 2017

Focus: Work Begins, Team Building, Discernment.

Desired Outcomes:

- Team building activities have been identified and scheduled for the current key volunteers.
- Resources, small groups and a preaching plan have been established for the discernment period.
- Time has been scheduled to identify Andy's contribution to the life of the church.
- Recruitment for an implementation team has begun.
- Outstanding work/documents have been identified and a timeline to dealing with anything overdue has been agreed.

May 2017

Focus: Visioning, Organisation, Discipleship

Desired Outcomes:

- The implementation team has met and received an orientation, helping them to understand their role throughout the next 24 months.
- Work on the ministry map has begun.
- A shared visioning workshop has been held with key volunteers, committee leaders and staff. The following documents have been produced: mission and vision statement, statement of values, and one, three and five year goals identified.
- A team has been identified to begin work researching possible provision for older Messy Church children and alternative provision for youth on Sunday mornings.

June 2017

Focus: Communication, Pressure Points, Budgets, Branding

Desired Outcomes:

- A small team have been appointed to evaluate all communications practices, and a plan has been written to ensure that all congregants, regardless of age or technical proficiency, feel informed. This plan includes a timeline for implementation.
- Next Steps have been determined for the one year goals identified in the visioning process.
- Based on the visioning process a group has been established to discuss ideas for creating a brand.
- All pressure points have been addressed.
- A budget has been prepared and outstanding accounts completed, presented and agreed.
- A 12-month church-wide calendar has been published, and individual ministry teams have begun working on their 18-month event calendars.

July 2017

Focus: Healthy Climate, Recruitment

Outcomes:

- Key volunteers have been identified and begun a training process to enable them to become enablers for new volunteers.
- The Ministry Map has been finished; work has begun on creating a list of all volunteer roles within the church.
- New opportunities for storytelling have been created in the worship services on a monthly basis. Resources have been set aside to assist with this storytelling.
- As the school year ends; volunteers in the children's and youth ministry have been thanked and celebrated.
- Work has begun on the database system.

August 2017

Focus: Visitor Assimilation, Job Descriptions

Desired Outcomes:

- A plan has been written for welcoming visitors to Holgate in order that first-timers are followed up with in a consistent and timely way, helping them feel welcomed, and also assimilated into the life of the church.
- A template for use in preparing job descriptions has been developed that includes:
 - How the position contributes to the church's mission,
 - Job description
 - Time commitment and schedule
 - Gifts and skills and other factors important in the role
 - Team leader
 - Training required

September 2017

Focus: Job Descriptions, Preventative Maintenance Calendar

Desired Outcomes:

- Work has begun on the job descriptions.
- A plan has been written in order that anyone loosely connected with Holgate is intentionally contacted so they feel valued and encouraged to come back.
- A Preventative Maintenance Calendar has been created for each area of ministry and the church office in order to plan for behind-the-scenes activities (e.g. order candles for Advent wreath, order palms for Palm Sunday, etc.)
- Children and youth are welcomed back after the summer, the ministry is celebrated. Exam results are celebrated.
- Work has begun to review Sunday morning provision.

October 2017

Focus: Evaluation, Ministry Team Training Day

Outcomes:

- The timeline implementation group has completed a 6-month evaluation of the process and made any adjustments that are necessary to improve the work being done.
- Work has begun to create lists of needed volunteers.
- Ministry team leaders and co-leaders have gathered for a day of orientation, training, and resource sharing.
- All volunteer roles have been identified. Ministry committees, teams, and other church groups have created complete lists of opportunities in every area, from weekly to monthly to annual opportunities
- Church committees and ministry teams have reimagined and written their unique purpose statements, core values, and three to four ministry goals in light of the broader church-wide mission.
- A process for receiving discernment feedback and comments has been initiated.

November 2017

Focus: Ministry Goals, Decision Making

Desired Outcomes:

- The implementation group, in collaboration with the Church Council, has evaluated their three year goals and adjusted their one goals in order to maintain the motivation and energy around the process.
- A written plan has been created that outlines the way decisions are made and communicated in relationship to programming, staffing, building and grounds, and budgeting.
- A group has been appointed to review the discipleship process.

December 2017

Focus: Measurable Goals, Leadership Development, Staff

Desired Outcomes:

- Participation goals have been established for all ministry events and weekly programs until July 2017 and there are clear lines of responsibility for filling those events.
- Evaluation of the church's special events calendar has taken place and a stream-lined calendar for January – December 2018 has been created.

January 2018

Focus: Celebration, Compliance Check, Adult Discipleship

Desired Outcomes:

- All staff and key volunteers have received safe church training.
- All paperwork for hands on, weekly volunteers who work with children and students has been updated and is in compliance with the safe church policy. DBS checks have been completed on each volunteer.
- The Discipleship group has created an adult discipleship plan that incorporates current and new small group opportunities.
- A celebration has been planned for the one year anniversary of the decision to begin the timeline process.

February 2018

Focus: Marketing, Christian Formation

Desired Outcomes:

- Marketing methods currently being used to promote the church and share successes with the congregation and the community have been evaluated, revised, and added to if necessary. A clear plan has been written in order to strategically promote the good things God is doing within and beyond the walls of Holgate. The following have been considered: church signage, social media outlets, viral videos, mailers, and tools for church members to use in invitational ways.
- The discipleship process has been reviewed and an overarching plan has been created for the Christian formation of 0-18 year olds.
- Volunteer needs for all ministries have been reviewed and updated. All volunteer job descriptions have been updated/created.

March 2018

Focus: Branding, Evaluations, Event Notebooks

Desired Outcomes:

- Mechanisms for evaluating all volunteers have been determined. Evaluations have included sections for self-reflection and input from others, and should be done in a way that leaves leaders feeling supported, encouraged, and positively challenged.
- A plan has been written in order to outline thoughtful branding, and how Holgate will market their brand within the church and the community.
- Work on event notebooks has begun.
- A volunteer thank you event has been planned.

April 2018

Focus: Volunteer team, Leadership Directory

Desired Outcomes:

- The volunteers have set aside time for team building, collaboration, calendar planning, and good old-fashioned fun.
- An annual Leadership Directory has been created that lists all ministry teams and leaders for all committees and groups (e.g. Church Council, young church leaders, committee leaders, etc.)
- A volunteer thank you event has been held.

May 2018

Focus: Goal Update, Volunteer Tracking

Desired Outcomes:

- A tracking process has been created and adopted through which all who are serving in what ministries can be tracked and recorded.
- The implementation group, in collaboration with the Church Council, has evaluated their three year goals and adjusted their one goals in order to maintain the motivation and energy around the process.
- All volunteer needs for the children's and youth ministry form September 2018 have been filled.

June 2018

Focus: Compliance, Sustainable Pace, Evaluations, Communication

Desired Outcomes:

- All volunteers have had their evaluations and met with someone to: review their job descriptions, make recommendations for programming improvements, make personal ministry goals, and renew their commitment for the upcoming programme year. This meeting also served as a way to redirect a volunteer to a new ministry in which to serve if things were not a good fit.
- Staff members have developed a healthy working pattern to include Sabbath and time to work on rather than in their ministry, a time to look at the big picture and make strategic plans.
- New internal communication practices have been developed to keep everyone informed and build trust between the congregation, staff volunteers and committees.
- All paperwork for hands on, weekly volunteers who work with children and students has been updated and is in compliance with the safe church policy. DBS checks have been completed on each volunteer.

July 2018

Focus: Catch up, review

Desired Outcomes:

- The timeline has been reviewed and all incomplete items have been identified and either rescheduled or removed as not applicable.
- Volunteers involved in the youth and children's ministry have been thanked and celebrated.
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August 2018

Focus: New Ministry Initiatives

Desired Outcomes:

- Following the discernment process a group has been formed to consider new ministry initiatives.
- Those responsible for the outreach ministries of Holgate have met to discuss current offerings and looked at opportunities for expansion, resourcing and visibility.

September 2018

Focus: Newcomers, Major Event Notebooks

Outcomes:

- All Event Notebooks have been completed.
- Current practices for welcoming visitors and assimilating new members have been reviewed and tweaked as needed.

October 2018

Focus: Volunteers

Desired Outcomes:

- The volunteer staffing needs have been reevaluated to meet the size and scope of each ministry and a plan to meet those needs has been created if necessary.
- The individual ministries have updated their major events calendar for the next 12 months.

November 2018

Focus: Integration, Volunteer Recruitment

Outcomes:

- A plan has been written in order that Holgate is intentionally providing opportunities for members of all ages to be better integrated (consider opportunities of fellowship, service, worship, etc.)
- Volunteer needs for 2019 have been listed and recruiting has begun.
- The implementation group, in collaboration with the Church Council, has evaluated their three year goals and adjusted their one goals in order to maintain the motivation and energy around the process.

December 2018

Focus: Decision Making, Parent Engagement

Desired Outcomes:

- A plan for engaging parents into the messy church has been written and included a timeline for implementation.
- A written plan has been created that outlines the way decisions are made and communicated in relationship to programming, staffing, building and grounds, and budgeting.

January 2019

Focus: Review

Desired Outcomes

- The timeline has been reviewed and all incomplete items have been identified and either rescheduled or removed as not applicable.

February 2019

Focus: Manuals

Desired Outcomes:

- The Ministry Manuals (both hard copy and digital) have been completed for each department, including
 - Visioning documents
 - Directories
 - Volunteer directory
 - Volunteer training agendas and notes
 - Attendance records
 - Annual calendar
 - Results-based job descriptions
 - Game plans and new initiatives
 - Meeting agendas and minutes for key committees.
 - Christian Formation Plan and record of curriculum resources used for the current year
 - Budget and other financial documents
 - Recruiting template, with a record of all the volunteer needs for the year

March 2019

Focus: Catch Up, Reflection and Re-assessment

Desired Outcomes:

- Those items from the timeline that have been delayed or pushed off due to unforeseen emerging Pressure Points have been handled.
- A review of the change process has been completed.
- Current pressure points have been named.
- Event notebooks have been reviewed and updated in preparation for giving them to this coming year's event coordinators.

April 2019

Focus: Celebrate!

Desired Outcomes:

- Review the last two years and celebrate the things God has done in Holgate church.