

The next steps

The parish has decided by 54 votes to 3:

“To the expenditure of up to \$100 000 for the next stage of the Re-development of St Albans.”

What happens next?

Some weeks ago, Vestry had a meeting with Bishop Justin and Nick Young the Diocesan Property Manager. It was important for us to be clear on what requirements we needed to meet, for the Diocesan Council to sign off on our re-development. The advice we were given is the following.

The most significant and critical step is the missional purpose of the project. This needs to be a compelling vision of where the church is going in the future to fulfil Gods call on us. The implications for re-development are that “form follows function”. Knowing what God is asking us to be and do enables us to more clearly articulate what needs to be done to our buildings to enable this to happen. The **why** determines the **what** and **how**. The Diocese will be looking for a clear connection between missional purpose and re-development plans.

We will also need sign-off from the Diocesan Board of Trustees for the economic and financial soundness of the redevelopment including fundability. To put this in context. We need to remember that the church is owned by the Diocesan Board of Trustees and any liability we incur in this project that we cannot meet will be a legal and financial obligation on them.

We have also been told that our missional plan will be insufficient if the church is unused for most of the week. Our missional and business plan must show good use of the facilities.

We can view all this as obstacles or we can see them as a sensible exercise of good governance on the part of the Diocese and as tools to help us to sharpen up our thinking so that we have a missional vision and a business plan that are excellent, compelling and exciting.

How do we clarify our missional vision?

The first step needs to be revision of where we have come from and a reminder of who we are. Our **Mission** statement is: **Providing the Living Presence of God’s Kingdom in Eastbourne and the Bays.**

St Albans Parish Goals are:

Be Developed to reflect St Alban’s Parish Commitment to growing the Kingdom of God:

- be a community which deepens discipleship and encourages mission and outreach to all
- offer worship opportunities to everyone
- strengthen the parish connection to Wellesley College and support its Anglican ethos
- continue the parish’s ministry of contemplative prayer, retreat and hospitality.

In all this the word “mission” has been repeatedly used. The following is a useful definition: *“Mission is an outward (beyond the church community) process (not driven by one off events) by which people*

through relationships with Christians on an ongoing basis come to be attracted to Jesus Christ. They enter a Covenant relationship with Jesus and take on Kingdom responsibilities.” (Matt 28:18-20)
This picks up the first three of the five marks of mission of the Anglican Communion.

1. *To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom*
2. *To teach, baptise and nurture new believers*
3. *To respond to human need by loving service*
4. *To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation*
5. *To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth*

Mission is about the church learning how to “Go” but we cannot go on our own account and in our own strength. We can only go when our identity is grounded in Christ and that only happens when we spend time in the presence of Jesus, which is why developing the **Retreat Parish concept** is at its heart a wellspring for mission. This will form the basis of our missional vision. We also think that it has good potential to link strongly into the fifth mark of mission of the Anglican Communion. Closely linked to this will be **generous hospitality**. From being in the presence of God we can take his presence with us into the community and be a blessing and a means of wholeness and health to our area. The third aspect of our missional focus will be on **connecting more with young families** in the community.

Questions have been raised about how the parish will be consulted on this. Do remember that all this is as a result of the consultations that were part of SEAT and this is some of the fruit of that process. The motion passed by the parish last year makes clear what factors the Parish considered important for the next stage. The dilemma we face is between starting a round of consultations about our missional intent and the project being delayed further. If you have something to add to the missional vision, we would encourage you to put some words around it and email it to the Vicar as soon as you can.

At our next Vestry meeting we will consider any further steps we need to take within the parish as part of this process.

Heritage Status

We are currently exploring the pros and cons of applying to have the church listed in the Hutt City Council Plan because it has some heritage value. On the one hand this may attract some funding, on the other hand this may be outweighed by greater compliance costs and restrictions. We will update you when we have clarity on the best course of action.