

PARISH MINISTRY PLAN 2024

Anglican Ministry Unit of Innisfail/Tully



Presented to the Ministry Unit Annual General Meeting, 03 March 2024

Canon 2, #9.1 (b): the Incumbent shall submit to the Ministry Unit Annual General Meeting “a Mission and Ministry plan” to be adopted for the current year.

ABOUT THIS MINISTRY PLAN

A ministry plan’s focus is about ongoing improvement: *discerning the changing landscape of ministry and how we might more effectively respond to that.*

A ministry plan recognises that each parish is unique, with:

- a distinctive demographic make-up,
- particular regional and community needs, opportunities and aspirations,
- specific capacities for resourcing (human and material).

Therefore, this ministry tries to take account of the following:

1. identifying our current and potential demographic.
2. identifying the regional and community context.
3. taking stock of our actual and available human and material resourcing.
4. acknowledging “maintenance goals” that require continued support.

From this base, we then develop “new goals” with accompanying strategies that target emerging areas for ministry or that support intentional congregational growth.

The challenge posed in this ministry plan is a call to the real meaning of “religion”:

**RELIGION: “re” meaning again, and “ligio” meaning connection
= re-connecting people with God**

Bringing many things together while trying to keep it simple, the Plan uses a 3-part framework:

- **Encountering Jesus:** *How can we more effectively give each other and new people an authentic encounter with Jesus?*
- **Experiencing Communion:** *How can we more effectively create authentic community – a sense of belonging within the Body of Christ?*
- **Sent on His mission:** *How can we more effectively carry out Christ’s mission in our context, today?*

CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC

The current *regular* worshipping demographic of the Ministry Unit comprises of:

- **St John's Tully:**
 - On average, 7-10 people, of whom:
 - All are of Anglo-Celtic Australian heritage;
 - Most are retired or close to retirement;
 - One is a parent of high-school / young-adult aged children, and who is in fulltime employment;
 - At most weekly services, it is mostly a female congregation (ie: 1-2 regular male congregants).
- **St Alban's Innisfail:**
 - On average, 30 people, of whom:
 - Heritage background is diverse, including parishioners of Anglo-Celtic background (usually older parishioners) and of Torres Strait Islander background (families: parents & children). Seasonally, there is a Vanuatuan group of worshippers resident as seasonal farm workers.
 - The Torres Strait Islander group offer the most evident potential for future growth at this time.
 - 3-4 families with children (one being the priest's family);
 - Each family has distinctive interests/aspirations/needs.
 - Another family of children joins us once a month.
 - More women than men.

For both congregations the most pressing demographic concern is an overall diminishing base of parishioners able and available for supporting ministry (more parishioners who are “downsizing” than there are who are “coming up the ranks”).

An increasing field of ministry in our region is to the elderly (less mobile or in nursing homes). This is an area of ministry that very few other churches minister to in any great way (except the Catholic Church). Other churches seem focussed on youth & families ministry and do that relatively well.

Key Ministry Targets arising from this Demographic Analysis:

- Explore and evaluate *fresh expressions* of ministry that connect effectively and meaningfully with a wider demographic to grow our regular congregant community.
- Explore ways to support engagement in parish life/ministry by our less mobile parishioners (a growing and important part of our demographic).
- Identify new candidates for Lay Minister and provide them with targeted formation for ministry to seniors, to the housebound and for funerals (a key ministry target).
- **[not a ministry goal but a funding imperative that impacts ministry delivery:]** Explore new avenues for fundraising that are less labour intensive (eg: innovative use of existing resources; grant-writing; crowd-funding).

MAINTENANCE GOALS

These are goals that aim to continue existing ministries/activities and require resourcing (human and material) to do so. They are “maintenance goals” because they do not address new or emerging needs but are deemed important all the same. These include:

- **Regular weekly services** for both Innisfail and Tully. Currently, these are:
 - Saturday evening (Tully), Eucharist
 - Sunday morning (Innisfail), Eucharist.
 - Wednesday morning (Innisfail), Extended Communion for nursing home residents.
 - Thursday morning (Tully), Extended Communion for nursing home residents and parishioners who are housebound.
- **Weekly pastoral care visits** to local nursing homes (Innisfail and Tully) and to parishioners who are house-bound. Currently, a team comprised of the parish priest and 3 Lay Ministers carries out a range of nursing home and private home pastoral visits. This will continue to be maintained in 2024. The Ministry Plan should consider what resources are needed to support these Lay Ministers.
 - Discernment and formation of new Lay Ministers to join this team will constitute a new goal in 2024 (see Ministry Plan).
- **Care Packs and the local Support Centres:** our parish currently supports the Innisfail and Tully Support Centres both financially and with items for care/relief packs. This activity should continue. Support required is by way of coordination and ongoing promotion across the parish.
- **AngelCare** shop to continue in 2024. As a new goal, the Ministry Plan will inaugurate a SWOT analysis in 2024 (with the Churchwardens) to identify support needs for the team and sustainability going forward. Apart from being the only fund-raiser in the parish currently, the operation itself serves as an important pastoral care presence in Tully and its income supports the Tully Support Centre.
- **Golden Chat Time (Innisfail & Tully)** to continue in 2024. However, in Innisfail, Gillian Christaldi has notified that she may not be able to continue coordinating and facilitating GCT Innisfail in 2024, therefore, succession planning is needed urgently here. In Tully, support needs for Diana Russell (coordinator) will also need to be part of maintenance planning.
- **Funerals** – we will continue to serve grieving families and to provide a dignified Christian burial as requested. The Ministry Plan, however, will include a new goal in 2024 to form a Lay Funeral Ministry Team to make this sustainable into the future.

PARISH MINISTRY PLAN: NEW GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR 2024

(A) ENCOUNTERING JESUS – “The Lord be with you”

How can we more effectively give each other and others an authentic encounter with Jesus?

Goal	Strategies	Elaboration / Resourcing	Measures of Success
(1) A welcoming Christian Community	a) Team of “welcomers” active and visible at all public services. Newcomers are actively welcomed and interest is shown in them.	A seasoned parishioner to coordinate this Team. Basic training. Roster. Welcome packs to give.	Positive feedback from newcomers. Returning newcomers progressing into regular, participating parishioners.
	b) Identified & agreed ways for new-comers to get involved	PC develops a Quick Reference list for the Welcoming Team to help easily connect newcomers to active involvement.	Newcomers becoming regular and involved parishioners.
(2) Meaningful and engaging liturgies <i>This does not necessarily mean replacing traditional forms. EG: look at the millions of youth who gather for the Catholic World Youth Day, or the thousands that gather for Ignite (Brisbane) each year, or the successful South Yarra Baptist church which adopted very Anglican liturgical style of worship – today’s young are not averse to tradition at all. They do, however, need engagement that is meaningful to them. We need to allow and engage fresh expression <u>within</u> the tradition.</i>	a) Actively invite and train young people to various ministries within our weekly worship (eg: readers, servers, musicians, cleaning, sacristan).	A seasoned Lay Minister to coordinate. A published resource for training – authentic yet fresh. Rosters that include younger parishioners and create a clear succession plan.	Greater diversity of parishioners taking ownership of their parish and remaining actively involved. Young parishioners growing in discipleship. Future leaders of ministries/activities can be seen here and now. [seeing a positive future makes for a more attractive church]
	b) Music ministry that includes fresh expressions of worship music	Not replacing but complementing older styles of worship music. Regular spot on the music ministry roster. (Possibly) Support to go and see effective worship music teams in action.	Young people inspired to work towards being our future worship musicians. A greater variety of worship music that caters for a wider demographic. Positive feedback.
	c) Draw on the rich diversity of liturgies in the Anglican tradition which could be open to fresh expressions of church.	Trial increased use of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, Compline and PP&P with creative expressions of lighting and music and leadership by younger parishioners.	Diversity of groups leading worship/prayer with a diversity of expression that draws a wider demographic into Church (and nurtures discipleship).

(B) EXPERIENCING COMMUNION – “We are the body of Christ”

How might we nurture Christian community and a sense of belonging in the Body of Christ?

Goal	Strategies	Elaboration / Resourcing	Measures of Success
(3) Develop new activities beyond Sunday worship.	<i>Not just social activities, but activities that nurture a sense of belonging & purpose within the Body of Christ across the Cassowary Coast.</i>		
	a) Café or Pub groups	1 or more small groups gathering in a café or other similar place for SOAP, lectio divina, or Bible Study. Can be day-time or evenings.	1 or more groups regularly meeting and positive feedback from participants. EOIs for new groups.
	b) Faith Circles & Parish Talks	Faith Circles: regular forums for sharing/dialogue on topics of faith/scriptures. Parish Talks: occasional events where a guest speaker gives an exposition on a topic of faith or church teachings/practices.	1 or more groups regularly meeting and positive feedback from participants. EOIs for new groups. Attendance.
	c) “2 Minute Reflections”	Various parishioners (either church-going or housebound) invited to prepare a short personal reflection on a topic of faith or scripture. This is then published in the PB as a feature article, or could be posted on the parish website too.	Take-up by parishioners (especially by the housebound). Feedback. <i>NB: Fr M or a LM would come to the homes of housebound people & record or scribe down.</i>
(4) Regular Healing Ministry	a) Dedicating a service per month as a “healing Eucharist”	Catechesis about what the ministry of healing is about. Involvement of parish “elders” in the prayer-ministry. Service planning: time made for individual prayer & anointing.	Attendance and feedback.
(5) Renewing ecumenical collaboration	b) Begin occasional ARCIC-style dialogue sessions including fellowship / supper.	Explore using the Catholic Centre (good open space with tables & chairs). Bring-a-plate to share. Pose a topic for dialogue with a view to building mutual understanding.	Feedback from both Anglicans and others that the sessions were helpful for broadening understanding of each other’s faith tradition.
	c) Begin a combined churches Bible Study or <i>lectio divina</i> .	Using a resource similar to our Advent & Lent booklets, facilitate a guided reflection on shared key points of our faith. Maybe share-a-plate too.	Attendance and feedback.

(C) SENT ON MISSION – “Go in the peace of Christ”

How can we more effectively carry out Christ’s mission in our context, today?

What do we mean by “mission”? What is the real “mission/s” today?

How can we serve Christ’s mission anywhere if our own parish no longer exists?

For this Plan, “**Sent on mission**” refers to the core business of the Church: making disciples and building God’s kingdom of love.

Goal	Strategies	Elaboration / Resourcing	Measures of Success
(6) Broadening our ministry to people who are less mobile (eg: nursing homes, house bound or just driving less or no car).	a) Form a team to brainstorm new ideas for ministering to people in NHs or who are house-bound.	For 2024, this would begin as a planning team who explore needs and resources and come up with suggestions for Parish Council.	1 or more new ideas are supported by Parish Council and are added to the existing ministry to NHs and the housebound.
(7) Active support of Innisfail Emergency Relief network <i>This is a quite visible presence of the Innisfail Churches responding to local emergency relief needs via the Innisfail Support Centre.</i>	<i>Given our current demographic, it is unlikely we could man a church relief team of our own in an ongoing way. Joining forces with an existing team is achievable.</i>		
	a) Consider supporting an existing church team in the network.	Expand the current basket collection to include vouchers to contribute. Parishioners joining the team at distribution point.	Letter of appreciation for support given.
	b) Empower all parishioners to be points of referral to emergency relief network.	Publish the Innisfail Relief roster & contacts in the Pew Bulletin and inform parishioners on how they can be points of referral for locals in need.	Feedback from parishioners about people they have been able to refer to the Emergency Relief network.
(8) Kids’ Bible verse cards given at communion time	a) A parishioner who can source (or print, laminate and cut) a range of Scripture verse cards for distribution to kids at Communion time.	A person to either buy cards from a Christian store or produce them on a computer. Print & laminate & cut in parish office. Need a wide variety and changeover so kids don’t end up getting the same cards over time.	Cards being distributed and kids (and parents) appreciating them.
(9) Collection of tracts and catechetical brochures	a) A collection of brochures & leaflets explaining aspects of belief & practice.	Digital resources already exist, just need shelving/display near entrance.	That the brochures need replacing = meeting people’s interest.