

MINISTRY PLAN

2021 – 2023

In the Ministry Plan, you will find the following components (click to be taken straight to each one):

[Introduction](#) – the story so far, about the Ministry Plan, your Ministry Plan

List of [values](#) the Ministry Plan is based on

Detail on each value:

[Values 1 & 2](#)

[Value 3](#)

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[Appendix 1](#) – bible passages associated with values

The story so far

Over the last 9 months, the Board and the staff have been working on Ministry Planning for 2021-23. At the end of 2019, when we started the process of searching for the new Pastor of Living Church, the Board was conscious of, and anticipating, the changes that would naturally come from a new pastor joining our church and working with him to bring his vision for how we do ministry. In their wisdom, the call was made to spend the time waiting on God, and continuing the good work we were already doing. It was hoped that a new pastor would be with us in 12-18 months.

And then 2020 came, and we saw a lot of changes that were outside of our control. All of a sudden our focus changed to helping people stay connected, trying to combat anxieties, and reshaping ministry in the face of restrictions.

Late in 2020, as we realised the wait for a pastor was likely to be longer than originally thought, and that the uncertainty around COVID was likely to be around for a while, the Board reassessed their position to just continue as we were; that with a longer wait, it would be wise to think where God might be wanting us to progress ministries. So they set about a process of doing this.

These are the steps taken so far:

1. September 2020 - Taking into consideration the culture, mission, and values of Living Church, the Board set out a high level Ministry Framework.
2. November 2020 – John Wallace and Malcolm Griffin took this framework to the staff team, and in consultation with the Board and staff, a set of 3 year priorities were agreed upon, and a Ministry Plan developed.
3. January 2021 – at the annual staff off-site the staff team, guided by Kathy and Dave Thurston, worked through a process of looking at Scripture to discern the God given reason the church exists, and to start looking at how we all answer that calling.
4. February 2021 – the Ministry Plan Draft is ready for consultation with our Key Ministry Leaders.

About the Ministry Plan

This Ministry Plan was developed by the Board and staff team to provide focus for the leadership of our church over the next 3 years, and we are now seeking consultation from you - our brothers and sisters who partner in the mission of our church - to engage, refine, test, and challenge this plan.

The values in this document were developed by the Board and staff some time ago, using the longstanding vision of our church. They were then reviewed against the information gathered from the church SWOT analysis. They are not listed in any order of priority, and the plan doesn't list all the things we will be working on over the next few years. Our existing ministries will continue and will be reviewed and fall into this plan where they fit. Similarly, the plan includes a lot of things we already do, but provides a bit more focus and intentionality to them. The Board and staff will be tracking each of the key ministry directions using a number of difference key performance measures.

Your Ministry Plan

Ministry is not just something the staff do – it is something we all partner together in. While this plan is primarily designed to guide the Board and staff, it will involve our whole church family in how we do ministry together, so we feel it is wise to seek feedback from our partners in the work.

To date, we have found feedback that has been useful in shaping the priorities and objectives in the plan, but we have also found some feedback that will be more useful in our implementation of the plan. We may find there will also be feedback that will spark a conversation – and we look forward to that.

Values

Value 1: We know and worship the true God who reveals himself in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Value 2: We receive the blessings of forgiveness, new life and adoption into the family of God, through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Value 3: We shape our ministry around the Bible as the inspired and authoritative Word of God. From start to finish, it tells the story of God redeeming the world through his son Jesus.

Value 4: We actively seek to make disciples, and encourage them to live Christ-centred lives, overflowing with grace and love as a community, in groups and as individuals.

Value 5: We gather as a community in a way that is not only encouraging and challenging for God's people but is accessible for believer and non-believer.

Value 6: We are a Church of Growth Groups not a church with Growth Groups. The primary aim of our Growth Groups is not information or formation but transformation into Christ-likeness.

Value 7: We continue to grow up in Christ together, empowered by the Holy Spirit; a growing up that develops healthy and generous habits with our time, money, emotions and relationships – our whole life.

Value 8: We are a 'pathway' church not a 'menu' church.

Value 9: We have a vertical pathway where our young people are encouraged to grow into maturity and ministry, working in partnership with their parents and the whole church family.

Value 10: We have a leadership that models mature living and servant-heartedness, and equips the members of our church to do the same.

Value 11: We train and equip everyone to serve in ministry teams with a special focus on those with the character, gifts and desire to move into more focussed ministry (full or part-time).

Value 12: We pastorally care deeply for our whole church family, primarily through Growth Groups, engaging extra support where necessary.

Value 13: We look outside ourselves to serve Jesus and a world in need, through partnerships in local and world missions.

Value 14: We depend on God for all of this through a commitment to prayer.

Value 1: We know and worship the true God who reveals himself in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Value 2: We receive the blessings of forgiveness, new life and adoption into the family of God, through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passages

Key Ministry Direction:

- Evaluate all we do in Ministry against our values.

How these will be achieved:

- Implement annual review of each ministry (or at close of ministry if not ongoing) to ensure it is in line with our values. Review to include ministry leaders and people involved in the ministry, as well as some who are not involved in the ministry but might be valuable to the team.

Definitions:

n/a

Value 3: We shape our ministry around the Bible as the inspired and authoritative Word of God. From start to finish, it tells the story of God redeeming the world through his son Jesus.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passages

Key Ministry Direction:

- Teaching of foundations of the Christian faith are incorporated into teaching programs.
- Integrated teaching across services, Kids Church, Youth, Growth Groups and Family Discipleship, with scope for personalisation as needed.
- Ensure quality of preaching/teaching maintained, particularly in the absence of a Pastor.

How these will be achieved:

- Over a two-year period include at least one series focused on foundations of Christian faith.
- Critique preaching against how well it teaches application of Christian foundations and implement review process for preaching series.

Definitions:

n/a

Value 4: We actively seek to make disciples, and encourage them to live Christ-centred lives, overflowing with grace and love as a community, in groups and as individuals.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passages

Key Ministry Direction:

- Disciple making of believers is embodied in our practices, culture and lives, and is visible in our individual lives and in our households.

How these will be achieved:

- Develop a framework for discipleship by July 2021.
- Identify 20 people to undertake the discipleship framework.

Definitions:

Discipleship: Labouring in the lives of a few, with the intention of imparting one's life, God's word and the gospel, in such a way as to see them become mature and equipped followers of Christ, committed to doing the same in the lives of others.

Value 5: We gather as a community in a way that is not only encouraging and challenging for God's people but is accessible for believer and non-believer.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passage

Key Ministry Direction:

- We welcome those who don't yet belong to our church family, whilst also seeking to grow those who do. A missional effort for the lost is maintained as an explicit and implicit focus for Living Church. This includes both local and world mission.
- Physical meeting as a body of believers on Sundays, at Growth Groups, and at ad hoc events is prioritized.

How these will be achieved:

- Implement a "Gathering Together" plan to encourage post Covid attendance at church gatherings. Plan to include separate actions for Sunday, Growth Group, other programs (playtime) and ad hoc events.
- Use evidence from societal responses to COVID to help us respond as a church to increase engagement.
- Implement deliberate move to include non-believers in all programs.
- Give Non-believers opportunities to explore Christianity.
- Ensure our property and ministries are safe and suitable for our community.

Definitions:

n/a

Value 6: We are a Church of Growth Groups not a church with Growth Groups. The primary aim of our Growth Groups is not information or formation but transformation into Christ-likeness.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passages

Key Ministry Direction:

Growth Groups are a place where spiritual transformation happens

How these will be achieved:

- Encourage people to join a Growth Group.
- Encourage regular physical meeting together, including Growth Group weekends away.
- Develop succession planning for Growth Group Leader.
- Implement Growth Group Leader meeting with Coaches to discuss Growth Group health at least twice annually.
- Encourage all groups to have a Growth Group Agreement that includes physical meeting as a priority and spiritual transformation as a goal.

Definitions:

Growth Group Health Check: A regular discussion between the Coach and Leader where matters such engagement, pastoral care, specific challenges and, where necessary, plans for the future of the Group, are covered. These will be confidential discussions with the understanding that information is shared with the Board.

Growth Group Agreement: A record, developed together by the Growth Group, of how the group will function and includes such things as: date and time to meet; venue; expectations about preparation; attendance expectations; flow of the study; meals or food; communication methods, confidentiality; social events, including weekend away; evangelism; roles within the group; pastoral care; prayer; music; planting a new group etc.

<https://church2church.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Growth-Group-Agreements.pdf>

Value 7: We continue to grow up in Christ together, empowered by the Holy Spirit; a growing up that develops healthy and generous habits with our time, money, emotions and relationships – our whole life.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passage

Key Ministry Direction:

- Finances and resources are focused to enable the Ministry Plan
- We continue to enable people to give generously/sacrificially of themselves and their money, and regularly challenge them to do so

How these will be achieved:

Prepare budget that aligns with the Ministry plan.

Teach stewardship.

Encourage everyone to review how they're serving.

Definitions:

Stewardship: Biblical stewardship covers a broad spectrum of topics for discussion: from serving God, to being trustworthy Christians, to helping your neighbour, honouring God with your earthly possessions, and so much more.

A steward is a person who has been entrusted with, and who manages, another's resources according to the owner's vision and values. The gospel calls us to recognize that everything we have is a gift from God (James 1:17) — and that those gifts are to be used for his glory and to further his kingdom.

Value 8: We are a 'pathway' church not a 'menu' church.

Key Ministry Direction:

Conduct events that feed our Connect, Grow, Serve pathway

How these will be achieved:

- Develop a process to add ministries and events that contribute to our pathway model of church.
- Implement a "Connect for Everyone" guideline, empowering people to run own events within guidelines to connect.
- Conduct review of events to determine whether beneficial.

Definitions:

Pathway Church: A church that encourage people to move along the pathway towards maturity in Christ. At Living Church we operate with a Connect, Grow, Serve pathway. Events such as Community Connect are doorways into the pathway, not distractions.

Menu Church: A church that provides a smorgasbord of menu options for people to get involved in.

Value 9: We have a vertical pathway where our young people are encouraged to grow into maturity and ministry, working in partnership with their parents and the whole church family.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passages

Key Ministry Direction:

- Kids, Youth, and Young Adults ministries thrive as we come out of COVID restrictions
- Continue to encourage growth for our young people, but also have programs accessible to non-believers

How these will be achieved:

- Kids Connect, Youth Connect and Playtime Connect programs grow in reach to families.
- Reengage in schools ministry as a pre-connect opportunity for young people.
- Youth Growth Groups start with a central community building focus to complement individual Growth Groups.
- Implement having all Youth Growth Group Leaders meeting with a Youth Coach to discuss Youth Growth Group health.

Definitions:

Growth Group Health Check: A regular discussion between the Coach and Leader where matters such as engagement, pastoral care, specific challenges and, where necessary, plans for the future of the Group, are covered. These will be confidential discussions with the understanding that information is shared with the Board.

Value 10: We have a leadership that models mature living and servant-heartedness, and equips the members of our church to do the same.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passages

Key Ministry Direction:

- All leaders (ministry leaders, staff & Board) are subject to accountability measures
- Conduct a critical analysis of all ministry activities to ensure they meet our core values

How these will be achieved:

- All leaders are coached and/or mentored.
- Staff regularly participate in formative review process.
- Update all policies and procedures, ensuring delegations and healthy leadership and governance are incorporated at all levels.
- Ensure all markers of credibility and compliance are identified.

Definitions:

Coach: Someone who catches up with their leader regularly, with the focus on providing training, assistance and encouragement, in order to improve their ministry skills.

Mentor: Someone who catches up with their leader regularly, with the focus on providing structured encouragement and challenge, in order to help them grow as a mature Christian who has a strong relationship with God.

Formative review: A process by which the staff member collects feedback on a set of questions from people they work with (both directly and indirectly), in order to gain insight into areas of strength, as well as those that require improvement. This feedback then informs their personal and professional development goals for the subsequent 6 month period.

Value 11: We train and equip everyone to serve in ministry teams with a special focus on those with the character, gifts and desire to move into more focussed ministry (full or part-time).

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passages

Key Ministry Direction:

- Our congregation members are enabled to frame, participate and ultimately run ministries with the support of staff. A pattern of training is followed where people are taught, shown, and then supported as they lead. Periodic reviews are carried out to ensure the right people are being used for the right task, and everyone is given an opportunity to serve.

How these will be achieved:

- Develop curriculum content with appropriate experience and pattern of training.
- Prepare ministry position descriptions that include role definition, training, accountabilities, expectations, delegations and periodic review.

Definitions:

n/a

Value 12: We pastorally care deeply for our whole church family, primarily through Growth Groups, engaging extra support where necessary.

Key Ministry Direction:

- Pastoral care is a tangible demonstration of our love for each other.
Note: This includes the full spectrum of care as groups, and in appropriate and safe follow-up (Dr John Warlow – Christian Wholeness Framework Pyramid) with ongoing and sustained effort given to closing gaps in pastoral care as we continue to love and care for each other

How these will be achieved:

- Establish reporting process for pastoral issues, involving elders.
- Develop a privacy and confidentiality policy and process.
- Identify gaps in care and expectations and communicate improvements.

Definitions:

Pastoral care: Care for people in any circumstance of life, sharing God's love and provision to them, through appropriate care. This is done using the 'CURE' framework – connect, understand, respond, engage help, evaluate – understanding that, as a church, we are just one part of the solution.

Value 13: We look outside ourselves to serve Jesus and a world in need, through partnerships in local and world missions.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passage

Key Ministry Direction:

- Strengthen relationships with local and world mission partners

How these will be achieved:

- Raise profile of partnerships with updates in newsletter, prayer on Sundays etc.
- Increase level of engagement Growth Groups have with their mission partners.
- Explore mercy ministry opportunities.

Definitions:

Mercy Ministries: Ministries that focus on caring for vulnerable people. In the context of Living Church, this will most often be people from outside our church. Mercy Ministries can be undertaken by individuals, Growth Groups or ministry teams. Our care must be respectful, appropriate & pointing people to Jesus.

Value 14: We depend on God for all of this through a commitment to prayer.

See [Appendix](#) for relevant bible passages

Key Ministry Direction:

- We are in conversation with God, seeking his will in all of life, ministry and relationships

How these will be achieved:

- Continue Sunday prayer meeting and raise profile by establishing a prayer ministry.
- Include teaching series on prayer in the next 2 years.
- Pray for our ministries, thank God for answered prayers.
- Review how well structures and systems encourage a life of prayer, not a prayer life.

Definitions:

n/a

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Appendix 1

Value 1: We know and worship the true God who reveals himself in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

John 14:6-9

⁶ Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know^u my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.'

⁸ Philip said, 'Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.'

⁹ Jesus answered: 'Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"?'

Philippians 2:5-8

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ who, being in very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!

Colossians 1:15-20

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Value 2: We receive the blessings of forgiveness, new life and adoption into the family of God, through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:38-39

³⁸ Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.'

Ephesians 1:15

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession – to the praise of his glory.

Value 3: We shape our ministry around the Bible as the inspired and authoritative Word of God. From start to finish, it tells the story of God redeeming the world through his son Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy

Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God^[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Luke 24

⁴⁴He said to them, 'This is what I told you while I was still with you: everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.'

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He told them, 'This is what is written: the Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

1 Cor. 10:1-6

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. ²They were all baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. ³They all ate the same spiritual food ⁴and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. ⁶Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

Value 4: We actively seek to make disciples, and encourage them to live Christ-centred lives, overflowing with grace and love as a community, in groups and as individuals.

Matt 28:18-20

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

Eph.4:1-3

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Col.2:6-7

⁶So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Value 5: We gather as a community in a way that is not only encouraging and challenging for God's people but is accessible for believer and non-believer.

1 Cor.14:11-12;24-25

¹¹If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker is a foreigner to me. ¹²So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church.

²⁴But if an unbeliever or an enquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, ²⁵as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'

Value 6: We are a Church of Growth Groups not a church with Growth Groups. The primary aim of our Growth Groups is not information or formation but transformation into Christ-likeness.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God^[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Eph.4:14-16

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Value 7: We continue to grow up in Christ together, empowered by the Holy Spirit; a growing up that develops healthy and generous habits with our time, money, emotions and relationships – our whole life.

Eph.4:14-16

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Value 8: We are a 'pathway' church not a 'menu' church.

N/A as more of a process/strategic value

Value 9: We have a vertical pathway where our young people are encouraged to grow into maturity and ministry, working in partnership with their parents and the whole church family.

Eph.6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² 'Honour your father and mother' – which is the first commandment with a promise – ³ 'so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.

⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

2 Tim.2:1-2

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

Value 10: We have a leadership that models mature living and servant-heartedness, and equips the members of our church to do the same.

2 Tim.2:1-2

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

1 Tim.3:1-7

Here is a trustworthy saying: whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. ² Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. ⁵ (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Value 11: We train and equip everyone to serve in ministry teams with a special focus on those with the character, gifts and desire to move into more focussed ministry (full or part-time).

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Value 12: We pastorally care deeply for our whole church family, primarily through Growth Groups, engaging extra support where necessary.

N/A as more of a process/strategic value

Value 13: We look outside ourselves to serve Jesus and a world in need, through partnerships in local and world missions.

Matt 28:18-20

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

Value 14: We depend on God for all of this through a commitment to prayer.

Col.4:2-6

² Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in

chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Phil.1:4-6

⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

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