



TOWN HALL #2

22 Oct 2023, 8pm

Transformation: Ministries & Mission Steering Committee

Australian Mission Centre,
Community of Christ

Opening Prayer

Rob Thompson, committee member, Transformation Minister



Schedule

22 Oct

Welcome & Opening prayer

Inputs – what have we learned so far

- Context & previous reports
- Engagement: the small groups + ind conversations

What now?

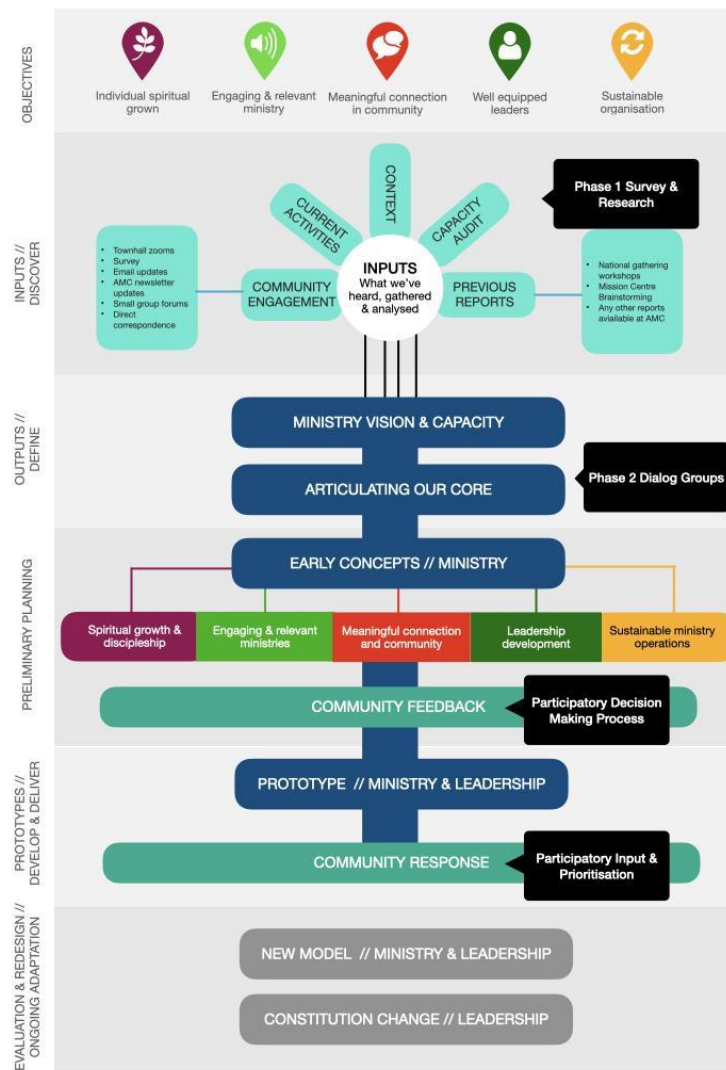
- Survey
- Conversation tree
- Idea dialog groups (December)

Question & Answer time

Closing Prayer



Building Context: our process



Context: ministry life-cycle

1

Seeds

Activities that are just sprouting

2

New expressions

Seedlings that have begun and need careful attention and support

3

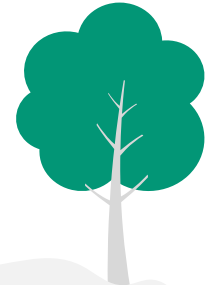
Thriving ministries & activities

Activities with momentum and well-established leaders and support

4

Legacy ministries & activities

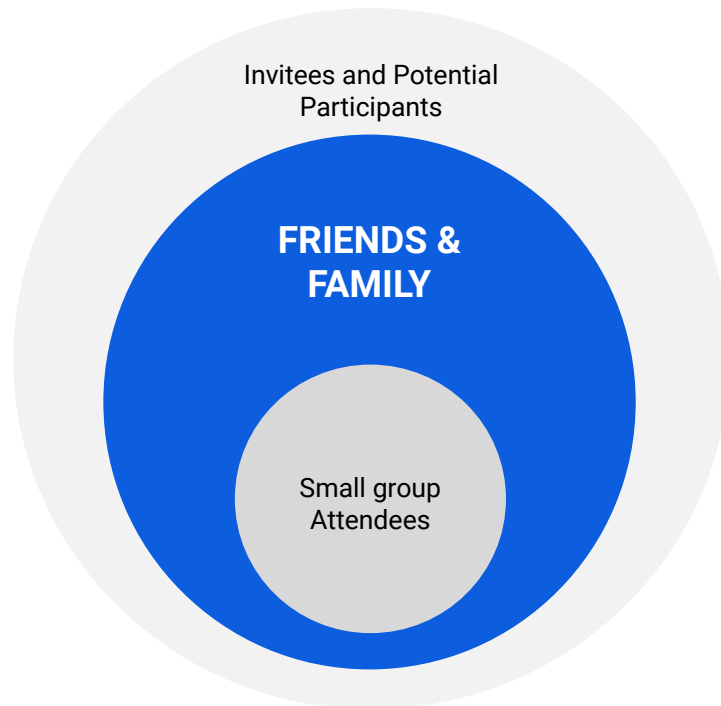
Activities that have tradition, but no longer as relevant as they once were.



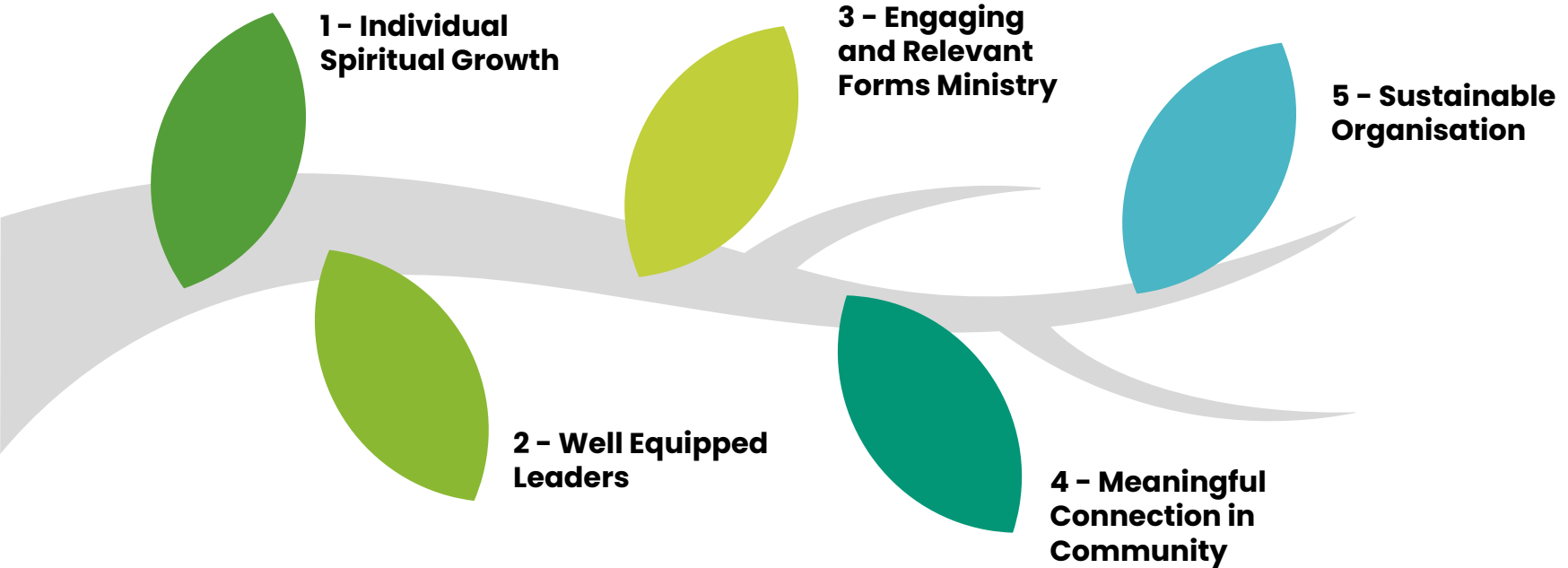
Where are we now?

- Over 40 people attended 5 small group sessions; mostly over 60yo
- 3 individual conversations recorded
- Some 'frequent flyer' repeat attendees

- Just starting to pull together insights
- Survey and conversation guide in draft form to be circulated this week (more info later)



What we've heard so far: Emerging Themes



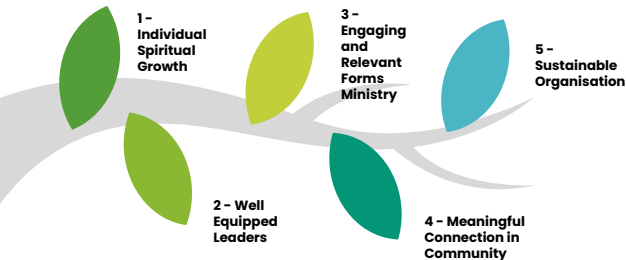
Spiritual growth

Spirituality and spiritual growth is mainly an independent endeavour

Growth and learning still a meaningful personal goal.

“sharing important for spiritual growth, activities like leadership camp. Being challenged to “extend myself”, learning and experiencing different circumstances”

Engage in range of activities including daily bread reflection, podcasts, scripture reading / study, prayer, spiritual practices, walks in nature, and more...



Well equipped leaders

Members and leaders are tired or still grieving the loss of a ‘well rounded’ church life (lost congregations, lost campgrounds, lost leaders, etc.)

Foundations for current leaders came from:

- Leadership camp classes,
- priesthood training,
- older youth service corps,
- example of ministers (eg Ray Burdekin, Jack gunning, Jack Imrie)
- and more...

[Camping ministries & other programs for spiritual growth] “Huge impact, “vital” to who I am; camp experiences provided blessings, opportunity to serve, learning, and encouragement.”

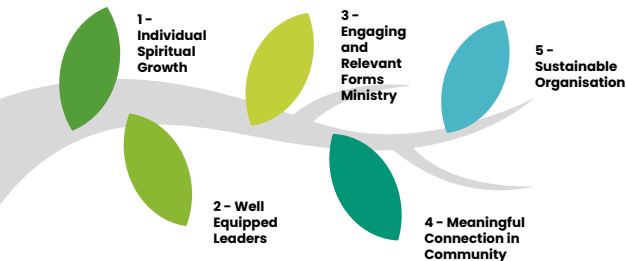
Engaging & relevant ministry

Camps/retreats/larger events are still important to many

Some people doing 40+ hours of ministry as pastoral care and service

Keeping a witness to Christ for the next generation is motivating for a few

“Participating in first older youth service corps group visit to New Zealand and New Caledonia - life changing, at a significant time (age): ‘inspired me to explore [the world], seek out different and interesting cultures and where there might be opportunities to serve’.



Meaningful connection

Congregational life now mostly serves as a social base/support network; a place for fellowship

Incredibly complex ecosystem of past church life has been reduced down to mainly small group gatherings/ friendships, social/care networks, and locally-distinct community engagement

“Gathering and sharing with the other congregations. Regular monthly pastors connection, - keeping us all connected and interacting.... and we grow from that....spiritually and mentally and emotionally.”

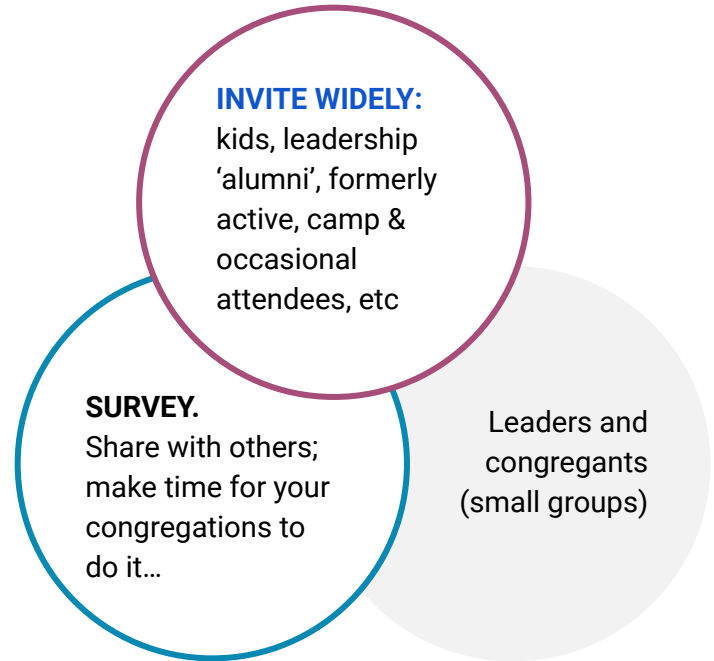
“Prayer services have given me a lot of spiritual growth”

Where to next?

First phase: time to extend our reach

- We've now talked with many of you in small groups / our core
- Now we need to talk to those who are 'unattached', remote, friends of our programs and others who do not regularly attend a group
- Share the survey and have coffee chats in wider circles.

Next: Start discernment and dialog about new ministries



Complete and share the survey

The link will be shared this Wednesday (we are in pilot checking mode)...



Ministry transformation - Survey 1

What matters most to you, in your religious and spiritual life? What would you like to uphold to the community as important, as we begin to evolve our ministries? As we consider the possibilities for what comes next for the Community of Christ in Australia, we are taking time to reflect on our experiences, values and needs and seek any ideas you already have about new expressions of ministry and mission.

In this survey you will find questions related to five (5) big themes, and we will also ask you to nominate your preferred area to explore further and any people that you think we should talk to who may not already be part of this discussion.

So, the pages you will go through are:

1. Individual spiritual growth
2. Well-developed leaders
3. Engaging and relevant forms of ministry
4. Meaningful connection in community
5. Sustainable organisation
6. Your preferences and connection ideas

You can save your answers and return at a later time to complete more sections or edit your answers, so don't think you have to do it all in one go.

Are you ready? If so, click next and begin the survey.

1/3 33%

Next

Invite Widely: A conversation tree

INVITE WIDELY:

kids, leadership
'alumni', formerly
active, camp &
occasional
attendees, etc

SURVEY.

Share with others;
make time for
your
congregations to
do it...

Leaders and
congregants
(small
groups)

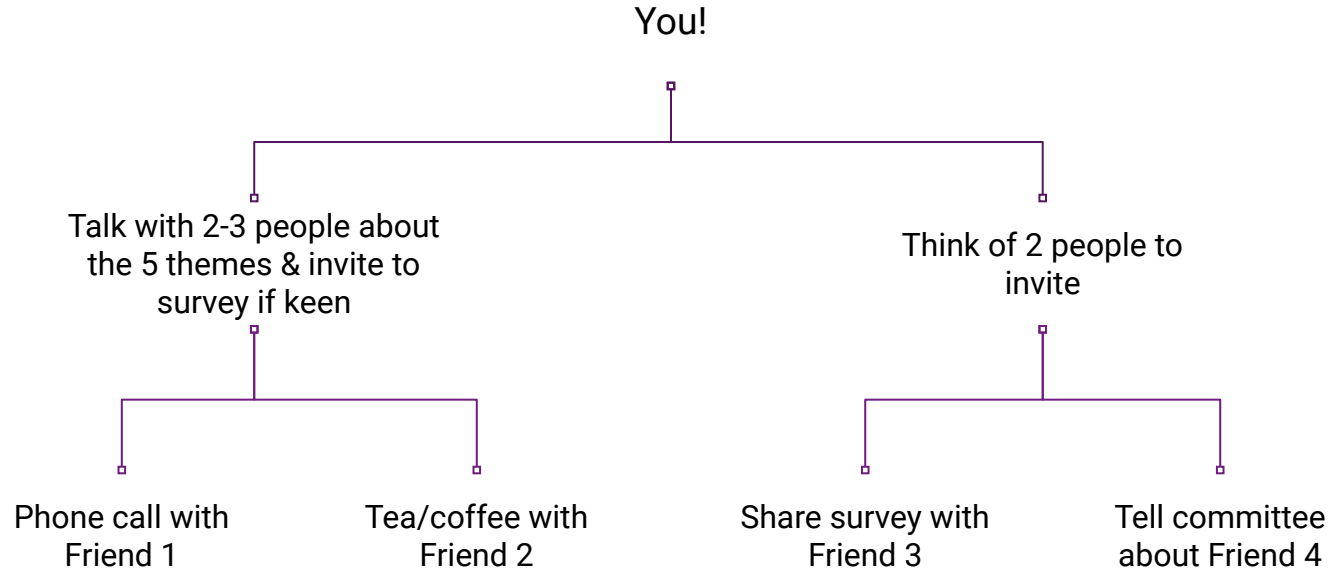
In the tradition of the 'phone tree' we encourage you to each reach out to 2 or 3 people and ask them about the themes.

Is there someone you share with who hasn't been to a small group session?

- your family who don't attend regularly;
- take 15 minutes before a worship service to let folks complete the survey;
- ask friends of our programs what they're seeking;
- talk with those who no longer attend but used to be keen.

We will provide a short conversation helper and guide or if you prefer, let us know their contact info and we will reach out. Then, let us know what you discovered via a short email, conversation or in the survey so their perspective and insights will be included.

A 'conversation tree'






Opportunities to participate

The next phase:

- Survey. Will be distributed electronically + hardcopy available to print and via postal service.
- Individual conversations. Invite you to a conversation 'tree' where we encourage you to have a conversations with friends and those who haven't participated.
- Ad-hoc small group sessions
- Monthly Town Hall Meetings continue (Sunday nights)

Dialog Sessions:

As you nominate your willingness to participate in further exploration of one or more of the themes, we will begin to group people together into working parties to explore opportunities within the 5 themes.



Calendar for next phase:

	Date/Day	Topic // Focus
Town Hall #2	Sun 22 October, 8pm - 9pm	Present summary of findings so far, themes emerging from groups, nuances, etc. & Next steps
Survey	Distributed after Town Hall	Reflect on 5 themes, Ideas, and Connections. Nominate to be involved in dialogue groups
Conversations & Small Gp Sessions	Various	Reach out to individuals for 1:1 conversations; complete at least 3 postponed and additional small group discussions
Town Hall #3	Sun 19 November	Full 'Where we are' summary, full results of survey. Opportunity to begin breakout groups.
Dialogue Sessions	Maybe weeknight?	4 themes: Conversations around each theme specifically, and feedback from surveys/ conversations
Town Hall #4	Sun 17 December	Survey #2 Results. Themes from small groups / working parties. Some stage of ideation?
Dialogue groups	TBA: Break out groups, members to lead?	All themes explored concurrently with different projects/ working groups. Draw upon a concise framework to consider program design / audience / feasibility, etc.

Q&A Time

What questions do you have?

- Please ask – if you're not sure chances are someone else isn't sure either
- We will log them to investigate and report back if we can't answer them now

A few basic etiquette guidelines:

- Respect other perspectives that may be shared
- Speak from your perspective using “I” language, or “I heard you say...”
- Keep comments brief if you can – we have a limited time together and want as many as people as possible to have the opportunity to speak

Reminder: October 29th

The Council of Twelve warmly invites the church around the world to unite on **October 29, 2023, for a special day of fasting and prayer.**

“We hope that everyone will wholeheartedly engage in this unique day as we collectively seek God’s will regarding the discernment of the next prophet-president of the Church.

We want to emphasize the importance of the discernment process, as outlined by the First Presidency. The bright future of our church hinges on our ability to listen attentively to the Spirit and to act diligently. We encourage you to continue submitting your reflections and names, adhering to the established deadlines.

Beloved Community of Christ, may the Holy Spirit, the source of unity and determination, consistently guide us and deepen our faith and devotion to Christ. We pray that all of you may be renewed, strengthened, and inspired in this noble mission.”



Closing Prayer

Peter Lonsdale, committee member

