

## **“Refreshing our Vision” - KLMC**

### 1. The Objective of the ‘Vision Process’

Firstly to look at the on-going life of our church and its congregation, also at our wider community. Over the past 10 years our church and the town have changed in size and composition; this has also occurred in our church during its 175 years existence; over time changes have been made to suit changing needs. Today we need to consider how our church needs to be made “fit for the future”.

We want to involve the whole church in discovering answers to two key questions

- How well do our present church activities match our church’s needs today?
- What might ‘tomorrow’s church’ need to look like (the next 3-5 years) and how might we need to adapt?

In addition, in a community which has also changed in composition and expectation and which is set to expand further, how can we, the Methodist church and the individuals in it, best show Christ in our lives to the whole community of Kirkby Lonsdale? Answers to the above questions will be based on the 4 pillars of Methodism – Worship, Learning and Caring, Service and Evangelism.

Within the above points, we seek a common and shared purpose for the church which reflects our internal and community needs and which everyone can feel a part of and accept as the on-going life of their church.

Two key points are that:

- God’s leading is central to this process and we will listen to what He says, and
- there is no in-built assumption that everything in the church will have to change; the basic premise is that, because of the changes which have occurred, we as a church need to regularly review all our activities and our links with the community in which we live.

## 2. How to do it?

By forming a team of around 6-8 people (the 'Working Group', previously called 'Core Team') chosen from church members nominated by the congregation and who have experience and interest in leading groups, we will review the above questions. The minister and stewards (who themselves represent a range of ideas within the church) will monitor the work of the core team and report regularly to the church council.

The Core Team needs to involve many other church members in considering what we currently do as a church and why and what are the needs of our church and our wider community today. By so doing, we will build a clear and shared picture of what currently happens in our church and its value and we will also explore ideas for a future vision. By comparing the two we will be able to see if/where there are gaps and what needs to be done to fill those gaps i.e. to meet the current and future needs of our church and our community.

The process will take time and effort - we envisage that up to 6 months will be required. The result will be not only a refreshed vision but also a means for assessing our progress towards that vision.

## 3. The outcome

There are no pre-conceived ideas about what the outcome will be; it will depend on the reaction of the church as a whole to the ideas explored by the various teams who, it is hoped, will embrace a large proportion of the church. *But note that there were two areas agreed by everyone at the Church Away Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and which are basic to our future. It is proposed that these will be considered immediately without going through a full review process:*

- *Energized by faith – to develop our house groups and Bible study and prayer life.*
- *Understand the local community – review what are its many facets, what it does, what are its unanswered needs?*

## 4. How to get involved!

In order to achieve (and sustain for the future) what we want by refreshing our vision as a Church, we need some dedicated time and effort on the part of Church members in carrying out the work in four main areas:

- Our vision for the future – exploring different scenarios for how our Church might serve its members and our community, given the changes that have taken place and will continue to take place
- Understanding the “Truth about Today” – all the things we currently do which provide value today to our Church members and the community
- Helping to articulate and communicate the “Why change” question
- Working on “How we will get there” – practical, short-term steps as well as medium and longer-term actions

In order to achieve this – and in order to involve as many people as possible – we need volunteers to contribute in one of three main ways:

### Working Group Leaders

We need between 4-6 Working Group Leaders – each will lead a Working Group of around 6 people, setting direction, establishing priorities and getting the work done through one-on-interviews, background research and working together as a team to produce the outputs, making recommendations ultimately to the whole Church. Working Group Leaders need to be able to command the respect of their team members and the Church as a whole; they will be good at leading a team of people, be good communicators and have a style which easily engages a lot of people in the work.

### Working Group Members

Each Working Group needs around 6 people to focus on “getting the work done” – but they will also engage with a lot of other people in testing ideas, finding out facts and communicating progress. They will work individually and as part of a team on each of the main areas of work described above.

### Formation of a Reference Group

A group is made up of those people who do not wish to be actively involved in either leading a Working Group or being a member of a Working Group – but who want to be consulted about what is emerging from the work being done. Their role is to confirm/revise/refine what emerges from the work and to build support and commitment on behalf of the Church as a whole to our future vision.

The Stewards invite volunteers and/or nominations from the Church members to fill these roles – before the end of September – so that we can plan a training and official launch of the work by the November church meeting. The time commitment for each role is negotiable, depending on individual circumstances.

#### 5. Finally!

To be successful, the whole process of reviewing our church life and links to our community needs everyone to contribute at levels which suit them and their interests.

We hope and pray that everyone will want to support the outcome as something that they have been part of.

No one need be fearful of the review or the outcome; it is designed to support the needs of the whole church, younger and older.

This can be an exciting and energising process with everyone involved in shaping the future of our church and of how it should respond to the existing and changing needs of its members and the community in which it lives.

Please do join in.