Minister Community Pilot 3

18th March 2023

Summary:

We met at Scraptoft Church, with 8 churches present with 1 unable to attend.

**Aims of the day** were to: –

To build relationships, build trust, and discover more about each other and our churches.

To look for patterns and notice what God may be saying to us through our Conversation Prompts and Storyboards

To work out where our energy and focus needs to be when thinking about working effectively together as a Minster Community.

**By the end of this meeting we will have identified Working Groups to focus on particular aspects of minster community life – to help move us forward in this process**

As a result of this we committed to….

**MC Facilitators**

Share Church Storyboards and sticker responses

To update the Community Schools on to the schools map and circulate.

As a co-ordinating group to pay attention to the ‘big themes’ arising from the day, and in particular to work on an outline ‘Vision & Values’ piece that would inform the Working groups.

To update the collated prompts and share.

To share the ppt and infographics for local use.

(We will do this on a ‘hidden web page’ with a link rather than an email with lots of attachments)

**Churches**

Committed to seek volunteers for Working Groups, engage with the Vision & Values as they emerge, and continue to pray for each other.

Deadline of nominations Easter 2023.

Viv Frogatt volunteered to craft a prayer prompt from these and for the MC

Storyboard Big Themes

Congregations are reducing in numbers, aging with that leading to burnout and burden for some.

This is reflected in a priority around children, young people and schools.

The fears which are surfacing are around loss of identity, autonomy and tradition which is prompted by the difference we see between expressions of church.

There is a strong desire for growth but no clear idea on how that may happen.

We need a way of working out what we need to talk about to ensure the minister community can function and what we see commonality in and would like to talk about.

What we noticed from looking the Conversation Prompts

* That we are very diverse which may make finding a shared vision complex.
* We don’t have to do everything, we can focus on our context.
* That we may need to share resources and structures particularly around fresh expressions.
* We have a lot of opportunities around schools and churches working together.
* We seem to know ourselves quite well. Discipleship & Mission and People & Ministry are very similar.
* Are we sure that the input we have received is from the people who have the most accurate information?
* What is our hidden data? Non CofE schools etc?
* How good is our communication? Do we need a communication dashboard?

Questions Arising from the Conversation Prompts

(Answered in the room, so summary responses below)

**Do we have conversations with other denominations as part of the consultation around Minister Communities?**

*No, we don’t have capacity to do this at a high level but if local conversations arise they can be involved especially around LEP’s etc which don’t apply in this area.*

**Have we thought about involving St Theodores in Rushey Mead as historically they were part of the mission Partnership in this area? Particularly aware that they are in vacancy and may not have engaged with the process as they have limited leadership.**

*This is an area which we can look at by talking to the Area Dean and seeing if they would like to be involved, there are several times when they could join in, before the working groups or just after they have completed depending on their interest and level of engagement.*

*(Note SKB has now approached City Area Dean for her assistance in approaching Rushey Mead).*

**Do we fit?**

*This conversation will be better informed by the working groups as the vision becomes clearer.*

**How do we help growth over such a diverse set of traditions, locations and expressions with the resources we have available?**

*This question sits within the Mission & Discipleship working group conversation.*

**Intercultural church, how do we ensure that this priority isn’t lost and informs all of the conversations we have together?**

*We will invite Jessie Tang to have a conversation with us where we can unpack this question. We noted that St Chads, & Humberstone are part of the ‘ring’ of Inter-cultural worship churches (IWC), and will be able to help this conversation along with Hope Hamilton who are part of the core IWC project)*

**How will we engage with Thorpebury and the large new build plan for this area?**

*This will happen as part of our new communities working group conversations.*

**How will we look at our vision and values including Women in leadership, Theology and Tradition and LLF which we have diverse perspectives on?**

*The co ordinating team will discuss this and return to the wider groups with a plan of how to include these into our working groups.*

**What do we need to pay attention to around buildings which aren’t ‘churches’?**

*This will fit into our buildings working group conversation.*

**What are the legal issues and potential trip hazards for the Minister Community both now and in the future?**

*The legal status on the churches will not change, there will be a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ which should clarify any issues we have now and leave space for future changes.*

**What support will be available for those churches in vacancy and those needing support?**

*This will be looked at in the detail later on. It was noted that this is both a future and an immediate question, as several churches in the process are currently in vacancy.*

**What will happen around worship timing and provision of staff?**

*This will be looked at in the detail later on, once the working groups have reported, although the ministry working group will begin to scope the territory.*