



We also agree wholeheartedly with the suggestion that a specific "communicator" role be created. The heart of this role is to improve communication both within the church and from the church outwards. We are engaged in the process of identifying and inviting this person or couple.

9 – Review of the review

We want to welcome the help that the review team have offered us! We are going to suggest:

- That once every six months a delegate of the review team is invited to Wantage for a day to be with the new team, to help the team stay on track and to feed back to the elders any observations they may have. Their visit would be made known to the whole church and anyone who wished to express a perspective to them would be most welcome to, confidentially or otherwise.
- That we invite another full review in three years time, January 2012. The team we invite to do this might be changed from the team invited this time so that, again, a fresh perspective is brought into our situation.

3 – Building

We are wondering whether, as a faith step towards this, we should express our vision by donating a significant sum of money towards a building project way outside our "sphere" – a hospital near a war zone or something like that!

Other points

Ultimately, the new team will take responsibility for the church and the outcome of the review, and it is the desire of the current team to give them as few answers set in stone as possible. So, we have little to say on the other points right now, other than that we continue to pray that God would clarify, lead, enable and send his power!

Responding to the Review

Where we've got to

Bulletin 1

March 2009

Introduction

This is an attempt to feedback to the church the outcome of the first few weeks of feedback, prayer and discussion by current church leadership. We want to be as inclusive and transparent as possible in this process, but still to lead!

Overall, we feel that the review was extremely helpful and welcome both the report and its recommendations. However, we cannot work on them all at once, so this report only comments on the areas that we have taken the time to consider deeply so far.

Points 1, 2 and 5 – New team and “communicator”

Overall, we believe that this proposal from the review team is correct. The encouragement of the review was to create a new team which would:

- Include the existing eldership couples.
- Broaden the personality types within the leadership.
- Bring mission into the heart of the team.
- Possibly bring villages more into the vision of the team
- Develop an intergenerational approach to leadership
- Increase prophetic and evangelistic creativity and risk-taking

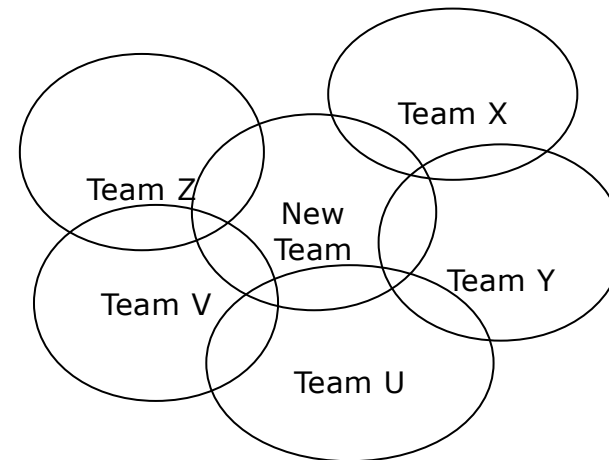
This is absolutely in line with our desire to be a church which exists to see the gospel, the grace of God, impacting and changing our communities and lives for the better – A city church in a market town.

This means we are not engaged on a classic hunt for leaders. The suggestion, which we agree with, is that we create a new group around the elders which will provide them with a much wider perspective, vision and connection with both the breadth of the church and the vision for the lost. This can only mean creating a team which is not a typical church “leadership team” and which will have some risk associated with it. The team should be aiming to bring fresh life, perspective and vision to the church. We are definitely not looking for more elders or elders-in-waiting!

Linked to setting up this new team, we would see much more freedom for other teams to get on and work out in practice the many things that are important to the church. Our desire is to create the space for each and every member of the church to find and fulfil the reason God made them.

We have had a number of suggestions about specific people, which we welcome. Obviously, it will be impossible to agree that every suggestion is 100% from God (given that some are contradictory), but we are seeking God to discern his pattern in what we have heard both from him as we prayed and in the feedback we receive. We don't think that there are a fixed number of “seats” that we are aiming to fill – getting the overall feel of the team right is the aim, within the limits of the size of a functioning team. We do not see this team as doing everything, but rather creating the connectedness, the atmosphere and the vision which releases other teams to change our region for Christ.

It could, perhaps, be drawn like this, although this is really for the new team to define and describe and we are trying very hard not to bake their cakes!



One piece of feedback which has been regularly received is the idea that an invitation to be on this team shouldn't be forever. We agree wholeheartedly, but we are concerned about fixing “terms of office” as we feel that they may create just as many potential problems as “once in always in”. We propose to resolve this by being clear that any invitation is “for a season” and that we would seek together to discern when that season might be ending. We see the review process suggested below as a key part of this.

So, we are proposing to create this new team, although we have yet to determine the best name for it! We are engaged in a process of asking those we feel God has highlighted, please pray for us and them that this process runs as God would have it.