

# Synod 2022 – Talking Circle Notes

## Enabling Flourishing Faith Communities

### Group A

Facilitator: John Rolley

#### Q2. What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?

Being seen as a resource.

We need God here now – people see how lives are changed.

Just being present and confident we have a gift to share.

People willing to help each other.

Community outreach.

Has God at the center.

Praying all the time.

Bible study groups.

Parishioners taking more responsibilities.

Sharing life with one another.

Tell the story – sing the story.

How we interact with people outside the community.

Rejoicing and celebrating where God is in our midst.

Allow people to feel vulnerable.

Not looking back – look forward.

#### Q3 What would enhance a flourishing faith community

Keep your eye on a fixed point.

Where our community is placed in a changing world.

Look around local area to see what groups are already meeting and see what is needed.

To not be frightened to be what God calls you to be.

Can share our faith by our actions.

**Q2. What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

A group of diverse people who care about one another, or tries to do so.

A group that accepts challenges and failures as they explore what it means to love one another as children of God.

Open communication within the church community.

Engaging with community outside the church to help them belong.

Caring for each other is good but need to grow in knowledge and love of God, giving the community a look at something that they will want to belong to.

Welcoming of newcomers.

Sense of enthusiasm of what people are doing – do what you do with joy.

Sense of community and caring for each other.

Willingness to discuss faith issues with each other.

Worshippers are engaged in other ways – motivated by their faith to volunteer in multiple ways in and outside the church living out the mission of Christ.

Community that helps you find your unique place in God's service.

Links with mission agencies outward looking not just for the insiders.

Fluid boundaries between in and out no one excluded.

Praying together.

Fellowship cuppa to get to know everyone better.

Diversity, accepting, safe, a fun place to be.

More than going to church on Sunday. Being and living in the community not just about numbers flourishing is about meaningfulness of what we do.

A safe place for sinners engages each meaningfully a group around the lordship of Christ and allow him the power and glory.

A diverse group prepared to love one another even though they are different, because they are different and love in action in community.

Growing in knowledge and love of Christ.

Excited.

**Q3. What would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Encouraging people to volunteer to get into new ministries - move away from "priest does church stuff" into "we can do this" ministry!

Increased energy and enthusiasm.

Outreach.

Encouragement.

Welcoming.

Fresh ideas -new people coming in especially young people.

More time to sit together and talk about deep stuff visioning mostly – our sitting down times are structured conversations working as a whole group.

Make services more understandable for new believers – how better to explain the good news in terms people understand.

Money, buildings, young people is the quick answer.

A group of people struggling together which opens a new set of conversations

Give people a greater awareness of what they already have how encouraging.

Doing your own ministry wherever you are every day.

Letting go of personal agendas and deeply care for one another.

Healing - we are struggling against each other rather than working together and appreciating each other we have the good news!

How better to market oneself in the wider community - how the media portrays church is not great people find other community elsewhere. Need better marketing.

Say sorry to God and start fresh post COVID reset.

Level of people's commitment to church and faith needs to grow – focus on Christ not on stuff / materialistic.

Risk taking by parishioners and by their community - how to invite people to be part of God's church.

Need to tell our story our good news and tell it well, not just the clergy but people too.

Connecting with the community.

Doing it together – within the parish; with neighboring parishes; with the community.

Improve how we as a church take criticism.

Learn and grow together.

Being prepared for personal growth!

Care, really care for each other, like we did in phone networks during early COVID days and bring hope and healing.

Be discerning of where the Spirit is leading us – and risk going there!

## Group C

Facilitator: Lynda Johnson

### Q2. What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?

Scripture - take them into mission for my personal life and to impact others.

To accommodate all levels – high church to evangelical.

Inclusion of youth.

Holiness and venerating Christ.

Aligned with gospel.

Vibrant.

Level of spiritual growth.

Outside four walls of building.

Use of original house groups.

All cultures involved and accepted.

Alive.

Praise with all they are.

Worship and outreach - including online presence.

Study groups to grow through.

Not afraid to speak about the gift of faith.

Points beyond itself to God's kingdom.

Fulfills Marks of Mission.

Generous and honest.

Quality of relationships.

Reflects community make up.

Open door policy.

Christian fragrance in everything we do.

Authentic difference.

Christ is center and referred to often.

Prayer life strong.

Welcomers as part of how things are done.

Spiritually enriching.

Outward focused.

Joy (fruit of spirit) and outward.

Sacred hospitality ie. A space to enter safely where change is possible.

Tradition with ambition.

Walk the walk to evidence your beliefs.

Not insular i.e. only about what happens inside the church.

Courageous, and asks community what its' needs are.

Live the words of the dismissal 'go in peace to love and serve the Lord'.

Shares assets including with bodies outside the church.

Shared eucharist.

Leave a legacy.

## Group D

Facilitator: Mike Uptin

### Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?

Solid core but a fluffy edge – allows folds to go in and out.

Relevant to the community but maintain values.

Love God, love each other and love community where you are (all will work).

Ministry to the elderly.

Flourishing is messy. Sharing our lives, tread on toes but forgive and walk with Jesus as a family.

Christ centered, outreach and prophetic.

Safe, loved and able to be themselves as they go on their faith journey.

Positive energy, resetting.

Not necessarily large or small. Where would we be today if God hadn't taken the risk.

Connection with community allows people to come searching.

Two great commandments – practical and teach us to go out and love our neighbors.

Comprehensive Anglicans – respecting diversity.

Enjoy the work of God.

Church is not the building; the church is you.

Pick it up and taking it out to share.

Have to reach out to the younger generation.

Be a missionary in your own faith.

Being the vine – connection to flourish.

Mung Bean analogy – inoculate bean to flourish.

Parishioners spread out to the wider community.

Knowing God's word, encouraging God's gifts within His people.

Sharing Jesus with others over a coffee.

Is one that is actively growing flourishing love in action- self and God, God and others and God and wider community.

Repentance is part of our flourishing. People won't become Christian unless they repent first.

### Q3 What would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?

Mindset shift from wanting to be there so people to come – instead where people are and where they are at.

History and tradition difficult but understand.

Having permanent leader to steer the ship.

Changing timeslot to cater for changing lifestyle.

Youth leader hard to find.

Engage in areas where church isn't present.

Religious Education returning to schools – impact of this...

Sunday worship is great, however, we need to encourage the people on the edges to go deeper through bible studies etc through relationship.

Club mindset – breaking down the club to reach others.

Walking in the door and being welcome.

We need to be comfortable to engage in the messiness – not sure how.

I can't expect things to happen and that starts with me – live by faith – must be able to commit to.

Sold off pews, invited craft group; engagement with cross agencies; Twilight markets = attempting to engage in church space.

Faith community with potential or a community with faith potential.

Honor of educational institutions to share the Gospel.

Religious schools.

Simple call – one on one communication – you build and listen to everyone's point of view; to ask for their help knowing they have a gift.

More remember seven days a week, not Sunday.

Jump in and not wait for someone else to do it.

Aging congregation.

Basic OHS assessments to make it happen.

Get over ourselves and just get on with it.

Acknowledging different spiritual journeys, helping the faithful to move out of their comfort zones.

Meeting people where they are at.

Recognises what is flourishing. Often it is what is going on outside the church that is flourishing.

Acknowledging it, we should rejoice in its potential.

Happy to be in a flourishing parish – feels good/one on one communication has done it.

Faith community without it being there – property has opened it up.

Rejoice what we do have.

Don't be afraid to get it wrong.

Have courage to take the next step.

Focus on 'being faith', not the buildings.

Reality is engaging in spirituality.

Hop on God's train.

Prayer – engaging in prayer and helping those in the aged care.

Homeless – helping others giving them a bed, a feed and a listen.

## Group E

Facilitator: Cameron Freese

### Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?

Less clergy reliant.

Prayer as first response not last resort.

Contemplative, seeking new ideas.

Mission is found in community not programs.

Gospel based.

Mission (community engagement) involves max number of people across age groups.

Age range present and engaged.

Mission work in own town/village/suburb.

Opportunities for people to engage in and with.

Is not necessarily large

- Collection of people thinking how to be authentic and present to your community
- Being true to ourselves and community in a range of people and ideas

Flourishing community is one where a minister does themselves out of a job.

Each member plays a core part and is dependent on (created in) Christ.

Community is resilient in times of trial – perseveres.

Is not hidden – shares itself with each other.

Has a priest for eucharist occasionally.

Provides services at nursing home.

Would be kickstarted after COVID.

Active pastoral work e.g. through op shop.

Broad age range.

Reaching out to disadvantaged groups- pastoral care.

More people living a Christ like light as an example to community.

Full church.

Familiarity.

People who feel they can fit in.

Opportunities to communicate with and engage with community e.g. Garden Club and cultural events.

Community is aware of the presence of the faith community.

Younger folk engaged and feel they belong.

People come to know each other- belonging.

People drop in – community pantry-opportunity for local community to engage with the faith community.



Faith community asking: "who is my neighbour?"

Something of distinction to offer.

Opportunity for friendship - especially of those who don't "come to church".

Collaborative work with other community organisations.

Breadth of outreach.

Breadth of involvement especially of parish councillors.

Revelation of personal gifts.

Age-appropriate presence in the community.

Engagement across the community.

Look after each other well.

Collaboration across denominations in the community [especially where "remnants" struggle for survival].

meeting need in community e.g. food for homeless [meals].

Acceptance of community members.

Ability to recognise the needs of others.

Move past survival so that fundraising is for mission.

Sharing of story - embracing of others - meeting needs.

Faith leading us to reach out - not just to each other but across the community.

Community of courage - listen and then step out.

Clarity of faith – gospel based.

Reaching out – doing it not just talk about it.

Range of ages.

Reaching young adults.

Sense of unity founded in love [as opposed to cliques].

Recognition of efforts.

Outward looking.

Niche opportunities e.g. Christmas markets.

Growing together as a community.

Inclusive.

Creating caring communities through communication and pastoral care.

Don't try to do everything.

### **Q3 what would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Generosity

Welcome

Hope

Encouragement

Continuity of leadership.

Affirmation of our identity in Christ and therefore empowered in mission.

Development of relationship.

More people.

Funding to engage with people externally demonstrating different attitudes and to fund engagement opportunities e.g. music.

Outreach - e.g. alpha- i.e. opportunities to invite people to engage.

Support

Care

Be people of courage

See / recognise each other

Share

Financial and spiritual generosity

Focus on praise

Openness

Growing together

Guidance – how to enhance the community and aid to see “our” gaps.

## Group F

Facilitator: Nicholas Whereat

### Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?

Shared sense of purpose-worship/pray/talking/serve.

Worshipping well in sacred space.

Connecting people with each other and with God.

Facing challenges head on- and head on together.

Where I am not the youngest person in the congregation.

Richness in the liturgy – music especially.

Growing in spirituality, growing numerically.

One where everyone is encouraged to be involved.

Having a sense of purpose.

Genuine welcome and follow up.

Good collaborative leadership – (you'll feel it).

Everyone has opportunity to grow and participate.

it's out then helping others in the wide community.

Grapple with difficult issues and not avoid them.

When your congregation comes from lots of different backgrounds.

Hard to define when your numbers are small.

Depends on the ministry context.

Is uniquely useful to those who belong to it/and those who don't.

Prefer the term 'community' to 'Parish'.

Solid engagement so community can see-positive witness.

Welcoming/growing faith/being active in wider community.

### Q3 what would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?

Reach out better/be trained to reach out better.

Sing songs and offer prayers in different languages.

Encourage cooperation action between parishes.

Be more intentional and focused-so we are 'uniquely useful'.

Use ordinary everyday language-so we are more accessible.

Become more relevant.

Education is vital.

Need to pray.

Listen to God better - trust God more.

Take honest stock of where we are [NCLS - very helpful].

Use the resources we have better - great tools Developed and available but underutilised.

Be clear about goals.

Institutional change – addressing racism/homophobia.

Encourage openness to change.

Great sense of shared purpose – congregation/Parish/diocese.

Educating and empowering our laity.

## Group G

Facilitator: Julia van den Bos

### Q2. What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?

New energy from individual clergy, and new members from younger areas moving to the area.

Warm welcomes with festivities. Combined services.

A flourishing faith community is based on prayer, caring, welcoming, sharing food.

Support for each other. Morning teas, a beautiful, historical precinct, respect for the story of the church. A need to share this history. How to move forward?

I dream of a flourishing faith community where everyone wants to be, to grow God's kingdom, in number and combined love. We are all so tired.

There must be life and energy.

Mainly music, mothers and children – lead by elderly women. Is this Church? "feed the ground"- a new church garden for the needy to benefit from produce.

Flourishing? What is that? We are too worried about the treasurer's report, maintenance stuff etc!

Is a church building the heart of the church? It's where people connect outside church services – out and about.

Flourishing equals not numbers but a need to reach out and invite them to join activities.

Mid-week service and lunch.

A sense of belonging, encourages unity, service groups outside church services. Links us to the community – then faith expands. Belong before you believe!

Diversity is to be encouraged – inviting others not of our faith.

Camps are great.

A community that regards and involves all members.

The common ground brings us together. We must build partnerships with each other and groups outside the church.

Unity can arise from sharing the love of God. Unity not uniformity.

Offer hope! Know Christ! – then lead others in.

Flourishing? – a rector who engages with the other groups in the community e.g. sports, Lions etc. Council, Arts, Youth Groups etc.

Create a challenge for church groups to grow their numbers. Reinvent.

Choose your people, choose your time.

Change our approach to receiving people.

### **Q3. What would enhance the flourishing of your community?**

Invite people to contribute e.g. I have a job for you.

How to bring young people to be involved in church groups?

Prayer – making prayers attractive. Corporate prayer. Share your faith. We need a vision for God's plans.

The Liturgy. The calendar. Celebrations e.g Maundy Thursday. Music. Building on tradition. Connecting o-line. Show the world how we operate.

Don't be afraid! Re-capture who we are as Anglicans.

Trust, be vulnerable, share, reach out! Get real otherwise we won't flourish.

We are the body of Christ. His spirit is with us.

Connect. Connections are happening on the Gold Coast. Trust and prayer.

Be proud of what we are on about. We must have strong convictions about our faith.

Integrate with the community. Tighten up the format.

Let's have fewer distractions. Focus on what matters. The ecumenical approach will provide a strong base. Partnering with other churches.

We can't exist in isolation. We must maintain our connections with others - even if we differ. A community must get over the hurdles that divide, but it's not unreasonable to stand up for your position.

**Q2. What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

Strong connection – ministry, mission, discipleship.

Take it to others to support the community in the name of Christ.

Spiritual growth support biblical community.

Profile for others to come – welcoming – Sunday evening service.

High commitment to theology inspired and walking towards helping people with energy.

Leadership modelled by Christ – humility.

Minister parish council – welcomes go out to community, Christ like.

God loves them. Expression of God's love.

Value of prayer.

Younger people are needed.

Recognise when people are ill.

Flourishing as a garden work together.

Challenging in diversity – language. Skills need to be looked at to embrace others.

Unified love for Christ welcome.

Everyone scripturally based.

Reach out to community unified.

Space for new growth – comfortable with the pain of change – God gives growth. Soil needs to be new for growth.

Small flourishing – new ideas. Looking at topics in a new way.

Encourage growth.

Expectations – thirst for Christ and the scriptures.

When people are excited about Jesus and being together and inviting others.

Equipped and capable.

Knows God loves them and a perspective – Salt, seed and God's hand out in community.

Connection to God and each other.

Inspired by the Scriptures.

Prayer support get together.

Consistency, compassion and understanding.

**Q3 What would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Adapt perception place of church, disciples leaders.

Equip people with scripture and confidence.

Open and understanding - courage to make connections.

Action - be passionate to join groups to work in your parish.

Changes - signs of gifts to be used. Identify God given gifts will bring joy. Recognise the wonder of God.

Morning teatime a joy. Enjoy, encourage, pray, persistence, patience.

Recognise spiritual growth, ecumenical community important.

Children's groups, intergenerational community.

Better techno devices for reaching out.

Challenges – feel safe without fear...beyond vulnerability.

Lead small groups – enhance and engage.

Introduction of meditation and studies.

Understanding community – engage sharing love.

Connect – homeless – energy to engage.

Encourage with connecting with First Nations.

Talking to people – providing steppingstones to faith.

Young families – connection for small groups.

People are seeking to know each other.

Depth of relationships form a rock – solid foundation – feel joined.

Listening to others' stories and sharing ours.



## Group I

Facilitator: Stewart Perry

### Q2. What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?

Changing people through community engagement.

Joined by common desire to serve God - not one's own interests.

Church community makes a difference for the wider community.

Active across a number of community realms e.g. school chaplaincy, aged care provision, friendship groups.

Pathway to build deep relationships around shared human experiences of living and dying.

Feeling of "I love Church" – music, spontaneous, generous, fun.

Lots of different things happening – diversity of engagement.

Embraces other groups – not necessarily Christian or Anglican. Where these exist an alignment of values, even if only transient alignment.

Flourishing embraces social and neurodiversity.

Enthusiastic people have an avenue to express their passion.

Energised and energising place.

A community of change.

### Q3 What would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?

Can't flourish all the time.

Intelligent interpretation of scripture and traditions of our church to explain dilemma and bringing us closer to God.

Break down the barriers that block our community coming together.

Responding to challenge with courage.

Take courage for small steps.

Allows the vulnerability to face the past and courage to build beyond.

Practice our values with passion and creativity.

Building families to give and receive love.

Recognise the gifts we already have.

**Q2. What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

Flourishing = being challenged + stretched.

Being in a space where it's ok to be "me".

Stories.

New branching out from the old, new opportunities.

Resilience, areas of life overlapping, learning together and sitting in tension.

Safe.

Traditions.

Not always found in the "busy"...shared love of God and wanting to share the Gospel drives the flourishing.

Outside community sees it as a safe space.

Children.

People connecting and helping out.

Opportunities for every one of every age to grow in their faith.

Know how to "park" issues/problems.

Gathering of God's people being nourished by prayer.

Flourishing → something tangible → can be seen/touched.

Putting into practice what is preached.

**Q3 What would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Put what we do on Sundays into more action Mon-Sat.

Think outside the beautiful buildings.

People getting unstuck.

Greater willingness to change and try something new.

A place to "host" the community. A place for rest and hospitality.

Reconnecting a disconnected community.

Time and space → Covid forced us to slow down.

- Communities e.g. schools are so scheduled.
- People come to church but don't feel a part of one → how do we have deeper interaction?
- Everyone speaking to others, not just the priest.

How do we become noticed in community? How do we see ourselves? e.g. promo on cars

Give 1% more.

Space for, and acknowledgement that people worship differently.

Open for input/new ideas.

If you're not seen in the community, you're not engaging with them.

Bring baptisms/confirmation to the fore again.

Priest visible in community.

Challenging media perception of who we are.

Seek out opportunities to promote the Gospel.

**Q2. What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

Faith communities: wholeheartedness, inclusive and outward looking satisfaction of serving homeless and hopeless.

Close-knit community maintaining Anglican tradition. Community and care for each other.

Part of larger church but also part of small nurturing community.

Emerging adult community formative safe to explore.

Space of reverence sweet spot where I was placed by God. Back to roots. Connection to history/generations.

Small group support and accountability.

Welcoming of my family. Type of liturgy fits new church after time in desert.

Right time, right sermon, fully engaged, love and sharing. Providing for needs – feeling loved.

Love and genuine caring for people. Interest in each other's connection.

Youth community – Four generations. Love, community, strong faith.

Markets on church land - reaching out. Support for needy. Finding and using skills. Really supportive of one another and community comes from love.

Oldies support of young ones.

Outward focused. Hope. Using the existing gifts.

Flourishing suggests energy and growth. We are the oak tree rather than the acorn, but we are committed and supporting our local community.

Harmonious management. Don't focus on own ego but good of all. We are struggling to maintain our position as moral authority for community. We need leaders to take position and be leaders.

We should offer moral guidance and not follow the secular culture.

Offer love, compassion, acceptance.

Not everyone flourishes at the same time.

We need horizontal and vertical leadership.

We are flourishing. We need numbers. Requires relevance for all. We need bums on seats. People are coming back after COVID.

Growth equals flourishing. Be positive about the future and keep moving forward. Trying to grow the whole church, not just our little part.

Connections. Internal and with wider community. Lots of questions not sure of answers.

Comprehensive church concept smacks of failure to lead spiritual community. Love all, but guide them to follow Jesus.

Key is reaching out. We need to be energised by the Holy Spirit. Flourishing equals growth equals need to embrace change.

Keep reading scriptures and praying.

### **Q3 What would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Not worrying about bums on seats. Too much energy expended on trying to keep that building. Our stories live in the people, not the buildings.

Immediate response is numbers, but we need to make church attractive to others – need a different mindset.

In the schools we need to prioritise religious education and worship, not sport etc.

Music enhances religious experience.

We need to let go of stuff.

What is the church? Us! Not the buildings or organisation. Strengthen the connections.

Sharing stories and outreach.

Strengthen ourselves and use the gifts that are already there.

Cursillo was a mountain top experience. Enhance personal walk with Jesus.

How do we get people to say “I want what you’ve got”.

Encourage all to come as they are.

Music, music, music!

Live our faith – we grow and others see it.

More dreaming.

**Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

Looking out the window and not in the mirror.

Be bold, going out in faith, be brave.

Involved in serving, coming together for worship, real life is beyond church doors.

Flower blooming and part of ecosystem. Some things must die to give new growth for flourishing to occur.

Humility – be who you are.

Growing in faith to grow together and then flourish outwardly.

Bring people to God and God to people.

Welcome to strangers – reach out to neighbourhood centre and LGBTQI community. No judgement, all included in God's family.

Lots in community - groceries, DV needs, welcoming and baptism family. Embraces those who come.

Look up, look in, look out. UP to scripture, God's word. IN - own congregation. OUT- service to others. Opportunities to build community.

Questions, explores, steps out in faith, open to spirit leading, not fixed in one time, place or tradition.

Good cross section. Not one size fits all, inviting people into relationship.

People actively invited and affirming gifts and opportunities.

Basis - welcoming communities- where all feel loved.

Relationships of care and support.

Going well- numbers/ finance/ viability.

- willing people to contribute.

- stewardship.

- mission outreach.

Open to adapt practices to be more attractive to younger people.

Creating caring communities.

Op shop workers who are not parishioners - accepted in their ministries and not pre required to worship with us.

Depth in team – one or two people not enough.

Succession planning.

Flourishing communities are everywhere not just inside churches.

**Q3 what would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Linkages between parishes and schools.

Having the courage to step out.

How can we support schools – what can we do/ offer for schools?

Shared vision - new and old coming together - finding common ground.

Meeting people where they are at - strategic planning in finding the needs of community.

Lay people empowered to give priest freedom to lead and vision. Outreach to all

Good leadership - fill vacant parishes.

More young people – Question- do we have to change our ways?

Building on connection with school/ baptism family- teddy bears' picnic.

Faithful, consistent gospel leadership across the diocese. No parish can truly flourish when the leadership is compromised theologically and doctrinally. I don't want us to water down God's word to go with the ways of the world and I think/know we expect better of our leaders.

Buildings but no cash - finances equals hard choices.

- intentional space for dreaming and innovation.

- strong admin.

- collaboration.

- barrier- language skills- learning basic words for communication and relationships.

- intergenerational- how do we minister to old generations acknowledging demands of family and work commitments.

To know each other well creating caring communities.

Ecumenically involve all churches in town.

People power/ dedicated people.

Reality of where we are at – can't go back - must go forward.

People of all ages. Being bold. Do Sundays actually work for people?

Team ministry - three priests part-time across two parishes.

- New ideas, working together. Sell the life of Christ - come to get what we have.

Greater support for clergy.

**Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

Intergenerational [older: wisdom - younger: ideas/energy].

Marks of mission - ticking those boxes.

Comprehensive.

“Home” and welcoming.

Sing the light - evolving/ developing faith.

Working with - bringing depth to faith and lives.

Attendees who want to be there not just there by habit.

Sense of vitality – imagine how we could be encouraged to try new things to get there.

Living out of the “great commissions”.

Making of disciples – coming to God not just in Word but in living life.

Nurturing disciples - whole of life/ lifelong living church and giving as church.

Sense of purpose of living God's Kingdom acceptance, grace, warmth and care.

Service to meet needs in community.

Accountability – sound theology to keep passion in check and sustain and outward focused.

Inside and outside – “you are fed and you go out”, both homeless/ poor worship and millionaire.

Both Anglo- Catholic ritual and evangelical.

Human interaction with divine interaction.

Where fruits of spirit are evident.

Not numbers – can be large and inert rather than flourishing.

Flourishing can be small and vibrant.

Where God is at the centre-relationship with God and how that is working [building, learning and growing in relationship].

People can see love and want to learn and grow in that love.

**Q3 what would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Sense of adventure.

Honesty/ relationship with God.

Loving God with heart, mind, soul, strength.

People being invited/welcome as child of God - Holy Spirit led.

Knowing what Bible says.

Courage to go back to basics to bring church to community who not familiar with it anymore.

Teaching/learning.

Trusting in Holy Spirit.



Work through challenges of current age-technology and belief that experience is through capturing in media not being it.

Resources – money to do things.

Time/space.

To be open to the spirit.

For relationships.

To discover what can do with courage.

Address weaknesses and growing and visioning.

Church planting - engaging to facilitate that and constructive dialogue.

Find courage by helping people to find the language for God conversations.

Time to discern and listen and think through.

Working with what we've got.

The holy spirits calling and trusting and praying.

Courage to imagine outside our box and take leaps of faith.

**Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

"Find out where God is active and get on board".

-what is God doing or calling us into? Or what are we no longer called to?

Looking forward.

God using us, as a community, in this place.

Families coming together (with children – Sunday school).

People happy to be there.

Christians worshipping together as one (ecumenical).

Growing in the stature of Christ (more important than numbers) read God's word and apply it in our lives in a variety of ways e.g. flourishing online communities.

People want to grow in relationship to each other and God rather than obligation.

Worship in community of believers and also reaching out e.g. social enterprise.

Passion that inspires.

People growing personally in relationship to self, others and God.

Growing in faith.

Reflecting community outside the church.

Openness to God – change – conversion.

Getting along in the context of diverse politics and passions.

Applying the gospel to those views and passions.

Secular community knows it's there and values its presence.

Flourishing internally – and this is known by broader community.

Post code effect – some suburbs seem to flourish more than others (geographical).

People who love Jesus and love their neighbour.

Profile of the church is like a slice of the broader local community in all its diversity, and the church reaches out to the broader community in that diverse context.

Invitational and reflecting God's love with thankfulness.

Working together to achieve amazing things.

Community that loves Jesus and wants to learn more and share that love with others.

Love and acceptance.

Cultural and language diversity.

**Q3 what would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Focus on families.

Spreading worship less thinly, but with greater diversity of faith, expressions or congregational profiles.

People taking ownership of the direction in which they seek to grow.

Ecumenical worship.

Physically show a welcome to those who might be hesitant.

“We need more young people” is a continuous mantra - rather look at what we do have and who we are, not what we don't have.

There is lots of work to do in people's lives.

Ask my parish-/need to ask them.

Harness the people who are there.

Seek what God is doing and once us to do. Listen and discern.

Youth and young adults ministry-can't fill a paid position (yet).

Being able to minister in different directions.

Community Connections and partnerships - compliment worship with external focus.

Building repairs needed to facilitate other ministries and community life.

Re-establish community outreach following COVID-19.

Connections need to be made-being visible as the church community working with and serving the wider community.

Get schools [e.g. choirs] involved in church life.

Picking people up from aged care to come to church.

Weddings and funerals in churches.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Open ourselves up to allow God to direct sustain and empower the community.

Seeing people pray - learn how to pray.

Pray for our communities.

Get out of our “Christian bubble” and be open about our Christian faith in homes neighbourhoods and workplaces.

**Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

When churches look past their own church and provide/help others “outside” this.

One that hears the word and is able to go out and extend God's love to the outside community to draw others in so the people see Christians in action and want that for themselves (positive look). Go out and show people the love of God. This can take a long time, not necessarily instant. The good work we do will “pin people down”.

Looks as though outsiders look at us and “see the Kingdom of God” by our actions.

Walk the walk talk the talk 24/7 – authentic and real Christianity.

Church leaders actively supporting people - are parishioners spiritually healthy? Spiritually flourishing? Spiritually diligent? Using your God given gifts to flourish the church? Resolve organisational problems - build team/ relationships – grow.

Find where people need to connect (e.g. small Bible groups) that nobody else is providing.

Respond and review. Think globally, love all.

People feel the love and the lack of it, so have differences resolved well, and genuinely care for each other.

Getting the family feel/ relational feel so the culture allows for hard conversations. It's flourishing when we care for each other and are known to care for each other, including those who aren't regular parishioners, and not just the priest doing the care - all of us!

- Looks like – people together, talking, friendly
- Sounds like – encouraging, kind, gentle words
- Feels like – safe, speak the truth, feel encouraged

Nourished people are likely to go on and help others with energy.

Depends on members of the community being and showing who they are by the grace of God. This allows connection, relationship growth, inquiry so people see your journey and are encouraged. Allow them to ask questions.

Tap into people outside your faith community.

What issues do they have that is a barrier to joining church? Listen to their story. Connect on a personal level so they hear how you approach life using your faith.

They can be negativity from:

1. learn how to be a part of your community
2. listen to understand, not respond
3. use empathy

**Q3 what would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Confidence in their own abilities and skills – “I can give it a go”.

Give people confidence to go and share their faith (we don't need a degree) we are storytellers.

Networking (build relationships and connect and build resources).

Work with other parishes.

Support – administrative leadership, each other. Not overstructured.

Greater networking.

Networking with neighbouring parishes, build ecumenical relationships.

Keep “love of God” at front of mind.

Intentionality around mission, identity, purpose, core business.

Confidence, clarity, intentionality.

Focus on important things – what we are about, relationships, be available.

Focus prayers on Kingdom growth, connect with God, broadcast our faith through different channels.

Work smarter, not harder/share best practise/don't reinvent the wheel.

Helping people to see the story hasn't limited with the apostles, we need to keep going, building.

Access resources give our time (not just the priest's) reduce paperwork, get back to being with people, share the load with the clergy.

Engaged community, connected to the community. Look at people's unique gifts and nurture these. Ask these questions weekly:

1. who am I?
2. what is my ministry?
3. what would make it better?

It isn't just about growth in numbers! Enthusiastic, generous, coming together for Christ – through church, schools, groups etc people grow in themselves. Characterised by the fruits of the spirit is what sets us apart from the world.

Outwardly focused.

Aged homes have people who have been Christians all their lives tap into this. Reach out, bring new people to God but remember the elderly. Involve them, use them in ministry, they have so much to give.

**Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?**

Place where regularly/intermittently attend, on a journey and want to build a faith community. Community want to grow, recognition, God calls us outside rather than in. Guiding principles across generations. Historically work/ faith disconnect but now there is a greater connection.

We all come together to hear/connect with God.

Comes for the liturgy but then goes beyond. Financially flourishing – may limit.

Involvement of people (in church activities and worship, helping out). Not just teachers but contributing.

Inclusion (contributing), addressing needs, growth-based leadership perspectives – expanding, boundary pushing. Stayed in the community because the people are willing to change their ideas and sit with the issue.

Hard to handle the difference.

“We don't have something to offer” mentality. Flourishing means willingness to accept the differences.

Op shops, food bank, barista coffee, vibrancy. But financially struggling. Safe place to invite their friends - they testify to this. Work with what we have - people need to hear the reverence and love that people need to hear. Personal growth.

Corporate/individual influence in the community - reaching out in the community (multiplying out). Safety is the highest priority. Not in a parish context. Feel comfortable to explore meaning, truth and willingness to persevere. Sikh man able to pray in a room – felt safe. Challenging question.

Worship is central (including in their desire to serve and grow), helpful structures to grow, intentional connection with new people.

All are loved and cared for, supported, free to explore our common faith.

Not flourishing, need a generation (parents, grandkids) in church. Can't make them go, need groups/ structures, modern hymns, work on growth.

Parishioners engaging across sector – involved in the strategic vision, contribute without judgement.

Financial means to run the parish, missing generations. Support through diversity – represent who you are in the community.

Need a full-time minister, lay preachers. Makes it hard but struggling financially.

Not sure. As a kid large family involvement in church. Now being auctioned. Flourishing but fragile - abuse and lack of recognition of sexual orientation. Only member that still attends. Not convinced that it is building and people but focused on spiritual growth growing out into the community.

Lots of ideas. Full in the past due to need for care and an avenue to support the community.

What is the difference between us and a social service?

We need to find the difference.

Space to grow into themselves and find a space in their community - financial. Church needs to believe in ourselves.

Younger generation – 50 kids to go to Sunday schools. Now Sunday isn't a Family Day. Sunday used to be a time for church.

### **Q3 what would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?**

Small parish, retiring for the second time, looking to that next step. Need to have the courage to change. Need to be open.

Need to be more proactive, inviting to the people in the church.

Stepping out with the third type of service. How socioeconomic.

High church frightens people. Young priest plays the guitar, informal service. Patchy attendance. Stepping out in a big way. Get traction through the op shop, barista.

How we draw others in (Alpha, how do we go into a third space)

Cultural shift to being more invitational (bit of a consumerist culture). How to attract people?

Own the message about what/who the church is. Internal fighting over small issues. Must be proactively presenting the positives.

Clergy have the opportunity to meet across the Diocese. Need to open lay dialogue (sharing ideas, resources).

Synod is the only time to connect.

Look beyond what we have.

Improving the church but need to look to community. Diversify through only traditional mass. No trained priest to conduct the service.

Pray, we are tired.

Different things work for different times/churches. May need the right time.

Toolbox analogy – every tool can help.

Similar ideas may not work. Need to look at the history of the parish. Why are we what we are?

Out to the community.

Diversity in who is volunteering to prevent burnout.

May be hard to engage to that level in the long term (need to take breaks).

## Group Q

Facilitator: Tania Eichler

### Q2 What does a flourishing faith community look like to you?

Alive – Sense of life in the Church. Caring for one another.

Prayerful, worshipful people.

Relationships constantly growing.

From the moment you walk in a feeling of belonging and connection.

Be yourself without restrictions

People actually come to worship i.e. turn up.

Cater for people who are seeking something spiritual.

Open and ability to challenge/change.

Want to be there!

Welcoming/a place to call home.

A place that is safe, can explore and ask questions.

Living community, living Jesus' message.

Obvious that they can participate.

Activity converted to mission in community.

Looking internally in church.

Supporting each other.

Building better relationships and strengthening these.

Quality of the community not quantity.

Searching and leaving faith journey.

Having community owned activities in the community we all worship in.

Variety of age groups.

Respect.

Inclusive – age especially (children)

- Encouraging people in faith development.

Broader church family

- Those that might not come to church but get involved in church mission activities in the community.

### Q3 What would enhance the flourishing of your faith community?

Actively engage in mission values, believe, worship, proclaim, love, serve and grow.

Pray mission. Prayer weekly/daily.

Demonstrate Jesus' story in you.

Blessings you have been given.



Increase tolerance or embrace other people's difficulties/challenges during services especially children.

Ageing parish vs introduction of children in this context.

Be proud of 'love' language of Jesus and promote.

Build on relationships in other faith communities.

People from outside faith communities to come and challenge our ideas. Questions and be ok with this.

Look for answers to life's questions in faith community and be confident in answers.

Using our language but also need to listen to other cultures and ways of explaining God/Faith e.g. indigenous spirituality and accepting that language.

Visibly relevant and rebuild trust in wider community.

Easy to be comfortable but need to take a leap of faith

- Result in shared responsibilities and leadership
- Are we too sceptical

Gifts of the people

- 'high' value gifts vs smaller roles
- Recognising and valuing gifts

"Fit" people are needed for those activities that bring people on 'to the veranda.'

To sustain the flourishing community you need younger people.

Fearful of the decline of the church for older parishioners

- Guilt for spreading illness
- More inward/scared

Traditional church limitations – physically, environment, habits of long-term parishioners need to change.

Move parishioners on cusp of not being able to do things online. Include and enhance people to join in, in their own time or a method that suits.

Technology.

Livestream services, activities.