

Vision and 3 Year Strategic Priorities – DRAFT September 2016

Locking Castle Church was planted as an Ecumenical partnership in the 1990s with the intent of *sharing in the ministry of Christ to the world*. At its core it has always been a missional church, reaching out to the surrounding estates in Weston, bringing blessing and hope through *following the way of Jesus and serving the community*.

A Unique Opportunity

Weston-super-Mare is the fastest growing town in North Somerset. With over 10,000 people moving into new local housing estates before 2025, LCC has a unique opportunity to grow the kingdom of God, see souls saved and communities transformed throughout the town. With its strategic location at the gateway to the town LCC is called to pioneer new initiatives and be a sending church, known for its love and generosity.

Vision and Strategic Priorities

Our dream as a church is to see a Life group on every street, where devoted disciples live out their faith every day, grounded in prayer and scripture and demonstrating a selfless love of others. As we build bridges and make connections, the church will be trusted throughout the community to be truthful, caring and Christ-like, both in what we say and what we do. Everyone can play their part as we are empowered and equipped to carry the presence of God into our challenging world.

So our strategic priorities for the next 3 years can be summarised as **GPS**:



Growing Disciples ♦ Planting Churches ♦ Serving the community

Given that prayer and worship underpin all we do as Christians and our impact on the community will only be effective if we follow the Holy Spirit's leading and guiding, we want to see the following specific progress in each of these areas:



Growing Disciples: ‘Disciple’ means a student or follower. At LCC we want to ensure you not only encounter Jesus for yourself but are also transformed and renewed by the Holy Spirit in order to serve him and help others.

Jesus summed up discipleship priorities with 3 key commandments:

The great commandment:

‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind.’ (Matthew 22:37)

The new commandment:

‘As I have loved you, so you must love one another.’ (John 13:34).

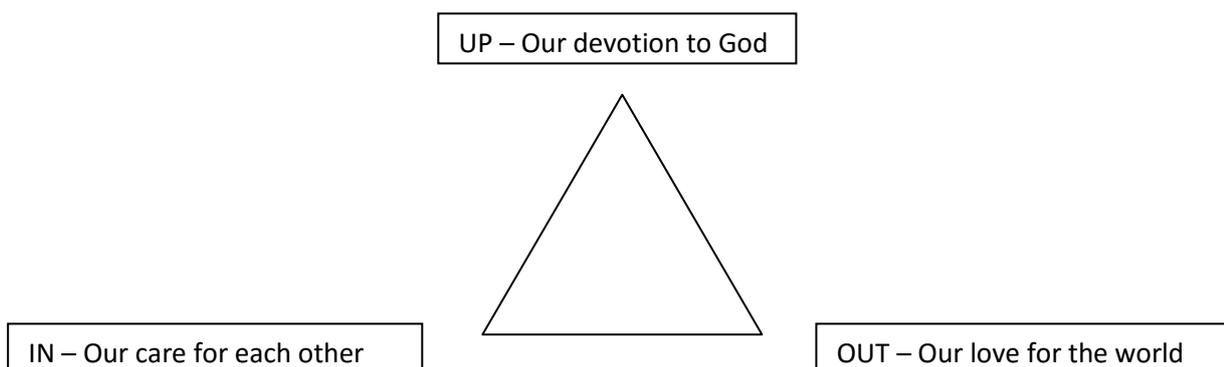
The great commission:

‘Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.’ (Matthew 28:19)

Therefore disciples of Jesus live out this calling both individually and collectively on a day to day basis through:

- Prayer, bible study & worship – our devotion to God (Up)
- Support and fellowship – our care for each other (In)
- Mission and evangelism – our love for the world (Out)

Mature followers of Jesus invite the Holy Spirit to empower them & give a balanced approach, placing equal value on Up, In and Out:



The discipleship guide

Over the next 3 years we want everyone who comes to LCC to grow deeper in their discipleship. To help assess the areas in which you might need strengthening, we are developing a discipleship guide, which will suggest how to go to the next level in each of the areas of *Up, In* and *Out*.

It can be used by individuals or life groups at whatever stage of your journey. You can track your progress from:

Exploring ⇌ Believing ⇌ Growing ⇌ Sharing.

Alpha remains a key strategic priority for LCC, helping people to transition from the Exploring to Believing stage. The next stages are facilitated by:

Life Groups and 1-2-3 discipleship

As well as our commitment to weekly Life groups for fellowship, study and pastoral care we are also encouraging 1-2-3 discipleship: (See livelife123.org)

- 1: Invite one person to be your spiritual mentor and guide
- 2: Ask two people to be your 'running mates'. People who are mutually-accountable, challenging and with whom you can be real and vulnerable.
- 3: Find three people to whom you can pass on the baton of faith – perhaps through our XLP mentoring program or meeting informally.

As a church we also want to invest in leadership training as well as releasing members to use their gifts at every opportunity.



Planting Churches



We have made great progress with establishing key relationships on each of our local estates over the past 3 years. Within the next 2 years we want to see a worshipping community established in each area that reflects the 9 marks of authentic Church described in Acts 2 (See the LCC website for details). We will work with

partner Churches such as Locking Parklands Community Church and Woodspring Church to establish *Community Pastors* and leadership teams for each estate, and support St. Anne's School in West Wick and Haywood Village Academy to provide weekly Take5 afterschool clubs for parents and children. These clubs can fuel regular 'Take5 on Sundays' events as a launch pad for an Easter missional holiday club and subsequent Church planting. This will mean that LCC's children's pastor will have a particular strategic role in growing these communities in the future.

We will work with North Somerset Council, the NHS, local churches and businesses to provide adequate community facilities, including a possible larger scale Community Hub near the North Somerset Enterprise and Technology College.

Everyone can be involved in some way encouraging Church planting, whether that is through getting directly involved with community activities & services or other initiatives such as Take5 or Alpha, by giving financially or by praying for God's Kingdom to come on the new estates.



Serving the Community

'Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...' James 1v27

Youth and Children's work. We believe the Lord has called us to keep investing into the next generations, making youth and children's work a priority and encouraging them to participate in the vision of the church. Progress is being made with our plans to convert the upper room to give them additional space and we will work to ensure both young people and adults are welcomed and encouraged at every stage of their journey.

Seniors ministry and Care home chaplaincy. Through Oasis and our work in care homes we aim to reach dozens of seniors with the Gospel every year, giving them the excellent pastoral care and support they deserve.

Foodbank. We will offer food parcels for those in crisis through our mobile Foodbank service, responding to needs as they arise.

Parenting and Debt Management Courses. Working in partnership with Lighthouse and CAP (Christians against poverty) we will offer courses that meet the needs of families and individuals on our local estates.

Supporting International Mission Agencies. LCC supports 6 mission organisations each year that work beyond our own locality. We will respond to crisis appeals and particularly pray for Christians working in tough conditions abroad.

Romans 12:10-13: 'Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.'