

Feedback Summary – Section 5 EFFECTIVE OUTREACH

Is your church passionately committed and actively involved in sharing the message of the Gospel with your local community?

Average score: **2.3**

How active are members of your church family in regularly inviting friends to church?

Average score: **2.0**

Does your church have regular programs or events that seek to connect with non-church people and build relationships with them?

Average score: **2.3**

When people attend your church services for the first time are they warmly welcomed and effectively followed up?

Average score: **3.1**

Further comments about your church's effectiveness in OUTREACH: (In your opinion, what are the challenges and what needs to be done? Max 200 words.)

Like most things in life, we need to learn. That is what a disciple is 'one who learns'. you need the right ministry, to teach and to train all to follow and practice the outreach Jesus' has commanded us to do - not just ritualistic performances and cups of tea afterwards. Real fruit comes from real trees that are healthy - our spiritual and temporal life needs to be the same.

Our church comprises about 6-8 regular members with an average age of ~ 80 years. Outreach is difficult in a village of less than 200 people who see the Church as an important historical institution for the rites of passage but of little relevance to one's daily existence.

Difficult to assess the first two.

As someone once put it: we are a very welcoming church, but we don't welcome well (in terms of having a formal, structured approach)

FROM OBSERVATIONS, I DONT THINK WE DO THIS TOO WELL. I DONT THINK PUB CHURCH OR RETAIL SHOP VISITATIONS ARE APPROPRIATE. I SELDOM SEE NEW ATTENDEES - MAYBE THEY GO TO DIFFERENT SERVICES TO ME

See previous answer. For small centres, working together ecumenically provides greater opportunity for the Gospel to be seen and heard locally. There should be proactive action to promote sharing of faith locally, but sometimes church doctrine gets in the way at higher levels

Outreach should not be about those that come through the door of their own volition. It should be about meeting people outside the door- bring accessible and visible. Maybe singing in the grounds if the church, gathering outside the church. The church buildings are a handicap

The challenge is church wide. How is the church relevant to society today? Not 'how is Christ relevant to society but how is church? For many people, not very. Many people I meet have a hunger for exploring faith but don't see the church as being the place where that can happen. Most outreach (not 'in drag') takes place in society - at sports events, in shops, helping at charities etc. A conversation happens and a spark is lovingly fanned. What then? A parishioner from one church works with Vinnies and has developed a friendship with an atheist who also works at Vinnies. He is asking questions. She doubts whether he will come to 'church' and perhaps Vinnies is church for him for now. The 'for now' is important. Another issue for Bathurst Diocese is the mistrust people have for the church after the past 5-10years. One church had a small bequest that was earmarked for ministry. It was lost in the reparations. That still causes huge hurt and makes people very wary. I'm not sure how you overcome this. Another issue is the lack of stipended clergy. Lay leadership is vital but so is intentional priestly leadership.

there's a need for more programs to reach out and to encourage people to start getting to understand the Scriptures.

Further comments:

Individual members actively share the Gospel.

Carols in the Park, ecumenical annual outreach event, well attended by the wider community.

Need to have friends outside the church to invite!

Have had church fetes, etc, but congregation attending community groups (CWA, Lions, etc) gives greater opportunity.

Challenges/what can be done:

Are discussing with Kevin Simington to come.

We need a team of welcomers

The importance of making new attenders feeling welcome and not overpowered is essential

Reduce the need to provide for the redress scheme.

You cannot hope to see young people commit to attending church while ever there's a debt from the past needing to be met. A debt not of our making.

A FINITE DATE MUST BE SET.

I think being in community as a church family is great at BBQ, Anzac Day however our congregation is aged and are addressing health problems or can't so often no one does anything.

One congregation is building up numbers, the other is stagnant. Kids Club is a weekly outreach but does not result in families coming to other church events.

leadership and modelling/encouragement

I wouldn't invite a person to church unless that person said they would like to come. I think our services are just about incomprehensible to an "outsider" and even too many regulars. I cringe every time we sing about God noting our "working breast" (are we all lactating mothers?) or about "enrolling Jesus" (in what? a TAFE course?)

We have been fairly effective in reaching the older demographic but not the young folk and families around town. This is the challenge.

worst part of our report card! Once inside our Church building, we do well at welcoming, encouraging and sharing the Gospel but have no programs or strategies for outreach.

Post covid is hard. We can welcome people to our church, but our homes are much better... to invite someone from home to church is a big step! From home to kid's club, meet night etc is much easier

The 10am and youth and children's crew are outward looking and strongly led in that way by the rector. Older congregation members are amazingly spread and active in our community and are a strong witness to their faith through the evident fruits of the Spirit in their lives. But active evangelists they are not.

Apart from the efforts of James Daymond and his small team, outreach and mission are hollow words. There has not been a formal card for new people to write their details on and I doubt there is any follow-up by clergy apart from James. The honorary parish secretary takes some details for a parish roll & mail-outs when she is greeting people, but this is the extent of it.

People needs a fresh awareness of God's mission, and the part we play in proclaiming the gospel. People need (God's) heart for the lost before they are tasked with evangelism. After that, our congregation needs small, practical steps in how to share their faith (i.e. training and confidence). We don't need our people to be more connected with our community, we need them to see those existing connections as opportunities to share their faith and hope in Christ.

Alpha was our main outreach to family/friends/local community. It bore some fruit but has unfortunately suffered from not being able to meet in-person to share a meal and a story.

Personally, I try to engage with my new community here. Our tiny church is planning outreach events in the next year

Our church members are typically elderly, some in aged care, faithful and active volunteers. Their capacity for outreach is limited. Within our community, what was intended to be a valued asset in Outreach, has been stolen by circumstances connected to bad management within the Bathurst Diocese. For the traditional Anglicans, the Orange Evangelical Church has now has effective control of the Orange Anglican School, having bought it cheaply when the Bathurst Diocese couldn't satisfy the CBA's demand to repay the loan. Much pain, much irony, and enormous capacity to increase that congregation at the expense of Holy Trinity and St Barnabas. There is not even a basis for a friendly relationship with St Barnabas, in Orange, yet.

We do not follow up very well although we do try to warmly welcome.

Alpha has been a regular feature each year with 2 programmes per year but there have not been a large attendance of non-Christians despite many invitations. The last Alpha programme did not eventuate as there was an exodus just as the programme was about to commence. I believe that unless the Anglican churches in Orange work together we are not going to be successful in drawing new Christian's into our congregations.

our genuine effort into outreach is good! and has variety. but the genuine follow up. I'm not so sure about that. haven't experienced it. needs relationships for sure. and time.

Again, there are a few people who are very welcoming, but there is no process for follow-up of visitors to the church (this is being currently developed). There are a few events organised, but mostly church members (or other church goers) attend, and they are not dedicated evangelistic events.

Good at outreaching to middle class, educated, employed people. There are some who fail to understand the needs of the marginalised, homeless and poor. Don't understand that the clients of emergency food relief facilities welcome the Bibles they are able to take. We must always be aware that Maslow's hierarchy of needs influences the activities of the poor and marginalised.

We need more events that involve the non-church community'
We are looking to take church out in the community e.g., church in the park

Out parish has been blessed with some growth although it is mostly folk from other churches rather than new people

I am not aware of any sharing of the Gospel in our community from our particular church, except for our SRE teacher to the primary school (who is me). Other churches do have events, for example, The Uniting Church has a lunch and speaker in their hall once a month which me and one other from our church attend. This is a good time of fellowship so perhaps our church could do something similar in the future.

Sometimes someone might bring a friend if they are visiting the region at a particular time. I do this, but my friends are already Christians, so it's not difficult.

There is a combined Christmas event, but I did hear that we were not represented last year, and it was meant to be our "turn". So that was disappointing.

I will say that we are always welcoming when we have new attendees or visitors. I am unaware if they are followed up in any way though.

Outreach is always a challenge, so I hope and pray that new leadership will have ideas to energise the parish and bring new people to church to hear the Gospel.

We need to be confident our church has something to offer new people. We have Christ but perhaps we need to be challenged more about the consequences of non-Christian friends not being saved.

At present I don't think that we do enough in the area of outreach, but this possibly could be changed but I am really at a loss to know how.

As our parish is made up of small towns this is a challenge. I believe that people are welcomed well when they attend a service however, I'm not sure that they are followed up to the best of our abilities. We also don't have a strong presence of children at each service and new people to towns often have children and the social setting of meeting at schools is missing in our parish's churches.

We have had in the past an Easter Morning service at dawn involving all churches and again on the June long weekend for church in the park.

Church is using NCLS to find ways to make new connections with the local community and thinking about ways of welcoming people.

The best outreach this month is the catering for the Eisteddfod our church reps were out there catering for hundreds of people under our banner and getting the Lords name out there everyone would have known who we are and what we do. Our Op shop is great Anglicare is a wonderful organisation helping out the poor and needy in our City. What's needed is for the community kitchen to be up and running again as actively as it was pre covid.

More follow up is needed for first time attendance to our church.

I think it is difficult to get young people and families to come and keep coming because we don't have any young people coming regularly to church, except for Arvo Church. At Arvo church we currently have 2 young couples attending who we hope will encourage each other in the future. Generally young families want young Christian friends so will go to another church in town.

I feel at my church we actively welcome newcomers and do our best with resources available to encourage regular attendance. Having said this, we provide and support and address any concerns but at the end of the day people will make their own choices as to whether they want to attend on a regular basis.

To a large degree church appears to be about the support of those who come and less about those who don't. Outreach has not had a strong focus.

It seems to be so hard to change people's image of church. There needs to be a way to get the emphasis on relationship not religion. We will keep praying.

Somewhat unsure of this activity. there are certainly some who are committed to this form of outreach.

I don't know. Some people do embrace newcomers - but it would be interesting to hear what visitors say.

Why would I invite a friend to church? It's like landing on a different planet. I invite friends into my life - they see Jesus in our home. I wait for them to ask about church and get curious

In my church they are warmly welcome. When you go to church, and you tell them that you let God in your life and heart you are looked down on. It makes feel unwelcome. We. focus on the cross.

We used to have well attended outreach breakfasts and dessert nights. These are not allowed now as our team leaders feel there is no point to these, they don't achieve anything. Things like this can be a steppingstone to coming to church, but our current team leaders think that the community would come to these and not to church so basically think it's a waste of time and effort. I definitely do not agree, and think we are missing a great outreach opportunity

Outreach to youngsters is very active.

There is a negative attitude in the way the Church has been portrayed in recent years. Child sexual abuse in the past. There are those who do not wish to be connected to the Church.

New people are welcomed but I wouldn't know about follow up. Baptism families are encouraged at the time but i doubt they are followed up. More follow up need to be done for regulars that drop out for one reason or another especially at this time following covid.

Visitors are always welcomed; it is only a very small congregation, so it is easy to identify someone new.

The first question on this page is not there in the printed version so when we came to enter the printed ones, we did not have people's answers.

This answer is transcribed from a written response and the first question on this page isn't there in the printed version.

We need a hart for outreach and a willingness to engage

With respect to Q3, the parish does not resource outreach well as there seems to be restrictions on the use of funds for this purpose. Funds are there for ministry, they seem to be hard to access due to lack of generosity and the fund-raising mindset.

These questions should be about the individual's practice, rather than church members, as this would be more accurate rather than us guessing.

I am not sure how to answer these questions and I think that my answer or comments are the same all the way through.

Our church is very welcoming. However, encouraging people to attend regularly is difficult.

This depends on the age group. The younger generation are committed to contacting their acquaintances, but older parishioners seem resigned to watching the parish decline. We need to see parishioners who are modelling good, caring and respectful outreach.

We live in a world wary of church attendance. So, it seems part of the challenge is for parishioners to be connecting with people in ways that they can easily share their lives with them and welcome them into their homes, thus demythologising the negative myths about church.

For example—via me—an SRE teacher supported and prayed for by the church, the church is reaching into the lives of a considerable number of teenagers. These youngsters become aware of various church camps and youth events. But what would really help move this forward is for chaplains to be in some of these schools so that the parents, staff and students become more deeply aware of—and practically engaged with—what the Christian faith is all about. We are praying towards this goal of chaplains being welcomed into the schools

As a new church there are many different focus areas and planning is for outreach events...so I believe that there is a very strong commitment to outreach.... We need prayer and wisdom to bring a focus to what these outreach events might be...and then a strong willingness by a majority to support the event/s

We need a permanent minister who can guide us in all aspects of our church life.

Needs to be led and organised

Our Men's Mixer nights are effective in including community members outside of the church including other denominations and numbers were growing pre-covid. Our Minister says Grace, but the topics are general and of interest to a wide group. People have fallen away from the church for a number of years due to other commitments - e.g. children's sport events. The church is facing an enormous challenge to attract people back to the church. It is not just the church having trouble with numbers, this is happening to many volunteer organisations. The attraction of the church has declined in society, and we can't offer a solution to this problem and fact.

The online church services have increased the number of attendees and is most effective in reaching people in outlying areas who don't have a church nearby to attend.

As above, individual invitation to events such as a morning tea or church service e.g., Blue Christmas service held annually, invitation to all churches to attend our annual picnic in the park (prior to Covid this was very popular and well attended) We plan a larger event this spring following individual services in all churches then meet in the park.

There is a warm welcome but follow up is only done by the minister (in my experience).

Definitely an area for growth.

Can't vouch for "follow ups"

There is nobody designated as a "greeter" in each service so there is no official encouragement to newcomers or visitors. There are a couple of individuals who will approach newcomers and invite them to their homes but by far the majority talk among themselves and ignore anyone they are not familiar with

The toxic phrase "Always preach the gospel and if necessary, use words" rules. One man has invited people in the past who now hold key roles at our church. He is no longer with us. Our church exists to serve the remaining long-term members. We have a church lifespan of 5 to 10 years. However, God will raise a witness to himself if/when this congregation folds. We are trying outreach ideas like Alpha and Love Languages but our congregation

challenge: to embolden people to want to talk about their faith with others; to be awake to opportunities to swing the conversation to God & Jesus

Be open to youth, be understanding and be non-judgmental to all who are in the community. There is no need and no purpose for discrimination against someone's gender, sexuality and race. There is no true excuse to discriminate and to exclude. It is not God's will to exclude anyone who isn't a white heterosexual man.

We have a number of groups & services that reach out to the broader community - I believe we do this well. I believe we have a challenge in reaching beyond these services to speak to people's spiritual needs and growth.

I don't know if people are invited, they could be and could refuse
They are warmly welcomed for a cuppa after the service but in one service no hymn numbers are mentioned or where to find the service in the prayer book
Again, one service does have outreach events while the other doesn't seem to

Friendly we do well. Too early to be sure about outreach in a broad sense although there are 4 or 5 who can be activated by a new face in church.

The reason it is a 2 for people asking friends to church is that they have already been asked, or know the people are not interested, not an effective route at this time.

People are certainly warmly welcomed but I'm not sure of follow up. It's difficult for a young family to stay when they find there are no others. I would love to see a couple of families move here with a purpose of growing families.

... has the odd ecumenical event.....World Day of Prayer, Joint prayer meetings during the drought & a couple of picnics in the park. COVID has interrupted some of these & it's hard to get people back.

Outreach is defiantly an area of growth for my church, including me!

No leader. No outreach. All visitors are made very welcome (usually travellers (Grey Nomads) and comment on our welcoming congregation. No follow up.

I believe the will is there and I am greatly encouraged by the commitment of the leadership. However, it's not simple. People don't come to church meetings on invitation anymore. The ones who do are almost always coming from other churches. "Christianity" is viewed with suspicion and hostility by many. It's tricky for some to build relationships, if they are not naturally outgoing. It's also absolutely critical to get this to work. If we can find ways to model this relationship forming skill to each other, it would help. For the whole church to engage with the community - perhaps through Anglicare contacts, perhaps through newcomer lunches, or winter fest or other events, could be a start:
We also must become trained in speaking with salt: learning to engage people on deeper levels. Lots of prayer. lots and lots. Then we need a further discipling step in place like alpha or Christianity explained

It is difficult because you have to be careful in what you say, or you will turn them away- most people don't like being pushed into something - would rather make up their own minds

Well, our Minister and his wife are full on with all of the above, and there would be many others working on this. Again, age comes in. New people are always welcomed warmly, cannot comment on the follow up. So, I guess the actual church serviced plays a big part in how the newcomer feels. Happy people around them, singing and praising well, no drawn-out sermons, inviting them to morning tea with sincere fellowship. That's a start too.

The desire to bring newcomers into the church family (especially children) is strong. Most of the congregation engage positively as they arrive but few are confident in initiating the connection.

Again, a distinction has to be made between the two congregations for some of the questions. The 8.30am service congregation, being older have now past their earlier enthusiasm for Sunday School, Scripture teaching and so on. From what I have observed the later service congregation lack a passion for outreach. They seem to bask in the glow of being Evangelical but have not progressed in their faith sufficiently to want to go out and tell others of what God has done for them. In my view, both congregations lack a deep and clear love both of God and for other people. To put it simply, they talk the talk but don't walk the walk. Or they don't do as Mahalia Jackson used to sing, "I'm going' to live the life I sing about in my song."

Our members are very active and conspicuous in community activities which is good PR for the church in a tiny village. The church stall at the monthly village market provides value for money. The home-made cake ensures the market can continue. Challenge is attracting young families - mum and dad work full time and rely on weekends for chores, kids sport and family get-togethers - no time for church - too many other pressures.

For the most part people are welcomed warmly. However, I do not know what or how any follow up is conducted. I would like to see a plan developed in this area if it's not happening. Programs and events must be relevant to the community and if another church is already providing a service or group then we must be careful not to duplicate this idea. Perhaps interchurch groups can be identified, and teams help each other? This would also provide a common unity amongst the Christians in the town.eg Scripture teaching is one way we can unite

There are sometimes services for particular organisations such as the CWA or the Women's World Day of Prayer which sometimes brings other people to church. The Community will use the church for funerals, occasional weddings and christenings, the community values the church but doesn't general get involved. In the past various programs such as alpha and Lenten studies have been done but not generally taken up by the community. Christmas carols, Easter Christmas services or when the bishop comes, sees a greater involvement from the community. People tend to be independent, hardworking and stoic. Prayer ministry and testimony could stir things up. Maybe regular inserts in the local monthly paper.

Our community has a very strong Baptist church community which attracts younger Christian members of the local community. We also have not far away in major centre other young churches that attract younger people. Young Christians make churches strong and grow, we need to address this as our congregation gets older

I think hospital visitation as very important. At the moment too many services are taking up the Minister's time because people won't accept change.

Outreach takes funding.

I believe there is always a warm welcome issued, but as I only attend one Service most weekends (except when I'm travelling, when I don't attend a local Church Service). I endeavour to attend when I'm away from home

Survive
