

Introduction

We welcome you to our Vision Statement for 2007-2008. We expect there to be much that will excite and encourage you during the year, but also we should all anticipate some challenges as changes occur and life progresses. During the year our Pastor of 26 years – Rev. Roy T Shearman - will retire on 31st July 2007, with Rev Pete Kidby having taken on the mantel of Senior Minister from 4th March 2007. This one change will have consequences which will affect us all at Bethel but we must remember its Father God's church and not ours.

The change of Senior Minister was part of our Vision of earlier years. We are grateful to God for how he led us to Rev Pete Kidby and how both Pastors have handled the transition. Last year part of our Vision was to seek another Associate Minister, and during the year we engaged in this process, interviewing on two occasions and inviting to preach at two services a potential candidate. However this did not lead to an appointment.

Whilst there will be changes in our ministerial team during the year we remain sure that our Mission Statement remains unchanged:-

Build the Church

Change the Community

Impact the World

Are you willing to give all you can to help make this more of a reality during 2007-2008 than last year? Is Father God calling you to expand your commitment, service, and passion this year in seeing Kingdom principles outworked in your life? We pray that you are prepared to make an eternal difference this year and join with us as we fellowship and serve together.

Our Vision

We invite you to be part of our Vision for Bethel during 2007-2008. There is a role for everyone who calls Bethel their spiritual home. Each of us is unique in God being a small part of the picture which only becomes clear when we are all in the correct position on God's canvas. Quite a number of the Kerith Groups will be looking at material which will assist us in identifying our gifts God has given us. Be ready to be surprised and used by God in your unique way.

During the last year we engaged as a Fellowship in the "40 Days of Purpose" Campaign. This had a profound affect upon many people with their relationship with Father God deepening. This has led to a growth in the numbers attending small groups with three new groups forming and growth in church attendance and membership. During the period of the campaign and immediately thereafter there were sustained spiritual attacks upon members and their families across the church, which confirmed that ground was being taken from the evil one.

We propose to build upon the success of "40 Days of Purpose" by running a church wide campaign of "40 Days of Community" during the year. This campaign looks to focus our attention upon our corporate relationship with Father God within our church community and demonstrating this to the wider community outside of Bethel. This campaign is produced by the same organisation as the previous material following a very similar style and format.

Recognising the power of prayer we propose to introduce the concept of prayer triplets into the life of Bethel. We believe this will help us in our day by day lives and produce results in the spiritual world which will make a difference on earth. This we pray will also blunt the spiritual attacks that are inevitable when Father God starts retaking ground from the evil one. We are mindful though that time is precious and care will needed to ensure that these triplets are not seen as another time burden upon members.

As a direct consequence of the "40 Days of Community" and our increased prayerfulness it is very likely that we will wish to focus our attention outside of ourselves in 2008-2009. In readiness for this we wish to establish what the community needs are. Our focus must be on meeting their needs and not our perception of their needs. Therefore, we propose to engage a professional market research organisation to survey our community in an impartial manner. Bethel be ready – both prayerfully and practically – to meet some of these needs, and thereby become a blessing to our community. We must overcome evil with good. We must be able to

positively answer the question – ‘Would our community miss us if we weren’t here?’

Also we will see the retirement of Rev Roy T Shearman on 31st July 2007 after 26 years of faithful service. Roy has asked that we don’t hold some jamboree to mark his retirement and we propose to honour his wishes. However, we will provide a suitable forum to thank Roy and Eileen for their faithfulness and will provide details in due course.

The process of seeking an associate pastor with responsibility for youth work was not successful during 2006-2007. We received details of a number of potential candidates from a variety of sources with two being interviewed and one coming to Bethel to preach. However no appointment was made. We have reflected upon this and consider that we should change the emphasis of the post solely to youth. This would bring clarity of purpose and responsibility to the position and help develop a vital ministry at Bethel. Therefore we propose to seek the appointment of a youth pastor. We have noted the comments of members concerning the potential associate who preached at Bethel and have amended our person specification to take account of these issues.

Of a more long term nature we are looking to appoint a children’s pastor. Our commitment to children and young people has always been a distinguishing factor of Bethel amongst the Christian Community of South Wales, and is, we believe, one of the elements that contribute to the vibrancy of Bethel over generations. During the past year we did hold a Gift Day where we were seeking £15,000 from members and friends. This would have funded a further associate pastor with responsibility for children. Only £6,500 was donated and therefore we did not progress this appointment. In an effort to bring clarity and direct responsibility we consider that we should set as a long term target the appointment of a children’s pastor, and not an associate pastor with responsibility for children.

The children’s pastor would have responsibility for all aspects of children’s work at Bethel, being called to work with children and having received formal training in this area of ministry. They would be present at each activity supporting and equipping the volunteers. This appointment is in no way a criticism of the volunteers but recognition that they need support from a children’s professional worker. Funds are not available at this time for the appointment but we ask all members to be prayerful for this development of the ministry team into the future.

Whilst our children and young people are a significant part of the life of Bethel our older people form a vital part of our congregation. During 2006-2007 Mr Roger Masterman succeeded Rev Roy T Shearman as Head of Ministry for Older People. Also during the year Sisterhood closed after running as an organisation within Bethel for over 75years. This group of older people are concerned for the lost of their generation and are looking to offer the Alpha Programme to their friends and relatives. This is the first time that Alpha has been offered specifically at this age group in Bethel and may encounter problems unique to them. Therefore we encourage all too prayerfully support this initiative and see God work in power.

Also during the coming year the purchase of the land to the rear of the church centre should be completed. This has been a long standing issue – but Father God’s timing is perfect.

During the past year we have also lost members who have been promoted to Glory. One of these – Kelly - was killed in a tragic road accident when a lorry hit her car at Mwndy. She was a single lady without any dependents and recognised that her meaningful relationships were with the fellowship at Bethel. As a result one of the beneficiaries of her estate is Bethel and it is expected that this will result in a donation of in excess of £100,000. Normally we do not mention finances within our Vision but this level of funds allows us to strategically consider our future, and this is addressed within our Goals later in the Vision Statement.

Therefore we consider that this year we will see change on a number of fronts. We are preparing the ground for future years and looking to establish longer term goals than previous years.

Our Values

The values that were agreed at our Church Meeting in May 2001, and which must underpin every activity of Bethel are:-

- **Value One**

Lost people matter to God and MUST matter to us.

- **Value Two**

The church should be doctrinally pure and should aim to be culturally relevant.

- **Value Three**

Followers of Christ should live their lives in a way that is consistent with the Word of God.

- **Value Four**

Each member will be encouraged to discover and use their Spiritual Gifts.

- **Value Five**

Loving relationships should be in every aspect of church life.

- **Value Six**

Small groups are an essential part of church life for spiritual growth and relationship building.

- **Value Seven**

Excellence honours God and we will aim to achieve it.

- **Value Eight**

Full devotion to Christ and His cause is normal.

- **Value Nine**

The church must be a unified body led by the Holy Spirit through the people of His choosing.

Vision Statement 2006-2007

Goal 1 – We will undertake a complete review of our children’s work at Bethel

This goal was not achieved during the year.

Considerable discussion was held at Heads of Ministry and Core Team meetings on the subject of children’s work at Bethel during the year. In autumn 2006 Mrs Anne Jones resigned from the role of Head of Ministry for Children’s Work. We are grateful to Anne for her efforts in leading this Ministry, and recognise the difficulties she experienced in her position. In March 2007 Mrs Anne Holley was nominated by the children’s workers as the Head of Ministry.

During the year we experienced considerable unease amongst the children’s workers concerning the Core Team of the Church. This arose out of an article in the Llantrisant Observer relating to an issue arising from material provided by Scripture Union; a meeting attended by two of the Core Team with leaders of Boys Brigade from Bethel and a national leader of Boys Brigade; and the agreed position of the Heads of Ministry and Core Team, that both Boys and Girls Brigades were not the best form of presenting the gospel to children in today’s society and its communication to the relevant volunteers. We recognise that hurt was experienced on all sides through these unfortunate episodes, but the Christian Gospel succeeds only because grace is available to all comers. Lessons have been learnt and we pray that the common passion of all parties to see children introduced to Jesus and develop an eternal life with him will become more of a reality during 2007-2008 than previous years.

The importance placed upon children’s work at Bethel is recognised by carrying forward this goal for the coming year.

Goal 2 – We will consider the concept of Community.

This goal was not achieved during the year.

Some work was undertaken but we cannot claim that a finished product was delivered. It was probably unrealistic to set this goal as we lack the expertise within Bethel to identify the various elements that form community.

However, we did recognise a geographical factor, in that Bethel Baptist Church Centre is located at the boundary point of three community council areas – Pontyclun Llanharan and Llantrisant. This simple administrative distinction has helped us focus our efforts in the coming year to these areas, as the majority of Members live in these three communities.

Goal 3 – We will commence the recruitment process for a second minister in anticipation of the retirement of Rev Roy T Shearman on 31st July 2007.

This goal was achieved – although an appointment hasn't been made. We have already made reference to the process we followed and are grateful for the assistance of Mr Alan Watt.

Goal 4 - We will refurbish the Coffee Lounge

This goal was achieved and everyone using the Centre is now enjoying the benefits.

Goal 5 – We will complete the purchase of the land to the rear of the Church Centre.

This goal was not achieved during the year.

The lawyers at Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) haven't given the conveyancing of the land a high priority, presumably due to the limited revenue it will generate. Members will recall that we have agreed to purchase the additional 1 acre for £5,000. This we consider to be a gift from Father God, recognising the current limitations of the site with the existing Tree Preservation Orders.

However we are attempting to bring pressure upon the lawyers at WAG to bring this long running saga to a conclusion, without incurring extra legal costs from our solicitors.

Goal 6 – We will continue with the process of appointing a youth pastor/worker.

This goal was carried forward from the previous year. As Members will recall we did attempt to combine the recruitment of the new associate minister with this position, as we are concerned that our

youth work could be more effective if a full time position was established.

We are carrying forward this goal to the coming year.

Spiritual Goals

The review of this goal is a personal exercise for each of us.

Can we honestly say that today we display more of Christ's character qualities than last year? Are we bringing heaven to earth in increasing measure each day? Are we distinctively Christian by our actions and deeds?

Encourage someone else today, and tell them how you have seen and or experienced their changed life during the past year.

Be purposeful in your one and only life to make a difference to our community – Father God is relying upon **YOU**.

Our Aims and Objectives for 2007/2008

1. We will undertake a complete review of our children's work at Bethel.

You will recall that this is a goal carried forward from last year.

The review is already underway with all volunteers within each organisation being invited to contribute their opinion. These are being collected in writing and will form the basis for discussion and dissemination of ideas amongst the volunteers and their leaders, with input from the Core Team.

The whole process is due to be completed before the end of June 2007 to allow for any changes to be implemented with effect from September 2007.

We encourage all children's work volunteers at Bethel to positively engage in the process, and for the rest of Bethel to prayerfully uphold this review, for the good of the children.

2. We will commission a professional organisation to undertake a survey of the communities of Pontyclun Llanharan and Llantrisant Community Council Areas to establish their perceived needs.

We have spoken volumes about community and attempting to meet the needs of the community in years gone by. But we have achieved very little. This is partially due to us being unaware of the actual needs within our communities. Therefore this year we propose to commission a professional market research organisation to undertake a study on our behalf.

This study will provide us with the elusive answer we have been seeking – what does the community perceive as its need. Hopefully with this information we will be able to move forward to allow good to triumph over evil in meeting some of our communities needs.

We are looking to set a budget cost for this work of about £13,000. This money will be found from the legacy that we have been advised that we can expect from Kelly's estate. We propose to invite a number of organisations to put forward proposals to

achieve this objective and we shall keep you advised as to progress.

We propose to undertake the commissioning of this work during June – August with the actual field work being undertaken October – December 2007. During 2008 we will be looking to meet some of the reported needs.

We will also be able to use the results of this work in meeting with other organisations including representatives of the councils. This will assist us in building partnerships with these organisations and hopefully become the catalyst for change.

3. We will engage across the Bethel in the “40 days of Community” Campaign.

We have already considered the success of the “40 days of Purpose” Campaign that we undertook as a church in the past year. Many people were blessed individually as a result of their engagement in that campaign, being drawn closer to Father God.

Consequently we wish to build on the success of that campaign formula. The “40 days of Purpose” concentrated upon our individual relationship with God. The “40 days of Community” looks to concentrate upon our corporate relationship with God. This campaign is to be seen as a tool for helping us become more spiritually mature. We encourage everyone to fully grasp this opportunity of using quality material to build upon the foundation established by the previous campaign.

We are looking to build the campaign team during September – December 2007, and then engaging in the church wide campaign during January – March 2008.

4. We wish to see everyone who calls Bethel their spiritual home in a small group. Therefore we will need to grow the number of small groups through the year.

During the past year there has been a growth in the numbers attending Kerith. This is a direct result of Father God working through the “40 Days of Purpose” campaign and we are seeing

more people join with us at Bethel and become part of our small groups. Members will recall that Value 6 of our Agreed Values is that:-

“Small groups are an essential part of church life for spiritual growth and relationship building”

As Bethel grows numerically small groups will be the only way relationships can be maintained. It will become impossible for everyone who attends Bethel to know and be in relationship with everyone else. Therefore, it must be a high priority for us to make our attendance at Kerith part of our 'normal week'. These Kerith Groups are a place to belong, grow, give, reach out, and encounter Jesus.

However, these Kerith Groups can only function if there are sufficient leaders. During this year we will be looking to recruit more volunteer leaders to allow the Kerith system to experience growth, which will allow all attending Bethel to experience quality relationships with a small number of people.

5. We will commence the recruitment process of a Youth Pastor.

We have already commented upon our unsuccessful journey of recruiting an associate pastor during the past year.

We believe that there may have been some confusion as to what we were seeking to appoint – an associate with responsibility for youth. We have on two previous years stated that we wish to appoint a youth pastor when funds become available. Consequently we consider that clarity can be achieved and responsibility clearly established by us proceeding now with the appointment of a Youth Pastor. WE WILL NOT BE PROCEEDING WITH THE APPOINTMENT OF AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR AT THIS TIME.

The person specification for a youth pastor will therefore need to be somewhat different than for an associate pastor, as will the appointment process. We ask Members to be prayerful of this appointment and to be open to seeing the recruitment of a person who probably is more relevant to young people than the majority of members.

Members will recall that we have during the past year agreed to the sale of our existing Manse at 44 Llantrisant Road. This will progress during the summer months thereby releasing funds for the purchase of a smaller property – 3 bedroom semi detached/terraced house. We wish to be strategic in our location of ministerial staff, and therefore will look to purchase the replacement property in either Pontyclun or the Llanharan community council areas.

6. We will encourage the establishment of prayer triplets across Bethel.

We will encourage the prayerful life across Bethel through the establishment of prayer triplets. We do not wish to add to the time burden of anyone but consider that only good will flow from increasing the prayer life of Bethel.

7. We will establish small groups for the young people attending the Friday night coffee bar.

The coffee bar is proving to be a success at Bethel. This is due to the work undertaken by our detached youth workers, the coffee bar team, and the prayerful support of a few faithful people. This is a team working under God making a difference. Building on this success we wish to see these young people become part of a small group in Bethel, for exactly the same reasons outlined above.

Therefore, we ask Members to be prayerful for the selection of leaders and their inspiring as they put Jesus before these young people.

Due to the numbers attending the coffee bar we are looking to start these new small groups by October half term.

8. We will offer an Alpha Programme for the older people of the community.

Much has been written within this Vision Statement concerning children and young people. But we have not forgotten that our

older adults also are just as important to Father God. Therefore we propose to offer the Alpha Programme specifically targeting the older people of our community.

This is a joint effort between our Older People and Evangelism Ministries. Alpha hasn't previously been offered at Bethel aimed specifically for older people, and therefore we may need to make some adjustment to how previously it has been operated. However, it can only gladden the heart of Father God that we are concerned for all ages at Bethel.

This programme will be offered during September – December 2007.

9. We will seek recruits for the worship and technical support teams at Bethel.

Considerable effort and time is invested by our existing worship and technical support teams in making Sunday Worship 'happen'. But there is a need to expand the team to enable current members of the group to experience worship in the congregation and avoid burn out.

Therefore we will be seeking suitable volunteers to assist in this vital area of the church.

This recruitment will occur during the summer period July – September 2007.

10. We will commence the recruitment process of a children's pastor as a long term goal.

We have already recorded the fact that our Gift Day in autumn 2006 did not raise sufficient funds for the progression of the appointment of a children's pastor. However, we believe that the growth of Bethel under Father God's direction will occur as we add more paid ministerial staff. This can be clearly seen following the appointment of Rev Pete Kidby in 2004, as more progress can be achieved by fulltime workers.

Therefore we wish to commence the recruitment process for a children's pastor during this year. We have already stated that the church will be the beneficiary of Kelly's estate. We propose to use the balance of money released following the sale of our existing Manse with the bulk of money from Kelly's estate to

purchase a further house. We fully accept that we do not have a children's pastor at present, but we believe we should put this money into a property in readiness for the time when such an appointment occurs.

In the intervening period the house can be offered to rent thereby generating income.

We would propose to purchase this property strategically; either in the Pontyclun or Llanharry community council areas, so that we have a home in all three council areas.

We will not progress this appointment until we are satisfied that we have sufficient funds available to meet our commitments.

Spiritual Goals

To continue to grow and develop an understanding of the responsibilities we carry as the people of God

- i. An understanding of Self
- ii. An understanding of Church
- iii. An understanding of the nature of Spiritual maturity
- iv. An understanding of the nature of Relationship
 - a. With God
 - b. With Church
 - c. With the World
- v. An understanding of what makes for Relational Community

We are a journeying People who are called to and gifted for the needs of our own, the local and the global Communities.

Build the Church, Change the Community, Impact the World.

Our Budget during 2006/2007

As in previous years we set ourselves the target of achieving a balanced budget for the year. We are pleased to report that this year our income exceeded our expenditure. We are grateful to Father God for his provision. Our income totalled £124,256.83 against a target of £114,000. However, our expenditure also was above our target at £119,091.61. This results in a surplus of £5,082.24.

Also as a result of our Gift Day the donations into both the General and Building Funds were improved as donors indicated where they wished their gifts to be redirected. With this additional income our surplus increases to £5,082.24. However most of this additional money has been donated to specific ministries and this has been added to the relative budgets of the ministries for the coming year.

We identified in last year's Vision Statement that although not included within our planned expenditure we would like to purchase an additional room size video projector. We are pleased to report that this purchase was achieved, and is included within the stated expenditure.

Members will be aware that during the year we suffered the theft of the church minibus. After considerable negotiation we have settled the claim for £2,800 which was received during the financial year 2007-2008.

The use of the Church Centre continues to generate a considerable proportion of the cost of employing our church administrator. Users from outside Bethel include Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC, Natural Child Birth Trust, DRIVE, and the Breakfast and After School Club. Without the contributions to use we would have needed to find from offerings a further £12,348.

As in previous years our Gift Aid Tax Reclaim has contributed a significant proportion to our overall income. We are grateful to Mr Ian Jenkins for his efforts on our behalf in submitting quarterly claims to the Inland Revenue.

Also during the year Dr Andrew Blair resigned as Church Accountant. We are grateful to him for his work in maintaining our finances and administering the PAYE. His position has been filled by Mrs Lucie Wheeler.

Our Budget during 2007-2008

We are again setting a balanced budget for the coming year. We are projecting the income to be £120,000 arising from regular giving from members and friends of £87,000, contributions from use of £12,000 and Gift Aid tax reclaim of £21,000.

We are unsure as to when we will be appointing a youth pastor and therefore have maintained the same expenditure for Ministry as in the previous year. It is very probable that costs will be incurred in the appointment and relocation process and these will be met from the Ministry budget.

We have allowed for the increases in salary of Rev Pete Kidby and our Church Administrator in line with the increases recommended in the Baptist Union minimum stipend as they relate to the individual appointments.

As Rev Pete Kidby has accepted the mantle of Senior Pastor from 4 March 2007 and we are recommending that he be paid at the senior minister rate from that date.

We have not as yet determined the recipient of the General Fund Tithe for 2007-2008, but we hope to revert to members with a recommendation at either the autumn or winter church meeting.

Also Bethel is to be the one of the beneficiaries of the estate of Kelly. This we understand will amount to a donation in excess of £100,000. We have indicated already within this document where we propose to use that money. Further we are given to understand that additional monies will be made available from an insurance policy.

Of the surplus of income over expenditure arising from last year's Budget we propose that £5,000 be used to repay part of the mortgage that Bethel holds on 26 Clos Leland Talbot Green. This will have the effect of reducing our debt but also reduce our monthly repayments as the discounted rate will end in April 2007. No planned maintenance is programmed for 2007-2008 on 26 Clos Leland.

We are anticipating completion of the purchase of the land to the rear of the Church Centre and will be proceeding with erection of a fence and clearing some of the vegetation during the year. At this time we are unsure as to the probable expenditure that this will entail, but look to fund this from the balance within the Building Fund.

Accordingly:-

Projected Income	£120,000
------------------	----------

Budgeted Expenditure

Ministry	£57,000
Mission	£13,000
Upkeep of Premises	£22,000
Administration	£25,000
Transport	£ 3,000

£120,000

During the year as funds become available we will need to replace the telephone system at the Church Centre as the current system now is too old to be maintained by BT. The cost of replacing the system is likely to be in the order of £800.