Mission Plans

Where do we start?



"*It is not so much the case that God has a mission for his church in the world, as that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission – God's mission." Christopher J. H. Wright*

Introduction

Mission Plans are not (should not be) scary. They are a useful tool to discern the next phase of congregational life and they identify priorities and gaps in your ministry and mission.

This document is not meant to be scary either! There are a number of different ways to structure a plan – there is no right or wrong way, these are simply offered for you to adapt and use as you see fit.

To accompany this booklet there are word files of different tables which may make capturing your work easier and clearer.

A well-written Church Mission Plan should enable and inspire ministry, mission, planning, measurement, and accountability. It gives focus and intentionality, enabling a congregation to use their time, energy and resources in line with what they have discerned God's calling to be at this particular time.

Our canons (31) require every charge to have a Mission Plan but their preparation can be daunting for busy clergy and churches. The purpose of this booklet is to provide a variety of approaches that churches could use to help.

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Getting started

There are several ways to produce and structure a Mission Plan. Models of mission plans are described from page 7, but there are certain parts which are universal.

- It is a document to be produced by the whole congregation, led by the vestry, under God's guidance and with prayerful discernment.
- It needs to be as focused as possible to ensure intentionality in mission and ministry, often providing as much guidance for what is not considered a priority as to what is.
- It will be unique to each congregation as it will emerge out of the context of each church and respond to God's mission in the community and congregation.

Common to all Mission Plans, however you structure it:

1. Prayer

Mission planning is always rooted in prayer. Prayer for your church, for the community in which you serve, the people God has brought together in partnership with you, the congregational gifts, skills and charisma. And remember to listen!

2. Understanding context: the current congregation

- "What have you got in your fridge"; what is going on at the moment?
- What takes the time/energy of the congregation/vestry? What is fruitful and what is less fruitful? What deepens your discipleship, worship, mission, pastoral care?
- Where is there thankfulness? Where is there concern?

Some more specific things to think about are below. Some chart change over a short spell. You could do this by looking at your profile in our 2025 Bishop Search Document or previous Mission Plans. What has emerged in your life together since these were produced?

a) God does not call all churches to be the same! Why has God called this particular group of people to this particular congregation at this particular time?
b) How has the congregation's membership changed over the period?
c) Who's missing?
d) What do people feel are the main factors behind any changes in size or mix of population? Have you any way of checking this objectively?
e) Consider your style of worship and any changes that have taken place or might be needed.
f) Has the church's role in the local community changed? In what ways? What opportunities are out there?
g) Is the congregation locally based or more of a gathered nature (people commuting from a wide area)? How does this affect your vision?
h) Has the financial position changed? What are the implications?
i) What is the state of all the congregation's buildings?
j) Where are the opportunities to tackle Net Zero targets?
k) Has use of all the congregation's buildings changed? If so, why and what opportunities do the buildings create?

3. Understanding context: your local community

God has called your congregation to worship and serve in your own unique community setting. Where is God working in your community? What is God putting on your hearts for the local community?

Some questions to think about from the perspective of the local community:

a) What are you already doing – can that be developed or changed?
b) How has the community around the church changed over the period? Think both immediate surroundings and geographical identifiable area (e.g. village, town, ward, etc).
c) How have local community changes impacted the congregation?
d) Look up held data about your community (using links below or other known sources): what stands out as remarkable in your local area? To what extent does it echo the stories the community tells about itself?
e) What changes are planned for the community in the next 5–10 years?
f) Where do you see signs of God at work in the life of your community, e.g. other churches, charities, community trusts, etc?

4. The hopes for the future

There are times in the life of a congregation when we discern that God is asking us to change, to move onto a new path, to open new ways of life together, to worship, to serve in different ways. So as you pray and listen:

a) Are there images that are given to you that might be important?
b) Are there people in your community that are missing from your congregation?
c) Are there people God is calling you to love?
d) In what ways might God be challenging you to a new way of discipleship, new ways of being church together?
e) How is the governance of your church, are there practical skills and information to unlock the path ahead?
f) Notice the nudging of the Spirit, note them down. God doesn't call for everything to be done at the same time:
g) What might be the first priorities of this discernment?
h) What resources do you have currently?

5. Recording

It is good to record this discernment process in a document. This is something that you can come back to regularly. If new (often just as good, just as worthy) opportunities arise, you can consider them alongside the Mission Plan and either change your plan by laying something aside for a season, or simply note the new opportunity for a future date.

a) And as you gather this together, are there people who feel called to take responsibility for any of these new pathways?
b) Can you split the bigger priorities into smaller 'bite sized' chunks with timeframes and opportunities?

6. Review

a) Consult the Mission Plan regularly, to review, celebrate, and refocus.
b) Share with your congregation as well as vestry.
c) Find appropriate ways to share what you are doing and what you are learning with others.
d) Some of the best learning and ideas come from informal conversations. Chat about what is going on and listen to how people respond.
e) And it will form part form part of the visitation by the Dean when that happens!

Useful online resources

- Blog post, 'How to…build a missional community': https://churchmissionsociety.org/blog/thinking-mission/how-to-build-a missional-community/
- Blog post, 'Mission in the New Era': https://togetherforthecommongood.co.uk/uncategorised/mission-and-the-changing-church
- Church of England Support Hub provides access to all their resources, and SEC clergy can join at no cost: https://churchsupporthub.org/
- A book that invited 52 young church leaders (in USA) to identify one 'quick' task that helped to grow the church. Each idea is a single page. Definitely worth a look: https://www.davidlose.net/2012/09/renew-52-now-available/

Useful online resources for data-gathering and understanding context

- Understanding Scottish Places gives data for the various villages, towns, and cities in Scotland: https://www.usp.scot/
- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 gives detailed statistical data for every area of Scotland: https://simd.scot/
- Church of Scotland parish census information may be useful but is from 2011. This is held by parish and can be found via https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/church-finder/
- A page with links on how to use research (particularly historical research) to build mission and ministry in a church: https://university.open.ac.uk/arts/research/religion-in-london/building-on-history-project

(Some) options for structuring the Mission Plan

In the Scottish Episcopal Church each charge is a separate and discrete charity. The understanding is that each charge should be fully self-sustaining and self-funding. Mission Planning will happen alongside financial planning. Each charge should have a 5-year Financial Plan.

We are living in a very rapid period of change in our society. We know the adage "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results". While God remains ever loving, ever faithful and ever exciting, ways of doing church, of proclamation and of living the gospel, by necessity changes often – more than in each generation. Sometimes it is easy to do the same things and expect different results, if only we did it better, or more intentionally, or with more money, etc.

Today, the shape and witness of the church is different and is ever evolving. Where is your congregation being called today? What will church look like in your context in 5 or 10 years' time?

There are many ways you may wish to structure your Mission Plan. Some options are below, but a different structure may make more sense in your context. Each way has advantages and disadvantages in terms of what it prioritises as you work together. Pray it through as a vestry and congregation – what speaks most to your vision of your discipleship right now.

1. Mission Action Plan (p. 9)

This articulates with clarity the journey the congregation and wider community are on. Understanding context is emphasised. **The process encourages us to look backward and forward, naming a place that is different**. It recognises that ministry changes, that new forms of ministry may emerge, and asks us to discern what those may be in our context.

 It can be a bit rigid. It sometimes doesn't allow us to celebrate the ongoing life of the church.

2. Anglican Marks of Mission (pp. 13–18)

This method places emphasis on us joining God's Mission (the *Missio Dei*). These 'marks of mission' are central to the life of congregations throughout the Anglican Communion.

By taking each of the 5 marks in turn, we are invited to look critically at all we currently do. It makes us question whether we are doing things 'because they've always been done', even if they are no longer part of our fundamental core mission. It helps us identify what parts of Christian discipleship and mission we may be weaker on, or even blind to.

 This approach can be difficult to put the different parts of our life together in place. It is tempting to simply describe the status quo and not to discern where God may be calling us to change.

3. Baptismal vows (p. 19)

Our baptismal vows are the foundation to our whole life with God, both individually and collectively as a congregation. This approach to our mission invites us to see how we feed ourselves, how we proclaim God in all that we do and how we serve those God has sent us to. It reminds us of our promises and again offers an opportunity to identify activities which may be secondary to our fundamental calling as church.

 It can be difficult to put things into this model and again difficult to discern what new forms of discipleship, ministry and forms of Church may be needed in our context going forward.

Task orientation

This is the second stage of Mission Plans. It takes the bigger goals of our discipleship and identifies key ways to address them. This might be in practical ways (community involvement, communication) or more internal discipleship (training for leadership, deepening discipleship courses). Each of these tasks should directly link back to the way you have structured your mission plan and identified as your calling. You can then decide what are the individual steps to move you forwards and who will be responsible for doing this. This stage should only come after you have worked out your mission, your calling in the previous steps.

Mission Action Planning (MAP)

The process of MAPing was developed and published by Mike Chew and Mike Ireland, the most recent edition of their book being published in 2016: *How to Do Mission Action Planning*.

The MAP process has 4 key stages – Review, Choose, Plan, Act – all of which are underpinned by prayerful listening and discernment. Each stage has a key question:

1. Where are we now? Review your situation
2. Where are we going? Choose/discern future priorities
3. What's the best way to get there? Make plans
4. What do we need to do now? Act on the plans

1. Where are we now? (**Review**)

Look openly and realistically at your current situation and spend time really listening – to the church, yourself, your community, and God.

- **Notice** what is happening – in the internal life of the church, the external context in which it is placed, and the links and relationships between the church and its community.
- **Listen** to what people really think and feel, rather than relying on your own assumptions about their perspectives.
- **Ask** a broad cross-section of those involved in church life what they appreciate, and what they'd love to see change – worship; growing in faith; engaging with the community; helping others come to faith, and what else? Have a look at numbers – service register; financial and buildings situation; the age and social profile of the congregation and your local community.
- **Celebrate** and give thanks for good, wonderful, joyful moments or events. Or perhaps find a way to grieve or lament something lost or dramatically changed. Honour where God has been with you and all that has happened.

2. Where are we going? (**Choose**)

This is about identifying your **vision**, **priorities** and **goals** in prayer.

Vision

What would this church community look like in about 5 years' time? Try to be specific. As you articulate this, it is important that people can commit to it. For example:

- "We seek to be a community where all who come will know the comfort, healing and restoration which Jesus can bring to them."
- "We will be a fully inclusive, caring, praying community that is central to the needs and activities of our village."
- "We are a flourishing church at the heart of our village, loving God and making God's love known."
- "Our Church exists to worship God; to lead people to Christ; to build a loving Christian community; and to serve a world in need."

Priorities

Focus on doing a few things well, which might include letting some things stop as well as starting or changing other things. Think both in the short-term (e.g. 2 to 4 months) and the medium or long-term (6 months to 5 years). For most smaller or average-sized churches, having two main things to focus on in any given year is often plenty. More than 4 priorities at any one time means, in practice, there are no priorities. For example:

- Reduce the congregation's environmental impact.
- Develop relationships with other congregations and charities in the village.
- Deepen the spiritual life of the congregation.
- Become a hub for mental and emotional well-being.

Goals

These break down your priorities into steps along the way. For some types of priority, it is possible for the goals to be **SMART: Specific – Measurable – Achievable – Relevant – Timed**. There are other types of priority that are more focussed on relationships or the quality of what is to be done, for which the SMART framework may not fit as well. Examples of goals:

- Increase insulation in church hall roof space by [12 months' time].
- Create geographical map of all faith-based communities and charities in canonical zone by [6 months' time].
- Speak with Mission and Ministry team about resources that can be borrowed from the Diocesan Office by [3 months' time].
- Enable all members of our congregation to participate in The Sanctuary course over the next 3 years.

3. What's the best way to get there? (**Plan**)

Once you have decided your main priorities, the next stage is to work out how best to achieve them. For some priorities, it will be fairly clear what needs to be done: the challenge will be organising and doing it. For other priorities, you may feel unsure how best to take things forward. Whatever your priorities, take them one by one, and create an appropriate plan. Helpful questions may include:

- ? Are there people whose ideas and opinions we should be seeking?
- ? How can we engage people, work with them, and publicise what's happening?
- ? Has anybody else tried to achieve something similar – in this diocese or elsewhere? Who could we talk to?
- ? How will we go about meeting this priority? How can we break it down into achievable steps?
- ? What is the next step that needs to be taken? Who are the best people to be involved? When will this be done?
- ? What resources – of people, time and money – we need, and when?
- ? How will we communicate this – so that people can get behind it, pray for it and encourage it?
- ? Looking across all the priorities, are the timescales and expectations realistic? Is anyone being overloaded with responsibility? Might anybody else be able to help?

4. What do we need to do now? (**Act**)

The final stage of the MAP cycle is to **Act** – **Check** – **Celebrate**.

 Act

Start to put your plans into practice.

 Check

Have regular discussions on how things are going. Some priorities will move ahead by experiment and evolution, others will be more concrete. Adjust your plan as necessary.

 Celebrate

Look for significant milestones along the way and take time to give thanks – to God and to all who have contributed in any way.

Helpful links

A summary of the original Chew & Ireland book, written by Alison Morgan, can be found here:

https://www.alisonmorgan.co.uk/Books/Chew&Ireland%202009.pdf

The Diocese of St Albans has an introductory video to the whole process as well as various other detailed documents and forms:

https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/parishsupport/growing-your church/mission-action-planning/

Five Marks of Mission (5MM)

The 5MM express the Anglican Communion's common commitment to, and understanding of, God's holistic and integral mission. It emphasises that the mission of the Church is the mission of Christ:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.
2. To teach, baptise and nurture [new] believers.
3. To respond to human need by loving service.
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace and reconciliation.
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The 5MM can be used as a framework to reflect upon the congregation's activities and what future priorities might be:

- Where are these marks embodied?
- Are some emphasised more than others?
- Might this be indicative of a charism/calling or an indication that some re-balancing is required?

In each section below we have included a range of areas and questions you might like to reflect on. It is not expected that any one church does everything!

Mark One: To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

This is how Jesus defines his mission. Reflect on the use of language about this mark. Words like 'proclaiming', 'good news', and 'kingdom' will be familiar to many church 'insiders' but their meaning might vary and they may bewilder others. Sometimes these terms may need to be unpacked, e.g. 'proclaiming' could be translated as 'communicating' or 'sharing'. Mark One encompasses the following areas:

Worship: The church proclaims the good news of the kingdom through worship. How does your worship reflect your understanding of God? How does it speak to non-church people?

Evangelism (the announcing of 'good news'): focuses on an explicit articulation of the gospel, which includes an invitation to faith, conversion, and discipleship.

Witnessing: includes the calling to give an account of the hope by which they live. It can be expressed in a range of different practical actions in the neighbourhood.

Communicating: how your values and beliefs are communicated, for example through magazines, leaflet drops, websites, and church grounds.

Engagement in interreligious encounters that serve to build community, respect difference, and invite common action for the good, whilst being a witness to Christian faith.

Some questions for reflection:

- In what ways is this activity/congregation proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God?
- With whom are we sharing good news?
- Do those inside and outside our congregations understand what we are talking about and why we do what we do?
- Does our worship, work and witness sound/look/feel like good news to everyone? Why? Why not?
- Who is involved in proclaiming God's Kingdom? In what ways are we an inviting congregation (as opposed to a 'welcoming' congregation)?

Mark Two: To teach, baptise and nurture believers

Mission invites people to belong to a community of faith and grow in discipleship. It also concerns the renewing of the life of the church internally, deepening our discipleship so that we are better equipped to serve God's mission to the world. Mark Two encompasses the following areas:

- Opportunities and spaces to learn about Christian faith.
- Bible studies and/or resources.
- The welcome given to newcomers and the deepening in fellowship of everyone.
- A supportive environment for children and families.
- Valuing the participation and voice of young people.
- Providing opportunities to deepen Christian life through prayer and spiritual exploration.
- Looking at issues of work, family life, politics, etc, in relation to Christian faith.
- A collaborative style of ministry, with lay people active in leadership and other roles.

- A willingness to self-reflect, change, and adapt to the demands of mission both individually and as a congregation.
- The overall focus of finances, buildings, and other physical assets is towards mission.
- Healthy and active ecumenical relations.

Some questions for reflection:

- In what ways are we teaching and nurturing all believers of all ages and stages?
- How do we welcome new people into our congregation?
- What is our explicit and implicit message about babies, toddlers, children, families, and young people? What about people with cognitive or physical impairment?
- How do we encourage people to explore the Christian faith?
- How do we enable people to come to baptism, confirmation or affirmation of faith?
- How are we communicating all this to our wider community?
- In what ways do we show we are all members of the Body of Christ, and encourage relationships and fellowship across generations and social divides?

Mark Three: To respond to human need by loving service

Healing the sick and caring for the poor were central to the ministry of Jesus. Much of his time, energy and focus were taken up with this. Mark Three might encompass the following areas:

- Church services that relate to people's needs for healing.
- Offering support for vulnerable people and disadvantaged groups (e.g. food bank, dementia club, reduced/free use of building by partner groups/charities, toddler groups, etc).
- Engagement with work of groups like Christian Aid.
- Support of chaplaincy work in various locations (e.g. schools, workplaces, prisons, NHS, etc) and work in care homes.
- Care and support of those undertaking 'loving service' in our congregation, as employees or volunteers.

Some questions for reflection:

- What is the human need we see in our congregation, community and world? How are we responding?
- What is the balance between internal, local, national, and global service?
- In what ways are our responses 'loving'? Do we place conditions on service? In what ways are these healthy boundaries and/or unhelpful judgements?
- In what ways might we serve one area of need to the detriment of another?
- Where are responses individual or congregational? What are the ways in which these might complement each other? Where are aspects of 'loving service' now the responsibility of other people/organisations? What might we stop or lay down?
- Where can we work in partnership? (Perhaps with other congregations, faith groups, third sector organisations, government bodies or private sector.)

Mark Four: To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace and reconciliation

Jesus calls us to be prophetic. Many of the structures of the world are unjust, and they exploit, impoverish and inflict suffering on people. Christian concern goes beyond relief, and seeks to address these wider questions of justice and peace with hope. Mark Four encompasses the following areas:

- Providing a safe environment and meeting place for children and vulnerable adults
- Supporting concerns of justice and peace in the local community and in the wider world (e.g. issues of migration and asylum)
- Promoting Fairtrade products and a living wage
- Tackling issues of consumerism and inequality
- Support of development projects (e.g. through Christian Aid)
- Exploring and working on the causes of violence and injustice (e.g. fundamentalism, sexism, racism)
- Investing money using ethical principles.

Some questions for reflection:

- Which unjust structures of society are we aware of and seeking to transform? Why?
- How do we work to transform our community?
- Who is excluded from our community?
- Who is being abused in our community?
- In what ways do we challenge violence? And do we embody, individually and collectively, an ethos of non-violence?
- In what ways might our understandings of violence be too narrow or biased in a certain direction?
- How do we maintain healthy relationships within our congregation? Between members and community? With the wider church, Diocese, etc?
- How are meetings run?
- How do we care for everyone in meetings and ensure everyone is heard?
- What does peace look like for us?
- Where do we focus locally, nationally and internationally? Why? Who are our official partners in this work?
- Who are our informal partners, and why?

Mark Five: To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

Mission involves a rejection of all that harms the earth, a recognition of its worth as God's creation, and active care of the planet. Mark Five encompasses the following areas:

- Participation in the Eco-Congregation movement and awards.
- Work towards net zero carbon across church buildings and members' homes (e.g. insulation, LED lighting, green tariffs, air pumps, solar panels, etc).
- Reduce, reuse, recycle principles used in the church and home. Imaginative use of outdoor spaces to support biodiversity and speak of God's revelation in and through creation.
- Support of local community initiatives and national campaigns on aspects of environment and creation care.
- Reflecting on, and working towards, environmental justice for those most affected today by environmental changes.

Some questions for reflection:

- What do you as a congregation do to safeguard creation? How is this related to what you do individually?
- What is the balance between Net Zero work and other forms of care for creation?
- In what ways do you sustain and nurture creation? In what ways are you part of the renewal and regeneration of creation?
- To what extent is creation part of your worship, work and witness?

An exercise in reflection

Sometimes the Five Marks of Mission can seem a bit long winded. As you reflect, do you have shorthand words for them? The most common grouping is: Tell – Teach – Tend – Transform – Treasure. However, these do not capture the full nuance of the Five Marks. There might be words/phrases which better represent your congregation's engagement with these Marks.

Discerning priorities

When you have worked through each mark of mission, reflect back. Some questions and prompts are below to help you in this:

- Where is each mark embodied in the life of the church?
- Are some marks emphasised more than others? Is this the right balance because of your context? Or do you need some re-balancing?
- Where could the congregation join in with what's already happening around it?
- What opportunities for partnership are there?
- What areas of church activity should stop to enable resources to be directed elsewhere? Be honest in appraising present activities: with limited resources, it is better to do less well rather than lots poorly.

A resource linked specifically with 5MM

Five Marks of Love, which is a "six-week journey of reflection on the Anglican Marks of Mission": https://www.ssje.org/5marksoflove/

Baptismal vows

Baptismal vows can be used to think about our congregational mission and discipleship. As membership of the church comes through baptism, vows will have been taken by most people attending worship (either by them individually or on their behalf). These may or may not be identical to the vows used below, but they will be similar.

As a disciple of Christ will you continue in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers?

- What are the central points of teaching from Scripture and tradition for you – individually and as a congregation?
- How do we support and nurture each other in teaching and fellowship? How do you deepen discipleship as a congregation?
- How often do you gather together for worship? What does your communion service say about your faith and community to someone coming for the first time?
- How does the congregation embody prayer? In what other ways do you "break bread" with each other both in the congregation and in the wider community?

See also notes above on Mark Two.

Will you proclaim the good news by word and deed, serving Christ in all people?

- How does the congregation proclaim faith in your noticeboards, in your gardens and buildings, in your activities, online?
- How do your activities in community convey your faith in Christ?
- Which deeds do (or do not) convey the good news?
- How do you as a congregation serve the community in which God has placed you?
- Who is 'missing' from your congregation? Do you need to reflect on why?

See also notes above on Mark One and Three.

Will you work for justice and peace, honouring God in all Creation?

- In what ways does the congregation work for justice? Do you talk about injustice?
- How does church life reflect our desire for peace and reconciliation?
- What are you doing during the week to promote and speak for justice in your local community?
- Are there ways in which your governance at the church perpetuate exclusion or conflict? What can you do about it?
- How does the church show care for creation as central to our faith?

See also notes above on Marks Four and Five.

With the help of God, I will.

This is the response that is made by each person. Reflect:

- Where am you seeking God's help?
- What are we trying to do by our own strength?
- Where do you need to seek God's help for your church life?
- Where is prayer needed? And for what?

This is the task of the Church. This is our task: to live and work for the kingdom of God.

This is the statement made by all gathered at a baptism/affirmation.

- How does your church grow together as a whole. How connected do you life with the other local congregations, diocese, national and international church?
- In what ways do you celebrate and contribute to the wider church?
- How does our life together reflect our understanding of the Kingdom of God?

Discerning priorities

Having worked through each baptismal vow, now is the time to do some noticing and discerning. Some questions and prompts are below to help you in this:

- How are these vows being lived out by individuals and the congregation?
- Are some emphasised more than others?
- How might the congregation as a whole help everyone to grow ever-deeper into these vows?
- In what ways do these vows, and the congregation, reflect Christ's presence in your community?
- What areas of church activity could stop to enable resources to be directed elsewhere? Be honest in appraising present activities: with limited resources, it is better to do less well rather than lots poorly.
- Where could the congregation join in with what's already happening around it?

Overall, the congregation is asking itself: "What does God want us to be and do in this place at this time?" This will help you articulate how you wish to "be" as a congregation, identify your priorities, and perhaps form a vision statement.

Finances

A Mission Plan is not the same as a Business Plan and churches are not the same as a corporation. God works in mysterious ways and we all know that asset-poor churches are often ministry and mission rich and vice versa.

However, as you put together your Mission Plan, this might be a good opportunity to look carefully at your assets, see how they are being used now, how they could be released for mission (either for the local community or to fund your other mission activities) and how your stewardship of the assets the church is holding are being maintained.

We often think of church life as a three-legged stool, where the legs are Governance, Internal Care and Ministry and External Mission. We know that if any of those legs is not on solid ground, mistakes and problems may appear. So although a Mission Plan concentrates on the two legs of Mission and Ministry in church life, it might be a good opportunity to also have a look at your Governance.

Some of the areas to look at are in the table overleaf.

	What is the state now and what are the next steps/what do we need to help us?
Giving/income – does giving cover core ministry costs? Where is the shortfall? What needs to be released to enable growth? Do we have reserves and what are we intending to do with them, could they unlock potential?	
Congregational roll – when was it last reviewed and trimmed? How up to date are your GDPR permissions? Do you display your GDPR policies, etc?	
Constitution – when was it last reviewed? Is it suitable for now?	
When was the last time there was a rent review/how do you support tenants?	
Safeguarding – are these up to date? What about training for **all** concerned?	
Standing orders – when were they last reviewed? What percentage of the congregation give through SO?	
Gift Aid – are all donors using Gift Aid if possible? Are there other ways to make giving easier? Card readers? QR codes?	
Vestry agenda and practices – how recently were these updated?	
Risk assessments – are you using the relevant forms, doing the assessments for all activities?	
Health and safety – have the vestry done the training? When was your last fire drill?	

Then look at your assets. Some of the questions you might like to ask:

- What buildings do we have?
- How many days a week is the church open?
- How many groups/people use the building? When do they use it?
- What partnerships do we have in the community – food banks, community groups, schools, other churches?
- What activities happen that welcome non-congregational members to our activities? How are our assets being used for mission? What could be done?

What	How is it used now?	How could it be used?	How does it declare our belief?	What is the road to change?	What changes are needed for Net Zero?
Church building					
Halls					
Noticeboard					
Garden					