

3.5%



The next nine years

A strategy for growth

- ✓ Strengthening foundations
- ✓ Building infrastructure
- ✓ Increasing capacity
- ✓ Targeting growth
- ✓ Expanding reach

Strengthening foundations

Parochial Church Council

You might remember, at the PCC Vision Day in 2016, I asked the PCC whether you consider yourselves as ‘leaders’ of Christ Church.

The official Church of England documents governing the PCC, state clearly that it is the duty of the minister and the Parochial Church Council to consult together on matters of general concern and importance in the parish. The functions of the Parochial Church Council include co-operation with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Parochial Church Council

Minister
(Chair of the PCC)

This consulting and cooperation between the minister and the PCC, means that together we take the lead in carrying out the ministry and mission of the church – the whole church. Some churches use the PCC as a rubber-stamping committee. Other churches have obstructive personalities on the PCC, blocking many of the things the minister wishes to introduce. A healthy balance is one where the minister takes the lead, in close consultation and cooperation with the PCC and treats the PCC as fellow leaders – colleagues in ministry. I think we do have healthy PCC – but there’s always room for improvement.

Included in the PCC, are statutory and crucial roles, such as Churchwardens, Secretary, Treasurer, Electoral Roll Officer, Safeguarding Officer, Under 18s youth and children’s work coordinator and Deanery Synod representatives. Put together, the minister and the PCC are entrusted with the legal, charitable and statutory rules and regulations of the church and state.

The ministry and mission of the church isn’t limited to the minister and PCC. We also have the privilege of an ordinand in training. Licensed and retired Clergy provide a vital support in ministry. Week in week out, the ministry of our two Licensed Lay Readers and one Pastoral Assistant, provide superb ministry in the form of pastoral care, preaching and leading worship.

Lay Readers

Pastoral Assistant

Organist

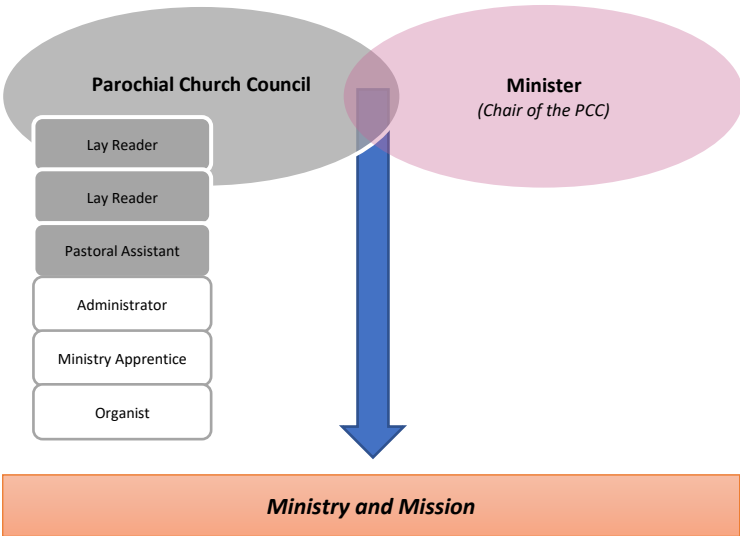
Administrator

Sexton

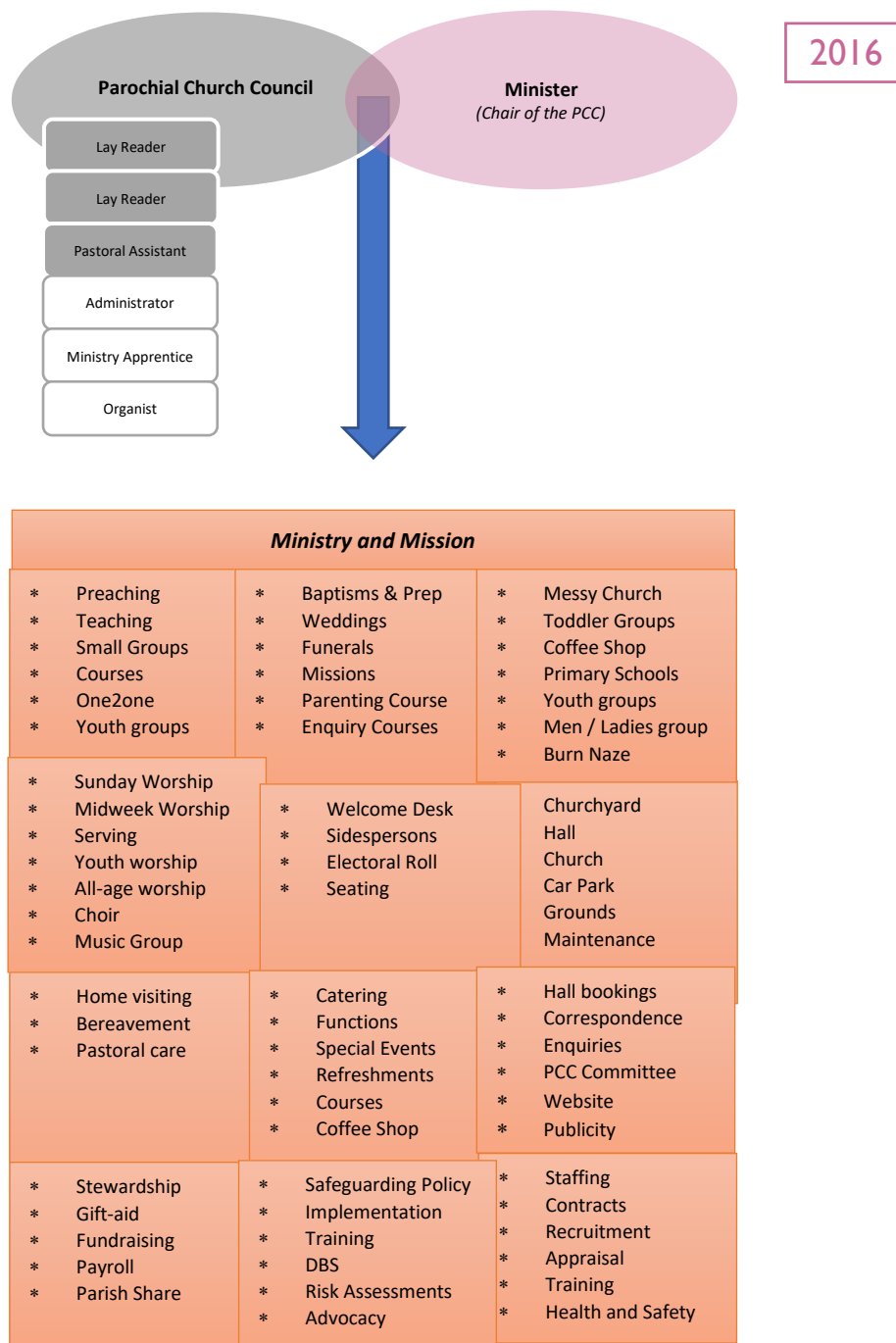
Ministry Apprentice

The support staff, employed by the PCC, help fulfil the ministry and mission of the church, in roles which would otherwise be difficult in a voluntary capacity.

Together, the minister, PCC, licensed lay workers, Clergy and support staff, are engaged in the ministry and mission of the Church:



Christ Church is an active, flourishing church, with 218 on the electoral roll and a regular weekly attendance of 125. As a PCC, we are large, with 15 elected places, 6 ex-officio and 2 co-opted members, totalling 23 people. This makes for long meetings, limited discussions, restricted time to share information and potentially disempowered PCC members. All this combined, means we are all together seeking to do everything. When we meet as a PCC, we discuss as much as possible, seeking to update the members and make informed decisions. On the ground, day to day, much of the ministry and mission requires decisions to be made quickly, without the PCC present. As the minister taking the lead, this is fine and is part of my role. However, as the population of the parish grows and the activities of the church increase, the day to day operations of the church demand more time than can be given by one person. The diagram below illustrates, in a broad sense, the structure of Christ Church. It shows the minister, PCC (and others) working together to oversee and lead all areas of ministry and mission all the time. It is very general, without specific areas of ministry and mission.



If we are to continue to grow and flourish, now is the right time to strengthen the foundations we already have in place. Strong foundations enable us to build on what we already have. There are three ways I propose we can do this. Firstly, to create distinctive areas of ministry and mission, rather than grouping them together; secondly to allocate PCC members to specific areas of ministry and mission; thirdly to look to plan to increase our support staff.

Let's take these one by one.

(1) Creating distinctive areas of ministry and mission.

Maturing Disciples ('Ministry')

The ministry of Christ Church could be summarised as 'maturing disciples.' For a disciple to mature, their knowledge of God will increase, their love for God increase, their zeal to worship God will increase and their love for one another will increase. The activities of discipleship should seek to do those things. We could subdivide this into three areas: Teaching, Worship and Pastoral Care.

Teaching

- * Preaching
- * Teaching
- * Small Groups
- * Courses
- * OneZone
- * Youth groups

Worship

- * Sunday Worship
- * Midweek Worship
- * Serving
- * Youth worship
- * All-age worship
- * Choir
- * Music Group

Pastoral Care

- * Home visiting
- * Bereavement
- * Pastoral care

The mission of Christ Church is to share the good news of Christ Jesus with all in our parish. With 12,500 people in our parish, it is quite a challenge. It is the command of Christ, to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." This mission, often referred to as the 'Great Commission' is not something for others to do – it is the task of the local church. There are three strands to carrying out our mission.

Making Disciples ('Mission')

Evangelism

- * Baptisms & Prep
- * Weddings
- * Funerals
- * Missions
- * Parenting Course
- * Enquiry Courses

Outreach

- * Messy Church
- * Toddler Groups
- * Coffee Shop
- * Primary Schools
- * Youth groups
- * Men / Ladies group
- * Burn Naze

Welcome

- * Welcome Desk
- * Sidespersons
- * Electoral Roll
- * Seating

Evangelism – this is the explicit task of verbally sharing the good news of Jesus, that he died for sinners, rose again and offers eternal life.

Outreach – this is the work of reaching out to build bridges with individuals and the community. Loving and serving others, with the intention it will lead to an opportunity to share the message of good news.

Welcome – this is the work of welcoming those who take the courage to attend services and activities. This may be the first contact they have with us and their first impression is often their lasting impression.

For the ministry and mission of the church to run effectively, efficient systems are needed behind the scenes, in areas such as administration, finance and hospitality. There are also important safety and legal obligations to fulfil, in areas such as health and safety, the maintenance of buildings and safeguarding. We can call these systems and process the 'management' of the Church.

Managing Discipleship

This is distinct to the leadership. The leadership sets the vision and direction and makes important and informed decision. The management is the enablement for these to happen, the implementation and the support needed to carry out the ministry and mission. I have identified 6 areas:

Administration

- * Hall bookings
- * Correspondence
- * Enquiries
- * PCC Committee
- * Website
- * Publicity

Safeguarding

- * Safeguarding Policy
- * Implementation
- * Training
- * DBS
- * Risk Assessments
- * Advocacy

Facilities

- * Churchyard
- * Hall
- * Church
- * Car Park
- * Grounds
- * Maintenance

Personnel

- * Staffing
- * Contracts
- * Recruitment
- * Appraisal
- * Training
- * Health and Safety

Hospitality

- * Catering
- * Functions
- * Special Events
- * Refreshments
- * Courses

Finance

- * Stewardship
- * Gift-aid
- * Fundraising
- * Payroll
- * Parish Share

Putting these three areas of *Ministry*, *Mission* and *Management* together, the diagram on the next page illustrates the structure. . .

Parochial Church Council

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(Chair of the PCC)

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Building infrastructure

Having two distinctive areas of ministry and mission as well as the support process to enable them to be effective, I'd like now to look at the role of the PCC in these areas and to think about how the PCC works as a team and how we can each identify the gifts God has given us and how we can best utilize them.

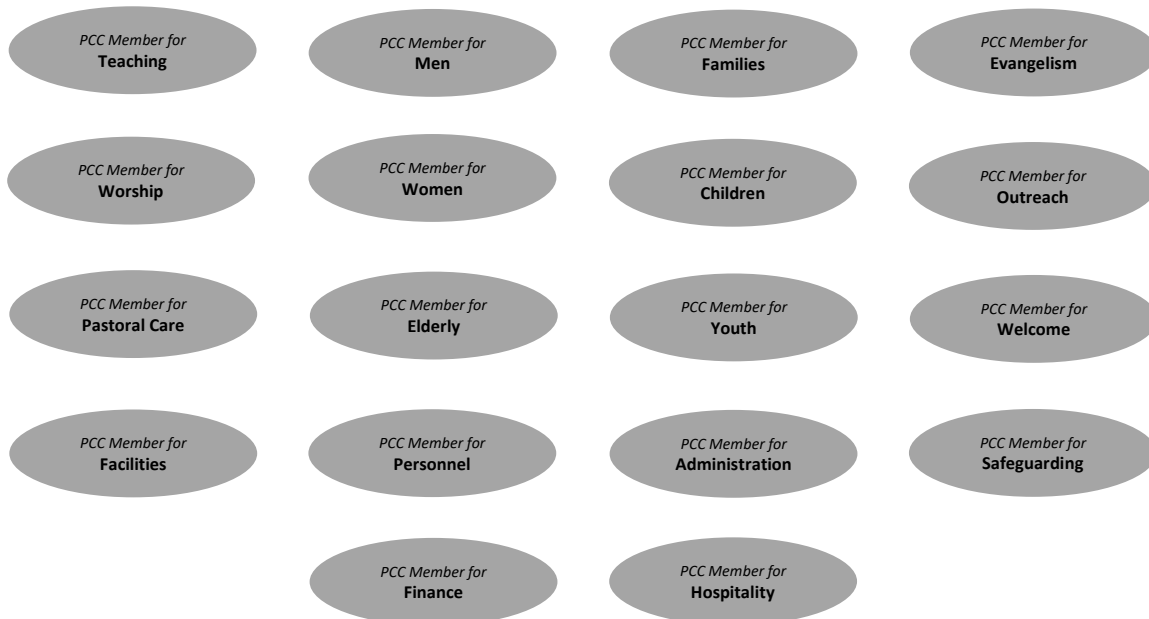
(2) Matching the giftings of the PCC members with the areas of ministry and mission

In sport, a team of 11 highly skilled, super fit, strong, quick, goal-hungry individuals will not necessarily make for a winning side. Balance is needed. The manager also wants three or four tall, solid, strong leaders who can form a defence as well as two or three smaller but quicker runners to press for goals. Managers know that there are 11 different positions on the pitch, requiring 11 specialist skill sets, 11 differing stamina levels and 11 differing personalities. Churches need to build such teams.

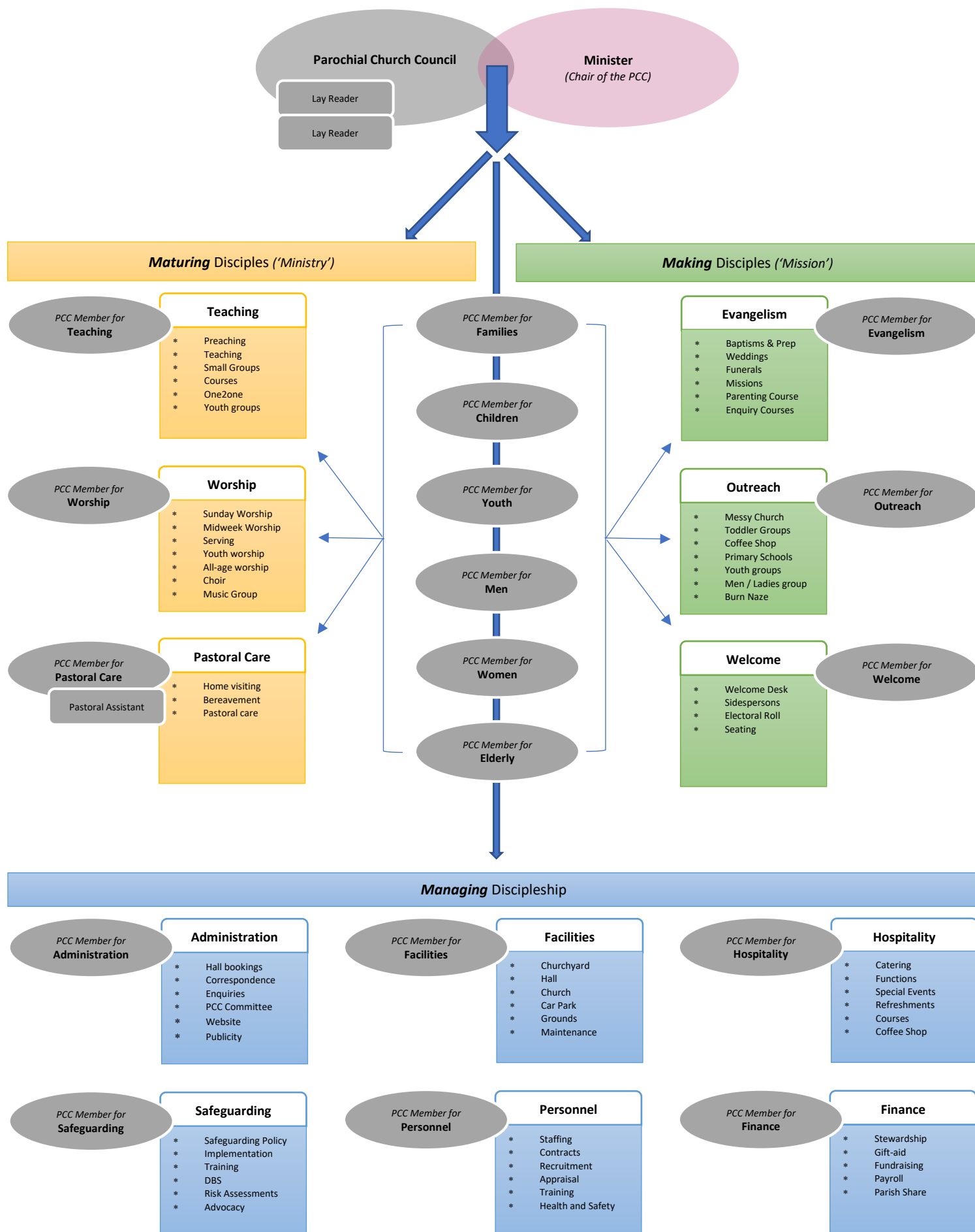
In sailing, not every yacht crew member is a leader, but the leader needs the crew to sail the vessel to the finish line. In the same way, not every PCC member, or staff member, or church helper is a 'leader' in the sense of having the 'gift of leadership' – but all are needed in order for the church to be faithfully led by the leader. The Lord God has gifted his people with specific gifts to be used alongside each other. Perhaps we can be more strategic and intentional about finding and placing our leaders.

In the New Testament teaching on the body of Christ we're given clear illustrations of the church needing to work as a team with varying gifts (see for example 1 Corinthians 12:1-31a and Romans 12:3-8). However in reality the norm at an APCM can be to appoint such people based on their position of respect, or godliness, their willingness to stand or ultimately, their number of votes. Certainly, godliness and willingness are excellent criteria, however we believe that God has given to his church all the gifts necessary. We ought to look at the specific gifts he has given us and seek to enable people to minister to their strengths.

Here's how we might reshape our infrastructure, in order to function as efficiently as we can using the shared skills we have to the best of our ability. I propose we allocate a PCC member to each sub-group area of ministry and mission and management. In addition,, recognising the specialist nature of some areas of ministry, I propose we allocate PCC members to aspects of ministry and mission that are specific to generational or gender groups, for example, children, the elderly, men and women. Altogether, there are 18 areas:



If we now allocate these roles to the areas, along with other paid and voluntary roles, the leadership structure starts to take shape:



The specific PCC roles enable the PCC to share more actively the week to week leadership of the Church. It is not the intention that each PCC member feels they should be in charge or take full responsibility for that area. Rather, it is their role to take an active interest in that areas of ministry, to support those who on the front line, to meet with regularly with the team involved, to assess training needs, budgetary needs and to take an interest in the welfare of those working and serving in that area of ministry. This way, the PCC can be involved in all areas of church life, and when coming to the meeting of the PCC, we can together speak from a vantage point of knowledge, awareness and insight.

Increasing capacity

(3) Plan ahead to increase the frontline and support staff needed in order to grow

As of 2017, we have the following paid staff:



They each carry out essential roles to aid our ministry and mission in the Church and Parish. Our worship on a Sunday is enhanced through the leadership of our organist. Increasingly our Ministry Apprentice is providing support in and gaining experience through a wide variety of activities in ministry and mission.

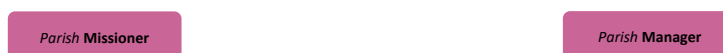
In 2016 we increased the hours of the Administrator to include a Wednesday each week, acknowledging the need to have someone with the necessary knowledge to deal with enquiries. Our Administrator is highly dedicated to her role and is a great asset. We still have needs in the area of administration, especially with regards to communicating by email and creating and managing computer documents.

Already after only a handful of weeks since employing a full-time Sexton, I wonder how we managed previously. We have seen improvements in the management of the hall, cleaning and maintenance and liaisons with hall users.

Going forward, we have areas of need. As a church with a regular weekly attendance we are classed as a medium sized church (less than 75 is small, and above 250 is large). It is difficult for one minister to adequately minister in the fullest sense to the needs of 125 regular worshippers, in addition to the housebound, those in hospital care and residential care and those from the parish in need of bereavement support.

I think we are operating at full functionality at Christ Church. We can probably continue with our currently levels of ministry and mission but it is unlikely we can grow much further than our infrastructure will allow. For example, Mini Millers Toddler Group is now at full capacity on a Thursday morning, meaning we'll struggle to take any new parents and children. The parents would love an extra morning, many are making enquiries about baptism, some want to start exploring Christianity further. As we get to know the mums and dads and children week by week, they are feeling part of the church community and part of the group of people to whom we show pastoral care. Add those 30 or so Mums, to the 218 on the electoral roll, and those who have joined Christ Church in the last year but aren't yet on the electoral roll, we are not far off 300 people. What this means, is if the minister does nothing else (no services, funerals, meetings, appointments) I could have on average 14 minutes with each person each week. I'm sure you can see the problem and the reality.

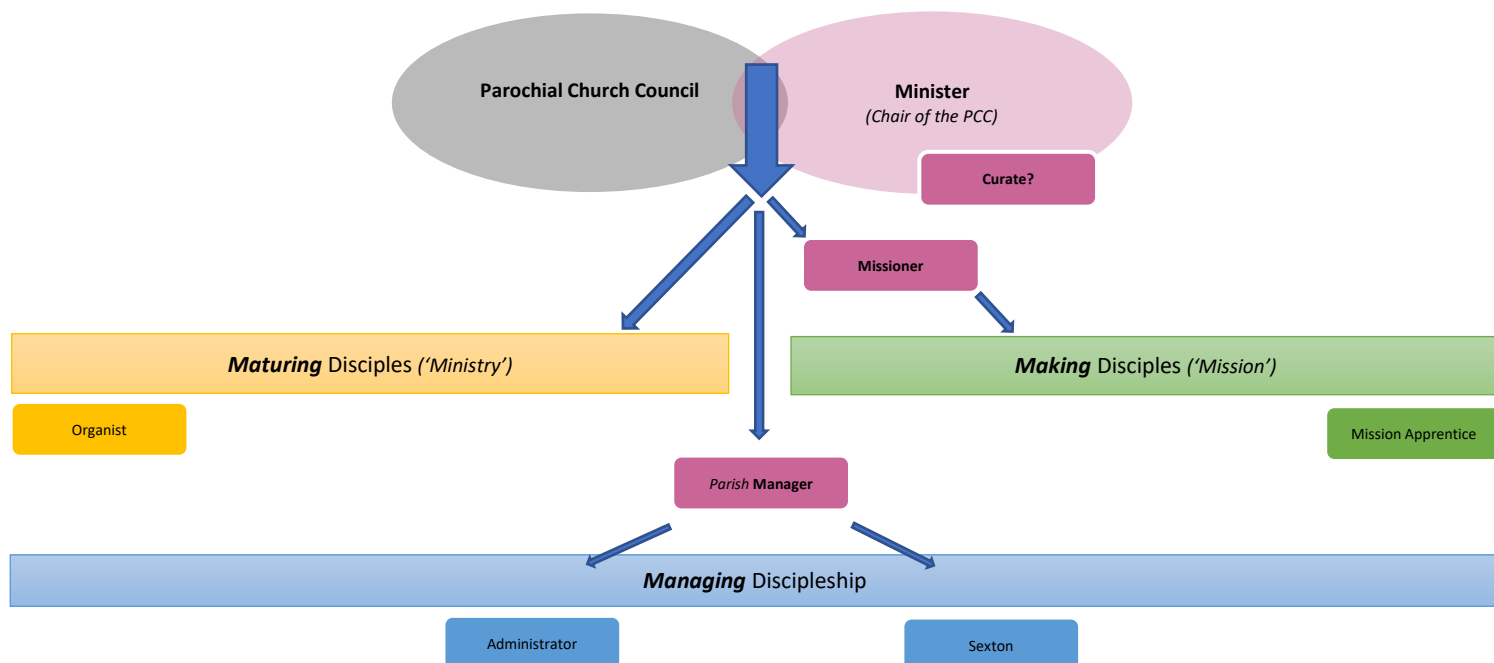
We need extra staff for two reasons: (1) to do what we currently do even better; (2) to increase our capacity to grow and make more disciples. With this in mind, I envisage several extra roles in the future, two of which will be key roles:



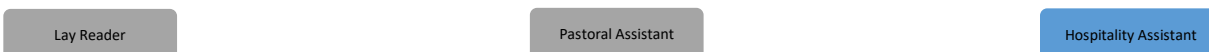
The role of the Parish Missioner is to lead the area of mission, of making disciples. This person can lead us into growth, building on the strong foundations we already have in this area and taking it to the next level. The role of the Parish Manager is to lead the infrastructure which makes the ministry and mission of the church possible.

Some churches and incumbents are identified as training churches and incumbents. In time, if this happens we have the opportunity of a Curate. This is unknown and is a decision the Diocese makes. It is important to remember that a Curate is allocated to a Church to be trained, rather than necessarily to be an extra pair hands. Experience shows however, that a Curate is a tremendous blessing!

Let's now look at how these roles (Curate, Missioner and Manager) fit into the proposed new structure:



In addition to these roles, we should look at identifying and training additional people for Licensed Lay Ministry and Pastoral Assistant ministry. There are others areas of need, such as hospitality. As we strategically offer hall hire and catering to those looking to hire the hall, to have someone dedicated to that task, will generate income and improve the level of service we can provide.



Each sub-area of ministry and mission, will need extra support as the activities of the church increase in order to continue to grow.

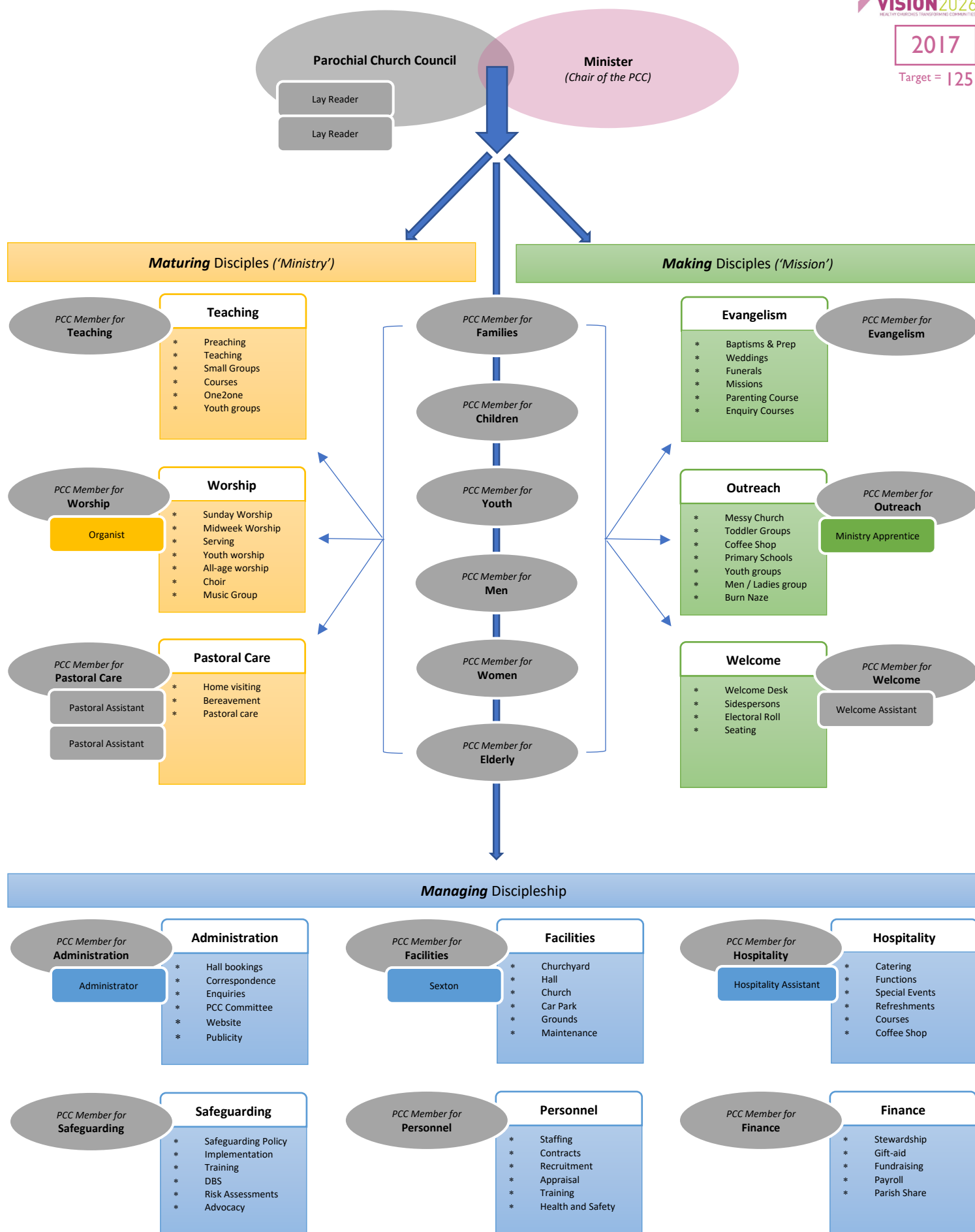
For example, the following roles could be developed:



The roles in a grey box are voluntary roles, the roles in coloured boxes are paid roles. The colours match the areas of ministry, mission or management to which they relate.

The diagrams on the next four pages illustrate how the proposed structure can increase in three year cycles, reaching 2026 with a large, fully-functioning efficient leadership team, ministry team, staff team and support team. Of course, we don't know the future but that shouldn't stop us from dreaming, planning, prioritising and most importantly, praying.

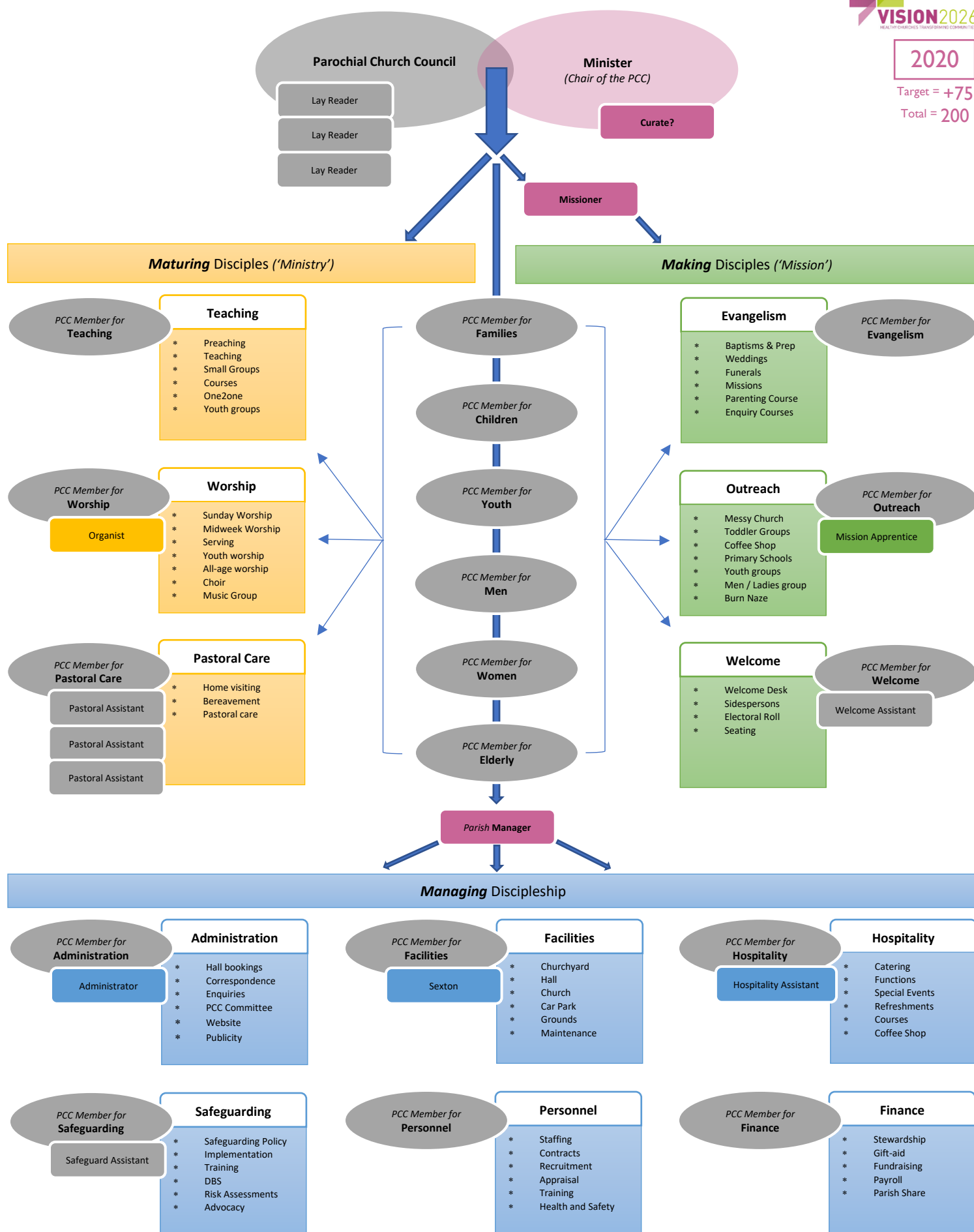
The reason for reviewing our current structures and for planning for the future, is simply to be obedient to the call of Christ to make disciples and to follow the New Testament models of teaching disciples, loving one another, serving the community and worshipping. The diagrams on the following four pages are a suggestion of how we might move forward from where we are, in order to be equipped to grow, having the capacity and structures in place to care for all those the Lord places in our care.



2020

Target = +75

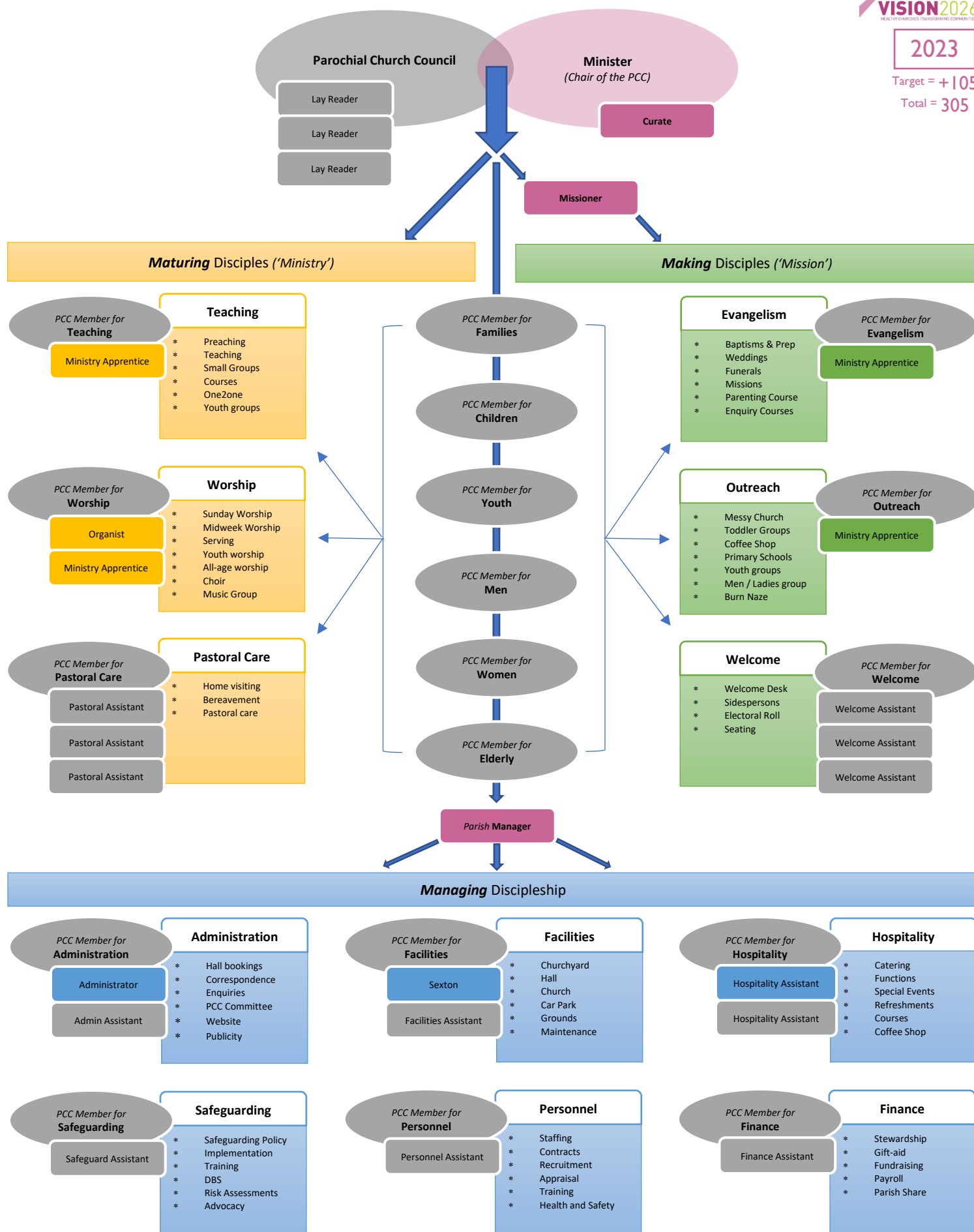
Total = 200

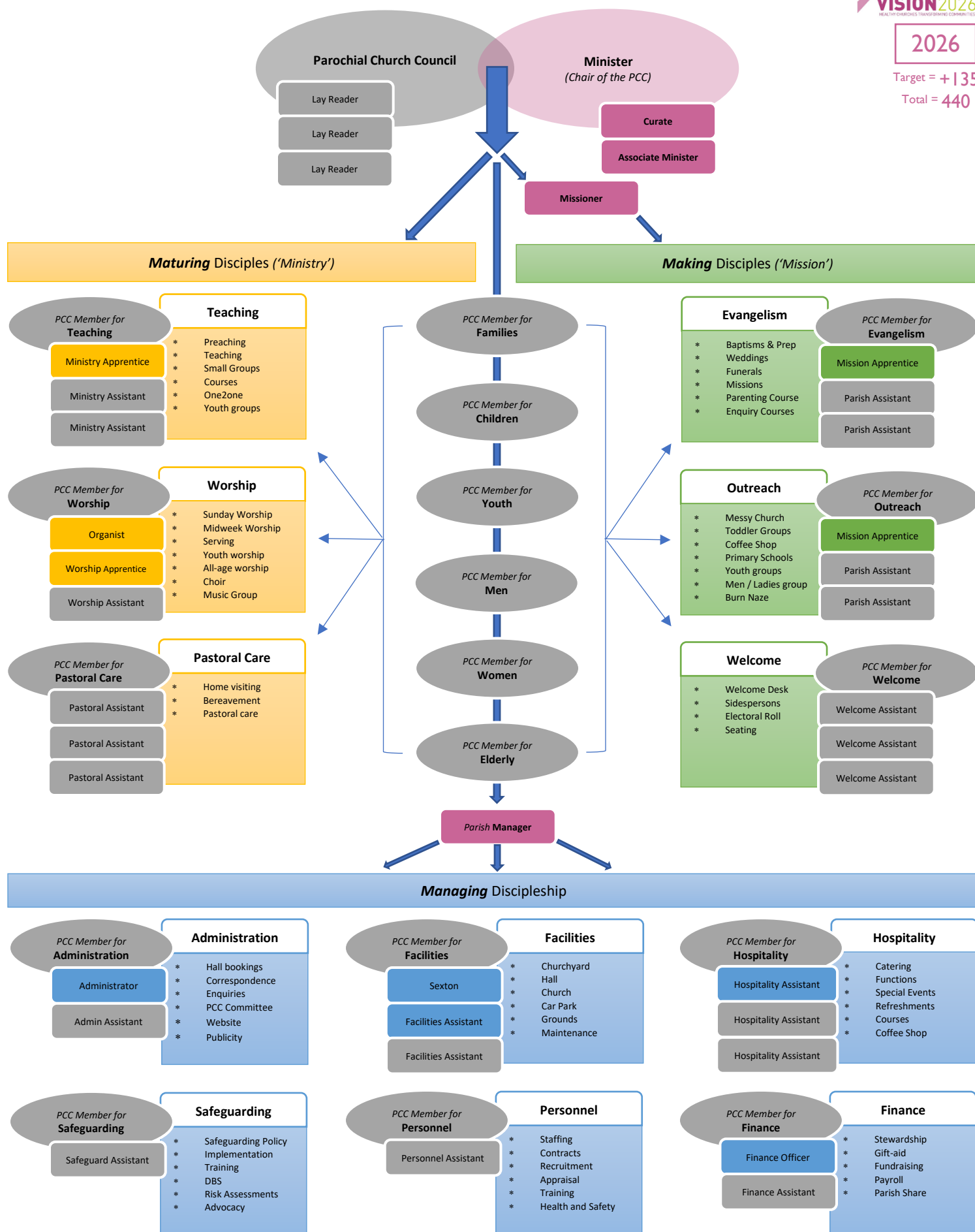


2023

Target = +105

Total = 305





Targeting growth

By this point, I'm sure you're thinking, how on earth can we afford these extra staff! Well firstly, it goes without saying, that if we take on extra staff, we only do so if our income indicates we can afford to. Over the next nine years, projecting our giving and expenditure and creating budgets for each area of ministry is key to ensuring we can sustain the ministry and mission of the church.

We should expect to grow, under God's blessing. He is a faithful God, who asks us to be faithful to Him. We can be assured that He will be faithful to us, both in bringing growth, saving souls, deepening our knowledge and love of Him, and providing all the resources necessary.

At the top of each of the previous four pages you'll have noticed a date, along with numbers:

2017 Target = 125	2020 Target = +75 Total = 200	2023 Target = +105 Total = 305	2026 Target = +135 Total = 440
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This year, as I have already mentioned, we have an RWA (Regular Weekly Attendance) of 125. Wouldn't it be fantastic if by 2020, we have grown by 75? That will take our RWA to 200. If we break this figure down, it looks like this:

- * 15 new members in 2017
- * 25 new members in 2018
- * 35 new members in 2019

Then, by the year 2023, the vision is to have grown by a further 105 members, to reach a total of 305 RWAs. Finally, by 2026, the vision is to have grown by a further 135 members, to reach a total of 440 RWAs. Based on the parish population of 12,500 residents, we currently have 1% of the parish regularly attending Christ Church. If our dreams and vision become a reality and we reach the number of 440 people, we will then have 3.5% of the parish regularly attending Christ Church. Just 3.5%! It really isn't a big number is it? But are we ready, willing, and full of faith, to ask God to grow Christ's Church over these next nine years?

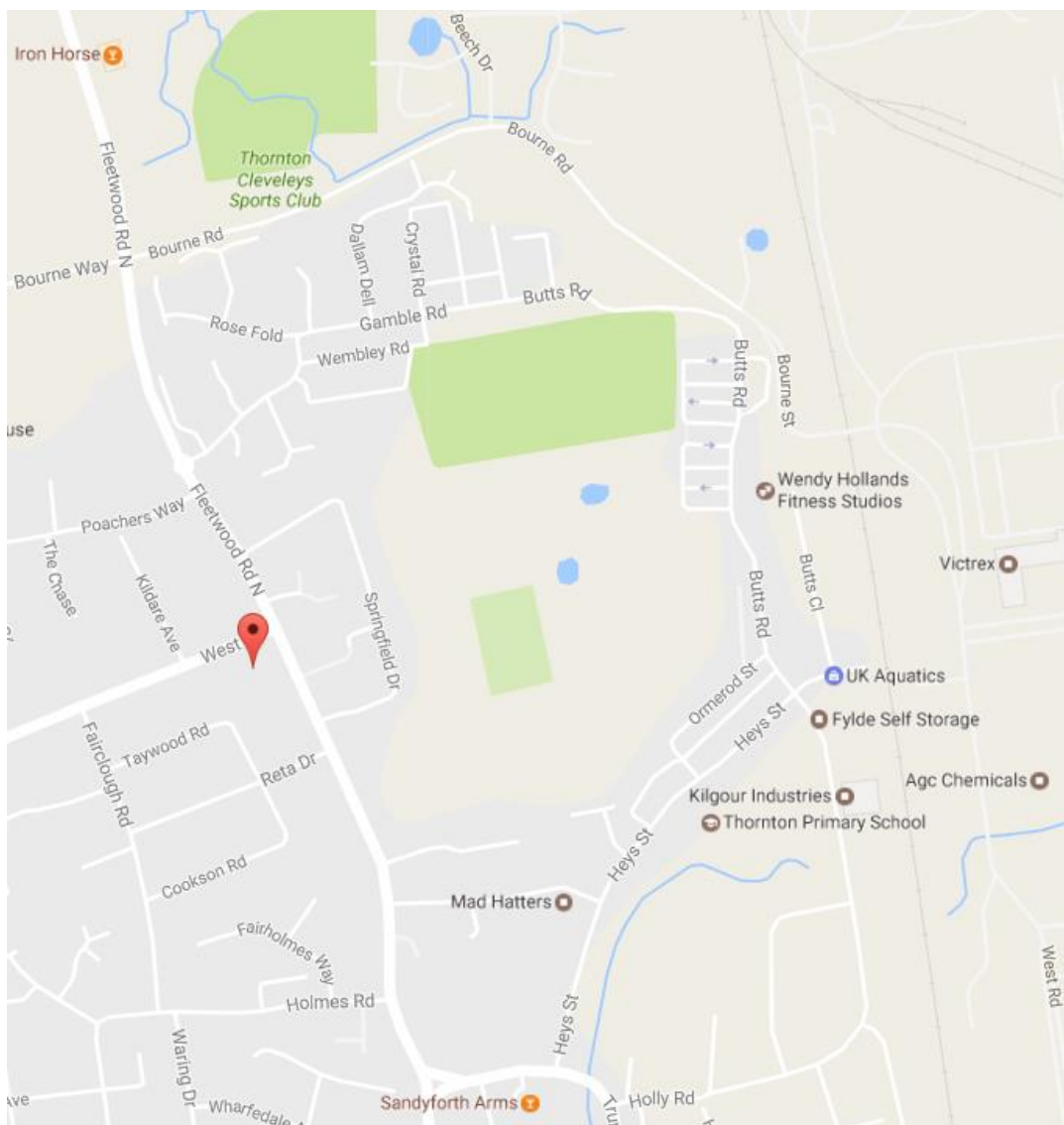
The point of growing, is not for the sake of becoming a large church, but for the sake of reaching more people with the good news of Jesus. To be a local church, with global hope:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
(John 3:16)

3.5%

Expanding reach

Even with 3.5% of the population regularly attending Christ Church, that still leaves 96.5% who don't. Christ Church historically has reached out to the area of Burn Naze. The final thought I leave with us, is a vision to plant a Church in the area of Burn Naze, by 2026, if not before. This will be a big undertaking. Resources, people, planning, venue, publicity and so on. But if we build our infrastructure as suggested, we will be in an excellent position to be able to realistically consider planting a Church in Burn Naze and re-establishing an Anglican Christian presence in that community.



Thank you for reading and listening this far. Let us now pray the Vision prayer for the Diocese, and then take some time to consider the proposals.

OUR DIOCESAN PRAYER: Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples, to be witnesses and to grow leaders. Give us the eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen