

CHRIST CHURCH ST KILDA STRATEGIC PLAN – MAY 2024

Vision and Mission Statement 2024

Christ Church St Kilda: your spiritual home.

We gather to worship God and explore faith in Jesus, welcoming and celebrating the diverse St Kilda community.

In the next three to five years we aim:

- to grow an energetic and committed worshipping community.
- to provide an open, inclusive and welcoming space for everyone.
- to communicate a vibrant, joyful and loving faith.
- to build connections with the local community.
- to be faithful stewards of Church Square and its buildings.

The above Statement was adopted by Parish Council in March 2024, and acts as the driver for all that follows.

The Strategic Plan outlined below is a medium-term plan which seeks both to address the priorities identified in 2024, and also to act as a guide for consolidation, renewal and numerical growth within the parish. It is based on the assumption that the next full strategic plan in three to five years time would work towards a medium-term goal of increasing usual Sunday attendances to an average of over 100 people.

Each of the Strategic Directions outlined below contains two over-arching drivers, with subsequent action items. This plan set the agenda of the Parish Council, and the vicar will report progress against this plan on a monthly basis. Progress will be reported to the parish through the Annual Meeting and through a quarterly congregational bulletin. Responsibility for delivering each item will be allocated to a particular person or group. Where there are budgeting implications for particular items, these will be carefully monitored by the Churchwardens and Treasurer.

Strategic Directions

May 2024 – September 2027

Endorsed by Parish Council 1 May 2024

- 1 Congregational Renewal – making a home**
 - 1.1 – by ensuring a welcoming environment**
 - 1.2 – by hospitality**
- 2 An Open Church**
 - 2.1 – by opening the church on weekdays**
 - 2.2 – by developing a culture of inclusive welcome**
- 3 A joyful faith – growing in the love of God**
 - 3.1 – by excellence in liturgical worship**
 - 3.2 – by Christian education**
- 4 Welcoming and celebrating the wider St Kilda community**
 - 4.1 – by expanding existing relationships and building new ones**
 - 4.2 – by improved marketing and social media**
- 5 Stewardship of Church Square**
 - 5.1 – by the restoration and increased use of the church**
 - 5.2 – by careful management of the Church Square site for ministry and income production**

Strategic Direction 1

Congregational Renewal – making a home

1.1 – Ensuring a welcoming environment

Christ Church is an imposing building which can be hard to enter for the first time. Ensuring that people encounter a community with a culture of welcome is crucial for growth. We will:

1.1.1 increase the diversity (age and cultural) of those with ministries of welcome at our liturgies, both at the church door and in other contexts through a renewal of rostering practices. CD'A to invite others to assist. Move post-service hospitality to CSF room after conversations with Penny and Valerie. Invite participants in morning tea roster.

1.1.2 encourage all people in visible ministries to wear name tags so that they are readily identifiable to new people.

Name tags are now available to those who desire them.

1.1.3 train or re-train all those involved in welcoming to ensure that they understand the different needs people have when coming to a place like CCSK, and encourage them appropriately. CD'A to lead Sunday workshop in May

1.1.4 ensure that the “first impression” of the building, both inside and outside, does not include any barriers to entry or welcome.

Significant tidying up of the church entrance, including the porch and narthex. Pew sheets now distributed outside the door of the church, providing a warm greeting on arrival.

1.2 - Hospitality

Christ Church is generous in its hospitality, however that hospitality can be difficult to access as people need to walk along a rough driveway to find the Community Centre entrance. We will:

1.2.1 Ensure that newcomers and visitors are invited and accompanied by existing parishioners to the Community Centre.

Ongoing.

1.2.2 have informal monthly meals and occasional evening events to which newer parishioners are explicitly and personally invited. Robert to host meals in the vicarage on Pentecost (June 8) and one other Sunday. Christ the King to be a bring and share brunch.

1.2.3 resource parish hospitality with an annual budget allocation from 2025, and ensure that every major service is accompanied by generous hospitality.

A small budget provision has been made for 2025. Ask Fundraising Committee to form hospitality sub-committee. Events after Christmas midnight, Easter Day, Christ the King

1.2.4 Improve church access for those with physical disabilities.

Strategic Direction 2

An open church

2.1 Opening the church

A church that is open during the week communicates a sense of welcome and community engagement. Ensuring that the building is accessible for prayer, reflection and tourism will greatly improve our community profile.

2.1.1 We will hold a service in the church every day of the week by 2026.

2.1.2 The vestry will be reconfigured as a workspace for the vicar, and a security system installed to enable the church to be open in the mornings. Vicar's workspace and Parish Office now upstairs in Community Centre. Make budget provision next financial year for installation of an alarm system to enable the church to be open to visitors when staff are on site.

Deferred until the completion of the 2025 building works.

2.1.3 During 2025/6 we will recruit and train volunteers both from the parish and the wider community to act as guides and "church sitters" during the afternoons. Talk to St Kilda Historical Society – Philip and Helen and local Monday group to gauge interest in being church guides. Start with opening on Thursdays.

2.1.4 By late-2025 we will improve the signage of the site, develop an interpretation scheme, and change the website to indicate opening hours and an invitation to visit. CD'A to develop simple interpretation scheme for church when open to the public.

2.2 A culture of inclusive welcome

The Gospel compels us to live a culture of inclusive welcome. At Christ Church we aim to build on the existing diversity within the current worshipping community by welcoming a wide range of new parishioners.

2.2.1 During 2024 we will make explicit the "everybody welcome" ethos of the parish through signage and other markers, the website and social media, telling our own stories to indicate the diversity already present in the parish. Obtain quote for complete renewal of website, to be paid for from Renewal budget during 2025.

Ongoing.

2.2.2 We will seek to diversify our appeal to those of a range of cultural and social backgrounds, by engaging with a range of local organisations including the Pride Centre. On hold.

2.2.3 We will work with the Community Centre on appropriate ways to ensure that Community Centre clients and visitors feel welcome inside the church. Geoffrey to talk with Penny.

2.2.4 We will ensure than anyone attending a service or event at CCSK for the first time is welcomed and spoken to by an established parishioner.

Ongoing.

Strategic Direction 3

A joyful faith

3.1 – Liturgical worship

The worship of God is at the centre of all that we do. It is the focus of community life that feeds us, strengthens us, and sends us out. It is also “the duty and service that we owe.” We will:

3.1.1 continue to improve the visual and physical experience of worship, and encourage the participation of increased numbers of people “up the front” as robed servers and in other ways.

Ongoing.

3.1.2 continue to resource the music of the liturgy. We will explore the establishment of a Music Foundation through the Melbourne Anglican Foundation to assist the parish to ensure that there is a “12 months of the year” coverage of high quality musical offerings at the 9.30am Sunday Eucharist and other major services. CD’A, wardens and Geoffrey to discuss and action this year. Foundation to cover: musicians, (organist, singers), organ and piano maintenance, possibly artwork as part of a “Cultural Foundation”.

3.1.3 during 2024/5 we will undertake research to understand what might be a viable second liturgical offering, in place of the former 11am “informal service”. A decision on what, if anything, is appropriate to be added to our regular services will be made by Easter 2025. CD’A to lead a parish consultation on a convenient date.

3.2 – Christian Education

Growth in faith and understanding is a key element of Christian discipleship. No-one has a static faith, and our educational offerings need to challenge, encourage, nurture, and mature. We will:

3.2.1 include educational material in the Sunday pew sheet each week, especially explaining elements of the liturgy and basic beliefs.

3.2.2 conduct a bi-monthly study group after the 9.30am Sunday service, especially encouraging newer parishioners to learn about the faith.

Begun, but then placed on hold due to the heating issue. Next series scheduled for Advent.

3.2.3 develop an opportunity for older members of the parish to reflect together on matters of faith, perhaps combined with a hospitality event such as a monthly weekday lunch. CD’A to organise a post-church discussion on a Sunday for any who would be interested and in the target demographic. Action, or not, depending on the response. EFM may be an option. Fr Ken may be interested in taking a lead on this???

Strategic Direction 4

Welcoming and celebrating the wider St Kilda community

4.1 – Expanding relationships

A parish church does not operate in a vacuum, and it is crucial that we take an active part in the local secular community. We will:

4.1.1 consult with local community groups about what sorts of engagement by/with the church would be welcome. Robert with local groups, Fr Glenn with local mob, Veg Out harvest festival? Nikki and Robyn to investigate interest.

4.1.2 seek to re-establish relationships with the City of Port Philip and with the state government. Serge is now our primary contact point.

4.1.3 work with the Community Centre and Theatre Works to engage the wider community on social and cultural questions. 2026, once TW has settled post-building project.

4.1.4 seek to establish a relationship of mutual understanding with the Pride Centre. On hold

4.1.5 develop a strategy for “four big community outreach events” per year, including Christmas, Easter and two others.

The Trivia Night and the Mid-Winter Feast served these functions in 2024.

Encourage additional concerts and art exhibitions as well.

4.2 – Improved marketing and social media

As CCSK is not situated in the middle of a shopping street, we need to work hard to raise awareness of our existence and our programmes. We will:

4.2.1 renew the parish website “from the ground-up” during 2025. See above 2.2.1

4.2.2 review the computer, network and internet infrastructure of the parish by the end of 2024, and make budget provision in 2025 for the renewal of hardware and software. Now 2026

4.2.3 actively market CCSK within the local area and through social media and other online media as an inclusive Christian community which welcomes all people regardless of their racial, cultural, sexual or gender identities.

4.2.4 improve street signage via the City of Port Philip. CD'A to talk with Serge to find out who we best contact.

Strategic Direction 5

Stewardship of Church Square

5.1 – Restoration and increased use of the church

The church building is the most prominent building on the site and, indeed, the reason for the site existing. We will:

5.1.1 re-launch the Restoration Campaign during 2025/6, with a focus on attracting large donations for specific parts of the restoration. Find out more from Penny (Community Centre) about new local philanthropy group.

5.1.2 act strategically regarding what works are undertaken to ensure maximum impact for funds available.

Ongoing.

5.1.3 once the church is watertight and more regularly open, encourage its use as a venue for concerts and other events from 2026.

We have held several concerts this year.

5.2 – Management of Church Square

Church Square is a unique asset that requires much stronger management to ensure quality and safe ministry provision, and appropriate levels of income production to fund both ministry and maintenance. We will:

5.2.1 as a matter of first priority: work with the diocese regarding an appropriate long-term use for 1 St Leonard's Ave.

This is being actively pursued.

5.2.2 work with the City of Port Philip regarding landscaping and adaptive re-use of the church grounds for community use.

Planned to follow the resolution of legal issues regarding 1 St Leonard's Ave.

5.2.3 investigate whether the current vicarage is fit for purpose, and during 2025/6 develop plans either for its renovation or adaptive re-use for income production.

Wardens

5.2.4 work with the Community Centre for a creative use of the upstairs "parish offices" to produce income for the parish.

During 2025 this area will be the site office for the building works. Future uses remain to be discussed. Post-building works, but noting that the parish now uses the two small offices.