

## Mission Action Planning – report on progress

### Gill Gowing

I wrote last month that we would be starting the Mission Action Planning journey and that we would be holding a number of workshops looking at who and how and what we are now and where we might be going. At the time of writing there have been two workshops. We used the 'Seven Marks of a Healthy Church' taken from the Healthy Churches Handbook by Robert Warren as a starting point for discussion and seeing how the group thinks we, as a church, measure up. It also provided an opportunity to learn from others about things that the church was already doing or had planned and to identify things that we might do.

The Seven Marks of a Healthy Church are:

1. **Energized by faith** rather than just keeping things going or trying to survive
2. **Outward-looking focus** with a 'whole life' rather than a 'church life' concern
3. **Seeks to find out what God wants** discerning the Spirit's leaning rather than trying to please everyone
4. **Faces the cost of change and growth** rather than resisting change and avoiding failure
5. **Operates as a community** rather than functioning as a club or religious organisation
6. **Makes room for all** being inclusive rather than exclusive.
7. **Does a few things and do them well** focused rather than frenetic.

I am writing up the notes of each workshop and circulating them in the first instance to those in the Mission Action Planning Group who attended that workshop for confirmation that I have correctly captured the points made. The notes will then be circulated to all those who attended the workshop to ensure they are also content with the notes.

As well as writing up the notes for each workshop I am pulling together the suggestions made and asking those who attended to identify which they consider to be the most important and those which they don't think important or which, in their view, should not be pursued. Once all the workshops have been held I will draw together the results and write a report with the notes of each workshop and the priorities identified by those who attended attached for the United Church Council.

By the time Link is published all the originally planned workshops will have been held. However requests have been received for another evening workshop and an extra workshop will be held on **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 7.30pm – 9.00pm** so if you haven't yet attended one there is still an opportunity to do so.

The Mission Action Planning Group comprises Michael Baker, Lizzie Miller, Barbara Patterson, Jim Pummell and Jenny Sumpter