

'THE WAY'



In Christ | With Christ | For Christ

Growing further in those five marks:

An update on other ways we seek to be more a happy, healthy and authentic church

In this, the fifth edition of *The Way*, I want to continue to explain our thinking and approach as we seek to grow in Paul's five marks of a happy, healthy and authentic church. Those five marks, which we saw in our sermon series on Colossians, are:

1. Rooted and established in Christ; Christ at the centre of all we do.
2. Growing in our knowledge of God.
3. Living as disciples of Jesus; individually modelling our lives after his.
4. Living as Jesus' family, the Body of Christ, corporately as brothers and sisters.
5. Living with good news to share; living a Jesus-centred life in which we engage with the mission of God.

If you are not familiar with these five marks, I warmly commend catching up with the sermon series, which you can find on our YouTube channel [by clicking here](#).

This publication, *The Way*, was one of the first initiatives agreed by the vestry. Its goal is to keep you informed and aware of our strategic development. We will only send it when there is something to share, so when you see it appear in your inbox, it's because we have sent something we believe you would want to know.

This time, I'd like to share about decision-making at St. John's. I have discussed with the vestry and mentioned from the pulpit something I experience here that I might describe as a paralysis of decision-making.

It seems to come as a result of the stresses placed on volunteers. At times, volunteers have been given a hard time in the course of exercising their various ministries. How then, can we become a more healthy, happy and authentic church in our decision-making processes, too?

When there are big picture strategic decisions that affect our future, it's good to discern together in 'the Unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace' (Ephesians 4:3). In our structure as an Anglican church, the rector has the authority to make such decisions, but I find it much healthier for the rector to exercise authority in a way that empowers lay leaders in the vestry to make decisions. How then can we help and equip the vestry to make decisions in unity and peace? The best answer is for us to discuss matters together as a church family and seek together to discern together how the Lord might be leading. Then all can be shared with the vestry and we pray for them, giving thanks to God for their willingness to take on this position of leadership on our behalf.

The current consultations on our Sunday service pattern are an example of this. They finished last night and have been some of the best conversations of this kind that I have had the privilege to witness in nigh on 40 years of full time ministry. It is my hope and prayer that these consultations will be the template in establishing a healthier dynamic for decision-making at St. John's going into the future.

Thank you for all of you who have participated. Every meeting has been priceless!

With every blessing,

Richard