

WEST SWINDON & LYDIARDS L.E.P..

PARTNERSHIP FOR MISSIONAL CHURCH.

MEETING REVD PAUL RUSH 16TH JUNE 2008.

RESPONSES TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS!

1: Wider Issues:

What responses so far from other churches? Their progress?

Looking for a Cluster of 10 churches in Swindon area. 10 interested, but West Swindon most advanced in investigation.

Support / Attitude of our Parent Bodies?

Anglicans & Baptists supportive. Methodists & URC to be approached.

What kind of Clusters do they think would work best?

A diversity of rural / urban, denominations, size, 'churchmanship' are what is wanted. Key is that leaders have a missional heart.

How firm do Clusters need to be before begin process in earnest?

A process over time to share, learn, research over next 12 months.

Its an opt in process, with no prior assessment.

Deadline for decision & sign up is June 2009, for programme to begin September 2009.

How would Clusters work together? How closely?

Meet as full Clusters 3 times in each of the three years, for a Friday / Saturday overnight residential, to share experiences & learn. There likely to be other meetings more informally between numbers of churches.

Timelines & Timescales which being asked of us by PMC? Eg a date when a final decision on our participation needs to be made?

See elsewhere. Paul Rush is asked for a clearer 'time line' to help us fit within appropriate timescales!

What kind of commitment will be required by PMC (how firm & binding would it be, and what form would it take)? Length of commitment, eg a year at a time?

A three year commitment, 2009 – 2012, but if a church pulls out for fair reasons then this is understandable (eg departure of a Minister). But no return possible later!

What will the Programme look like? (Meetings, Consultancy, Training, Frequency etc); such as has been conducted elsewhere? Estimate hours per month / year?

Various training events will be included.

Each Church must form a lay led 'Steering Group' who oversee / lead the programme for the church (3 / 4 members). NOT with Minister on this. They responsible to each church Leadership team (1 member on it, at least!). They appoint:

Year 1: Listening group (to community, church etc)

Year 2: Mission Action Team (to experiment with a 'risky' project in community, ie a new project that might not succeed! Aim is for it to be a learning tool!!)

Year 3: No special Group set up, but Steering group to facilitate the whole congregation being involved in producing a Church Vision Statement!!

2: Our internal organisation:

Need for a 'lead' person who will take it on? Overall in Partnership, or for each participating church? Who, & how appointed?

Appointed by Church Leadership Teams.

The ECC might not have major decision-making role in this, but be a place for communicating what churches doing, and keeping any churches not involved abreast of learning developments.

Effect upon Partnership if not all churches sign up, or in different Clusters?

Its OK by PMC if not all 5 of our churches sign up to this programme. They have to each be motivated and have leaders to move it forward. But there would be a great sense of synergy if all 5 do sign up on joint partnership project, alongside another 5 churches (eg Old Town Partnership, Parks / Walcot).

Involvement by ECC / Staff Team / Church Leadership teams in processes?

Ultimate decision-makers at different stages?

Ministers are more in background to oversee, but not in Steering group! Would attend triannual Overnight meetings (all Friday & Saturday). Also various training events and some of the Spiritual input.

Staff in Year 3 form a "Staff Covenant" to negotiate their & their churches commitments following on from this programme after Year 3. eg to negotiate minister's missional versus pastoral role!

How do we progress the whole idea, before final decision, and what internal preparations do we need to make before we formally might begin?

1: Meeting with Pat Keifert (initiator of this: see his book "We are here now!" which describes the process & experiences) in late September to learn more of the ideas, concepts, theology behind it.

2: Meeting of all partnership Leadership Teams in early/mid October with Paul Rush, to explore.

- 3: Further discussions including with other members of 'pre-cluster' in early 2009.
4: Full scale meetings with tutors / advisers from "Together in Mission UK" including Martin Robinson (?) in Spring 2009, before final decisions made.

How much will this divert limited energy & time from other activities, and how much can incorporate existing programmes to enhance them?

This needs careful consideration by church, especially from Year 2 onwards. A few current activities might need to be 'put on ice' or stopped altogether. Even some healthy growth might benefit from pruning to become stronger!

Effect on Programme of leaders & ministers coming and going?

Since Steering groups lead the process, this reduces the impact.

Process does begin to effect the Job Description for future ministers!!

Steering Group should be stable. They need to agree to be released from some other commitments for the period – agreed with Church Leadership Team concerned.

3: Finances:

What costs will be involved that need to pay PMC per year? Per Church, or Partnership or per Cluster? (All inclusive of say travelling expenses by course leaders)?

£500 per congregation per year. (subsidized from £750 p.a. plus)

There will be extra costs for travel by Steering Group / Ministers, and hospitality (but three 'overnights' are included in overall costs.

Any subsidies eg by Parent Bodies?

Yes, in terms of large amount of time given by their Mission Advisers (eg Paul Rush, Nigel Coles).

What additional costs would be involved (eg hospitality, purchase of materials, our own travelling costs & training etc)?

See above. Not a huge amount, actually! Costs of Year 2 Missional Project, however.

Stephen Skinner, 17/6/08