

The Anglican Parish of Kingscliff



PARISH CONSULTATION VACANCY REPORT 2023

Compiled by: Archdeacon Tiffany Sparks & Archdeacon Kay Hart

AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE VACANCY CONSULTATION – ANGLICAN PARISH OF KINGSCLIFF

Participants:

Consultation held Saturday 10 June 2023, 10am
30 in attendance
Average age 60+
Mixed male/female representation
Discussion tables in groups of 5/6

Notes:

- 8 of the 29 participants had engaged in a Vacancy Consultation process previously.
- There was representation from each of the faith communities in the parish: i.e. St James' Sunday Congregation, St James' Wednesday Congregation, St Mark's. The majority of those present worshipped at the 20 Sunday Morning Service at St. James, 6 St Marks Pottsville, 7 St James Wednesday, 3 parish councillors, 2 nominators and 1 nominator over zoom.

Prior to the Vacancy Consultation a morning tea was held. Below are the main points of observations/comments that were made during this gathering time:

- There was good engagement and interaction of most participants

THE VACANCY CONSULTATION

Welcome - led by Marg Dephoff

Opening Prayer - Archdeacon Kay Hart

Acknowledgement of recent death of parishioner, Ann Moore and prayer - Archdeacon Kay Hart

Explanation of the procedure – Archdeacon Tiffany Sparks

The focus of the consultation centred around five main areas:

- The Church NOW,
- The Church of the Future,
- Skillsets amongst us,
- Openness to change, and
- Skill sets of a new Rector.

THE CHURCH NOW:

Those participating engaged actively in the discussion centred around **The Church Now**. It was evident from both the discussion and the raw data material provided that the parish of Kingscliff is involved in a lot of activities and has a general good nature around trying new things. However, there were some conversations around divisions within the parish.

The five top points that came out of this discussion were:

- Movement towards exploring spirituality
- Planning future based in prayer and engagement
- Actively reaching out into the community
- Enthusiastic and committed
- Preach the Gospel

Like many parishes in Grafton Diocese concerns were expressed about:

- Aging and declining congregations
- Lack of intergenerational worship and youth
- Maintaining an Anglican Liturgy and Eucharistic centre.

During the *feedback* session there was a strong sense that those gathered were enthusiastic members of the Kingscliff congregation who were unafraid to articulate their strengths and also their concerns.

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE – Dreams moving forward.

- Emphasis on the next generation
- Encourage and facilitate lay leadership and community groups (home groups etc)
- Church community to find ways to reach out to secular community
- Deepen our faith and the faith basis of Church life and activities.
- Encouraging young people
- Modern music

The raw data shows most all tables listed creative liturgy/music/preaching in some way.

There was also a strong sense that the parish needs to reach out to the wider community.

The main points articulated in relation to **The Church of the future** focussed on:

Worship & Discipleship:

- encourage, train and facilitate lay leaders, eg home groups
- deepen faith = which should impact on church life
- more modern music

Mission and Outreach:

- church community outreach to secular community
- emphasis on next generation
- encourage young people

Those gathered named the main obstacles of living into their future dreams as:

- Unwillingness to accept change
- Finances
- Not embracing diversity
- Facilities that may not 'match' congregational needs. (Examples youth and age)
- Impact of historic abuse (general not specific for this parish)

There was generally a good feeling around this question. The raw data shows that there is general concern around aging congregations and lack of youth. Music was also another common theme.

SKILLSET OF THOSE IN THE FAITH COMMUNITY

The *raw data material* shows that this parish while concerned about their aging congregation, are heavily involved in parish activities and outreach or at least supportive of the **parish's** efforts. They were confident in their ability to name their strengths and give thanks were appropriate. The need is for a leader to be able to bring these gifts and skills together in a cohesive manner.

The main skills sets of the parish were identified as:

- Practical skills – eg. Gardening, building, cooking, catering, sewing. These skills are used to build links to community
- Blessed by three retired priests ministry
- Welcoming and friendly
- Motivated
- Community Outreach

The skills currently missing were identified as:

- Spiritual impact in projects
- Skilled youthful energy
- Ability to embrace technology
- Organised Pastoral Care
- Musicians and contemporary music

OPENNESS TO CHANGE

After a short discussion around 'Change' and 'Change management' participants were asked to name one thing that they would not change. The main results are listed below:

- centre locations
- blue chairs
- our desire to grow
- fellowship
- don't change current Bible studies and home groups
- prayer circle

- willingness to explore creative expressions of worship
- weekly bulletin email communication
- bible as central to tradition and faith
- balance and Anglican foundation in liturgy
- regularity of the Eucharist
- walkthrough of the church grounds from one street to another – public thoroughfare

The regularity of Eucharist and balance comments were in the context of Anglican Liturgy. They would like to continue the emphasis on the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the sacrament as liturgical equals.

Those attending were also asked to rate their openness to change from 1-10: 1 being totally resistant and 10 being completely open. This was done via a anonymous slip of paper that had a 1 – 10 rating on it. Out of 30 completed slips, 28 rated themselves as a 7 or above for openness to change.

SKILLSET OF RECTOR

In looking to the future needs of the parish the main skillsets of the Rector were identified as follows:

- facilitate change
- Read the mood of the parish accurately
- Spirit filled
- Develop us as Disciples
- Prior secular experience – background outside the Church in order to relate to the world.
- ‘Lived in the real world’

Margaret Dephoff concluded the process with thanks to Archdeacons, Kay Hart, and Tiffany Sparks; which was followed by a concluding prayer.

This report has been prepared by: Archdeacon Kay Hart, Regional Archdeacon of the North in conjunction with Archdeacon Tiffany Sparks, Diocesan Archdeacon.

Raw Data Material held in the Diocesan Office