



Consultation Report

Lifestreams Christian Church

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About Manna Consulting

Manna Consulting is a Christian Ministry dedicated to serving Kingdom ministries to enable them to flourish and to see them realise the Kingdom impact they are called to have.

Our mission is to walk alongside churches, Christian not-for-profits, Christian schools and Christian businesses, providing a fresh perspective and tailored support to nurture healthy and impactful ministries.

We do this through the provision of consulting services, training, coaching and events. Recognising that all ministries and organisations have unique contexts and needs, we do not adopt a cookie-cutter approach. Rather, we take the time to understand each ministry and the specific needs and challenges faced and then offer a tailored approach.

Acknowledging we cannot be everything to everyone, we work collaboratively with other ministry specialists and experts to ensure that the unique needs can be understood and met.

Scope & Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the key findings from Manna Consulting's health and impact assessment of Lifestreams Christian Church and provide a snapshot of the church's current position. Recommendations will be made based on the data collected and analysis conducted throughout the research stage, pertaining to the 4 areas of Manna Consulting's Health & Impact Framework.

This final report will be presented to the LCC Servant Leadership Team and once accepted, it is recommended that dedicated time is set aside to digest and discuss the contents of the report with the consultant and work out an implementation plan. This document should be read in conjunction with the LCC Strategic Vision document that was produced as a consequence of the strategic vision workshop.

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Executive Summary

Purpose & Objectives

The Servant Leadership Team (SLT) at Lifestreams Christian Church (LCC) engaged Manna Consulting to complete a health and impact consultation, focussed on three key objectives:

1. To work with the Servant Leadership and Ministry Leadership teams to establish a 10-year strategy that would enable the church to see its vision realised.
2. To complete a health & impact assessment with the specific intent to gain a full understanding of the church's current position, and to identify the key areas the church and its leadership will need to address as it moves forward into this next season.
3. To work with the team for the next 12-months to assist with the development and implementation of the recommendations and strategic priorities.

This report is the culmination of the consultant's initial assessment. It presents to the church the methodology, key findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the data collected and analysis conducted. The aim of the report is to give the church an objective view of its current situation and to set out a clear path forward.

Methodology

The methodology involved gathering multiple forms of data and information from various sources to form a holistic picture of LCC. This included financial information for the last three years, statistics around giving and attendance, recent annual reports, church history, organisational structure, staff and ministry leader information, and governance documents. A whole church survey was conducted with 157 respondents, and 11 interviews were held with staff and the Servant Leadership Team. The consultant also facilitated a strategic vision workshop and attended a Sunday worship service. The data was triangulated to corroborate and validate findings, and common themes were identified to form the key findings, recommendations, and actions in the report.

Findings

The table below is a summary of the findings from the assessment with an evaluation of each of the health and impact framework and its current health and impact. The traffic light colours indicate the following:

- Needs immediate development and should be an area that is prioritised.
- Some positive indicators of health, but some aspects in need of development.
- Generally healthy so focus should be more around maintenance as opposed to development.

Church Area	Key Findings & Assessment
Kingdom Identity	
Identity: The extent to which the church has a lived understanding of it's individual (e.g. children of God, Disciples of Jesus) and corporate (e.g. Ekklesia, body of Christ) identity.	LCC has a strong understanding of individual and corporate identity in relation to Jesus and His Kingdom, with high survey scores reflecting this. However, there is a disconnect between understanding and practice, particularly in discipleship and evangelism, which needs to be addressed by clarifying how the church's core identity translates into ministry practice
Vision & Mission: The extent to which the church has clearly articulated and embedded the future God has called the church to (vision) and what God has called the church to do (mission).	LCC has a compelling vision and mission that provides clarity of direction and purpose. The vision and mission are well articulated, and communication and adoption of the vision and mission are strong. But there is a need to help some members understand their role in fulfilling the vision.
Kingdom Culture The extent to which the church has a culture that reflects the Kingdom of God.	At LCC, survey responses indicate a very positive and welcoming culture, with strong alignment between articulated beliefs and lived experiences, though some areas required attention. Leadership culture has been perceived positively, but ongoing investment in the church's culture will provide a strong underpinning for effective ministry.
Ministry Enablement	
Leadership & Governance: The extent to which the church's governance and leadership are effective in	The leadership and governance of LCC are strong, with high levels of confidence in the leadership team and their commitment to following Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The Senior Minister, Rod, is highly regarded for his pastoral care, leadership, and ability to build and grow ministries, though there is a need for sustainable

<p>enabling effective ministry to happen.</p>	<p>consolidation and succession planning. While governance is well-structured and supported by a clear constitution, communication from the leadership could be improved to enhance transparency, and clearer pathways for constructive feedback should be established to strengthen engagement within the church community.</p>
<p>Operational Efficacy: The extent to which the church operates in a way that enables effective ministry to happen.</p>	<p>LCC has a well-defined leadership and ministry structure with clear areas of responsibility and effective communication. However, while clarity exists, functionality remains a challenge, with ministry areas operating in silos rather than cohesively toward a common mission. Some staff members hold diverse responsibilities that do not naturally align, leading to a structure that feels people-driven rather than mission-driven. Over time, the church's structure has expanded organically, but its foundational design has not been adjusted to support this growth, creating inefficiencies that need to be addressed for greater unity and effectiveness.</p>
<p>Finance & Resources: The extent to which the church stewards and utilises its financial, human and physical resources in a way that enables effective ministry to happen.</p>	<p>LCC faces financial challenges despite being asset-rich, operating under a deficit budget and relying on alternative income sources to manage cash flow. Staffing costs make up a significant portion of the budget, and whilst this is not necessarily a bad thing, the church needs to consider the long-term sustainability of expenditure on personnel. A program-heavy ministry model has contributed to a reliance on paid staff, potentially limiting opportunities for lay people to engage in ministry. While volunteerism is strong, the wide range of ministries competes for volunteers, creating a perception of insufficient participation. To ensure long-term financial sustainability and effective ministry, the church must redefine its approach to staffing, volunteer mobilisation, and ministry structure.</p>
<p>Assets: The extent to which the church utilises its assets (e.g. buildings, social enterprise) in a way that enables effective ministry to happen.</p>	<p>LCC has a strong asset base with well-designed ministry buildings that provide an inviting and functional space for growth. The development of the aged care centre in partnership with Bethanie was a good strategic move, expanding ministry opportunities. As the church considers future site development, it must decide between a co-location or integrated approach, ensuring partnerships align with its mission. Managing multiple stakeholders requires careful oversight to prevent distractions from core ministry objectives. Additionally, the church must clarify whether its vision is to equip and send or to attract and engage, as this will shape its approach to development and community engagement.</p>
<p>Kingdom Ministry</p>	
<p>Transformation: The effectiveness of the church in delivering ministry activities that will help in bringing transformational change in people's lives such as discipleship, pastoral care and prayer ministry etc.</p>	<p>At LCC the Prayer HUB is playing a crucial role in keeping prayer at the heart of its ministry. While the church is actively working to strengthen its discipleship culture, survey data highlights a gap between available opportunities and actual engagement. Although many recognise the importance of discipleship, fewer are actively involved in discipling others or being disciplined themselves. To fully align with its mission of helping people find and follow Jesus, discipleship must be embedded across all ministry areas rather than</p>

	treated as a separate function, encouraging personal responsibility in spiritual growth.
<p>Edification: The effectiveness of the church in delivering ministry activities that will help to build up the church body in unity such as fellowship, corporate worship and other ministry gatherings.</p>	LCC excels in this area, offering various gatherings that encourage and support members throughout the week. Belong groups provide deeper connections beyond Sunday services, complementing strong pastoral care efforts that extend beyond the ministry team. The church is warm and welcoming, though there are opportunities to improve engagement with newcomers. The Sunday worship service is a positive experience, with post-service fellowship that is vibrant, reflecting a healthy and united church culture.
<p>Proclamation: The effectiveness of the church in delivering ministry activities that will help to reach and serve the local community such as evangelism, mercy ministry and other community engagement ministry.</p>	LCC is very strong in community engagement and service but struggles with intentional evangelism and faith-sharing. While its ministries positively impact the local community, the church must deepen its focus on presenting the gospel in word alongside its actions. The introduction of the BLESS framework is a positive step, but further efforts to embed this into the church culture are needed. Despite relying on a program-driven approach, research shows strong individual engagement in the community, highlighting opportunities to recognise and support informal evangelism. By equipping and empowering members, the church can enhance its effectiveness in sharing the gospel.
Kingdom Fruit	
<p>Kingdom Disciples: The extent to which the church has committed disciples who are growing as all of life disciples and equipped and mobilised for ministry.</p>	LCC embraces the call to make disciples, recognising that discipleship is an ongoing journey of dedication to Jesus and His Kingdom. Survey results indicate strong personal spiritual practices, with most respondents committed to growing in faith, yet fewer report visible transformation or active disciple-making. Within discipleship, equipping members for ministry remains a weakness, possibly due to a program-heavy approach. To strengthen its mission, the church must take a more intentional approach to discipleship at the centre of its mission, ensuring clarity in discipleship pathways, fostering deeper relationships, and creating measurable growth opportunities.
<p>Kingdom Unity: The extent to which the church is experiencing spiritual, relational, functional and missional unity.</p>	Unity is a core strength of LCC, enabling effective ministry. Relational, missional, and spiritual unity are strong, with widespread support for the church's vision and mission. However, functional unity needs improvement, as ministry silos hinder the full mobilisation of gifts within the church. Externally, LCC collaborates well with other churches and ministries, reinforcing its Kingdom-focused approach and extending its impact beyond its own capacity.
<p>Kingdom Impact: The extent to which the church is having a tangible and transformational impact in the lives of individuals and families</p>	LCC is making a significant impact in the local community through its ministries, particularly LCS, addressing a wide range of needs. However, while its Christ-centred activities are valuable, there is a need for more intentional storytelling to capture the true transformation occurring in people's lives. Despite strong community engagement, the number of baptisms remains low,

<p>and on the overall social fabric of the community.</p>	<p>raising concerns about its effectiveness in guiding people to faith and seeing Kingdom transformation. Beyond the local level, LCC plays a vital role in supporting missionaries and church planters, further expanding its Kingdom influence both nationally and internationally.</p>
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Conclusion and Recommendations

Lifestreams Christian Church is a vibrant and welcoming community with a strong foundation of gifted people, dedicated leadership, and meaningful outreach. There is much to celebrate about the church's life and ministry, but there are areas that need further development to bear greater fruit. While it has excellent facilities and a faithful congregation, some aspects require attention to ensure the church fulfills its mission effectively.

At this pivotal moment, the church has the vision and leadership necessary to move forward successfully, but before advancing, it must take time to realign its foundations. With an abundance of programmed activities, there is a risk that ministry efforts could become distractions rather than pathways to its core mission. A careful assessment of priorities and strengthening of essential pillars will help the church stay true to its calling.

The church's future effectiveness depends on simplifying its ministry approach, fostering unity across its programs, and focusing intentionally on discipleship and evangelism. A program-heavy structure may require adjustments to become more sustainable and impactful. By making key strategic shifts, Lifestreams Christian Church can maximise its potential, deepen its Kingdom impact, and experience significant growth in both depth and numbers.

1. **LCC needs a period of consolidation:** LCC should take up to 12 months to review key areas, continue 'business as usual', pause new development work (with some exceptions), and implement necessary changes to create a more streamlined, efficient, unified, and effective ministry.
2. **Establish a philosophy of ministry:** LCC needs a clearly articulated ministry framework and philosophy that connects the church's core identity to its life and ministry. This will help shape ministry activities and ensure a unified approach.
3. **Review and restructure the current ministry areas and staffing structure:** LCC should review its ministry areas and staffing structure to ensure they align with the vision and mission. This includes simplifying ministry, moving away from a program-driven approach, and establishing a cohesive ministry structure.

4. **Clarify, articulate, and embed ministry measures:** LCC needs to establish key measures for engagement (outputs) and impact (outcomes) to understand the effectiveness of its ministry. This will help celebrate successes and identify areas for improvement.

5. **Intentionally build a Kingdom culture:** LCC should focus on leading and building a strong Kingdom culture among the leadership and the whole church. This will impact all areas of church life and provide the underpinning for an effective ministry.

6. **Establish a sustainable financial base:** LCC needs to consolidate its finances and work towards a sustainable budget. Developing a financial strategy with the vision and mission in mind will help address short-term and long-term financial needs.

7. **Succession Planning:** The SLT should start planning for the eventual transition of the Senior Minister, Rod, within the next ten years. This process should be well prayed through, carefully planned, and executed sensitively to ensure a successful transition.