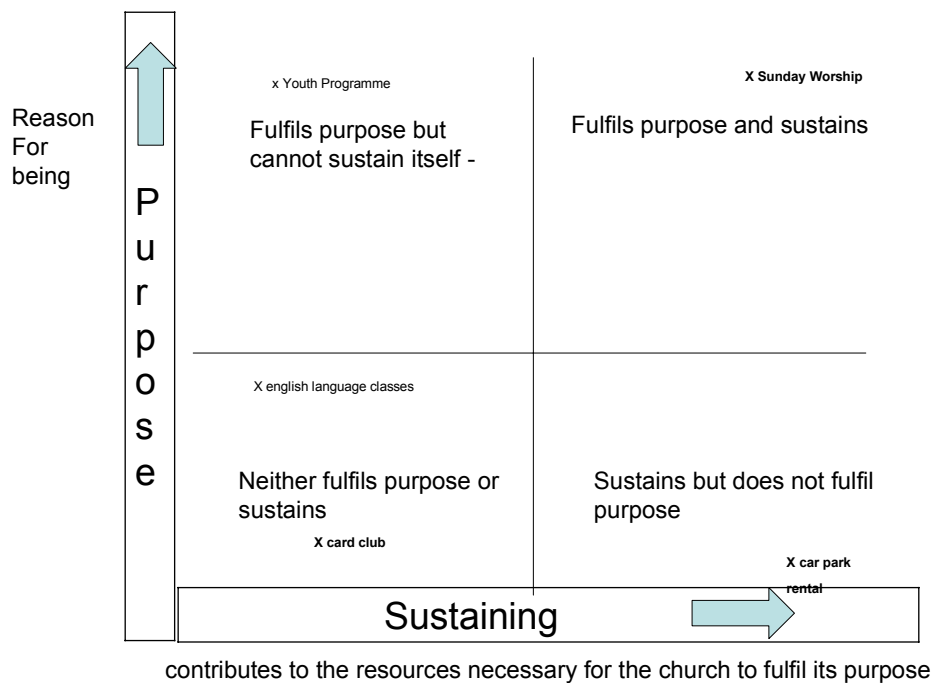


Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand General Assembly 2006
Appendix to the keynote speech of The Rev Martin Baker
Sunday 1 October 2006

An exercise in developing a strategy for parish growth.

While I was at the Kennedy School of Government, I learnt about a common way for organisations to develop ways to focus on and grow their mission. This is one model that may be helpful



This kind of ‘mapping’ is used by many organisations in the development of a more strategic approach to future planning. Instead of ‘purpose and ‘sustaining’ there may be other variables whose interaction you would like to compare.

Think about your purpose as a church - why you are here – and gain some consensus about the challenge God may be calling you to respond to in your context. It may be as broad as ‘making Christ known’ or ‘seeking and saving the lost’ or ‘equipping people to be Christ’s disciples’ perhaps there is at this time some more specific challenge in your community which you need to focus on.

Think of all the resources that may be available to you to support and sustain your purpose. People, money, physical resources, gifts and skills. Combined these things make up your 'organisational capacity'.

The challenge here is to think about how you can do two things at once:

1. Fulfil your purpose and

AND

2. Release the people, money and other resources in support of this challenge.

ASK: How can we move all the things we do in the direction of the arrows?

Take some time to plot your present congregation's activities. An activity like renting out some of your land as car parks may be a good way to bring in money to support your church's purpose – but the challenge is to think both how can this land potentially generate more resource and how can it help fulfil your purpose. There will certainly be activities which you need to support because they strongly reflect your purpose – even though they may not enhance either your income or encourage more people to be involved. Some things you may need to end because they do not achieve either function.

Experience, intuition and a readiness to take some risks are all part of this process. A prayer group that provides no financial income may help enhance an individual's call to commit more time to a church's mission. A community group who meets in your hall may be open to suggestions of speakers who may be able to offer insights from the perspective of Christian faith. A new paid church worker may free up a number of volunteers to support the church's work. There are other times when a group or activity no longer fulfil the challenge it was originally set up for.

Making plans about how you move one church activity into another quadrant or remove some all together may help in developing a direction for your congregation.