

# ENGAGE SUMMARY

DATE: 14 May 2021

LOCATION: Kingdomworks Collaboration Centre, Warabrook.

## ATTENDEES:

1. Nic Cassar – Newcity Baptist Church
2. Steve Troyer – New Vine Lakes Baptist Church
3. Joseph Skaf – SDA Church Warners Bay
4. Catherine and Kesh Rico Govern – All Saints Church Nelson Bay
5. Jason Alexander – Central Church Newcastle



## PROGRAM

Welcome and Purpose

YOUR CHURCH - '3 minute to spin it' about you and your church (recorded).

Dialogue around the following questions:

- What do you think is the letter (the unique story) that God is writing to the church of the Hunter for the next decade?
- What does future relational unity look like? (strengths, opportunities, barriers)

Lunch – The group was joined by guests from Alphacrucis, Rhema FM and Compassion.

Video Discussion – What leaders are saying about unity and collaboration in our region.

Discussion – Community Profiling and the harsh realities facing the Church and its leaders across the region.

Prayer.

## OUR PLACE. OUR STORY – WHAT IS THE LETTER THAT GOD IS WRITING TO THE CHURCH OF THE HUNTER?

Group responses to what might be in a letter from God to the Church of the region:

1. Direct energy to missionaries and church plantings.
2. Restore our youth to the fullness of Christ.
3. Pray for a softening of the proverbial 'miner's heart' for God.
4. Make generous investments in building up churches, evangelism, discipleship.
5. Help to deal with poverty and cure people.
6. Nurture your children and support your families.
7. Discover what your true purpose is.
8. Pray for civic leaders and help and support them in the work they have been called to do.
9. I'm coming back for my bride.
10. Reveal the Father's, heart to love His people. Show openness and acceptance.
11. Remember the One Another thing, that's all of us.
12. Celebrate one another, encourage one another. Together.
13. Pursue your first love, prayer.
14. Disciples look like Jesus.

15. Discipleship is fathering / nurturing; rather than broadly 'teaching'.
16. Love, prayer, faith, worship.
17. Some things need to die, so that a new harvest can come.
18. Connect with the people – show up at non-church events, support community.
19. Break down your walls – open your doors – be transparent, reveal yourselves.
20. Work together as one – denominations don't matter. Oneness.
21. Passion for 'our place'.
22. Be bold you punch above your weight.
23. Our circumstances, city and church might be changing from season to season, but God's presence and truth doesn't. His Spirit is at work, always doing a new thing. He sees that people in this region are looking for 'hope' and He wants to share with them where lasting hope is found.

## WHAT DOES FUTURE RELATIONAL UNITY LOOK LIKE?

A group discussion around this question included the below comments:

*"Our experience during COVID-19 has been that we are better together especially when there are shared values, even 80% on the same page. It would be great to co plant new churches where families and resources are contributed from different churches."*

*"There is a need to dig deeper into what unity looks like."*

*"There are churches and buildings that have not life, they need honesty to address their real situation and partner with other churches that can help. To ask for another church to send help. In one area a church might have a strength in discipleship and another worship. If they were open to ask for help and to share their strengths it would build the whole church."*

*"We need to move from 'our' kingdom to God's Kingdom. Sometimes we are scared to work with other churches because they are not culturally the same."*

*"It is important for people to have a good exit from your church to go with blessing. If there relationship between leaders then can work together when people move from one church to another."*

*"People need trust to be able to share. Most pastors are time poor and relationally poor. Bringing people together away from phones and commitments is a massive cost but worth it. If you bring a bunch of leaders together and pray and have time together trust and relationships form."*

*"Ecumenical groups bring up the challenges of doctrine, dogma and discipleship. If we find something a common ground that offends no one it also doesn't represent anyone. Trust is the big currency. Starting to reengage in relationship is different to just making a program or event work."*