



"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God." (2 Corinthians 5:20)

BACKGROUND

The pastoral team met on 1 March 2022 to discuss the Welsh Mission strategy for the next triennium. Over the next few weeks, thoughts and ideas were shared and collated into this strategic plan for your consideration and input at the Welsh Mission Session that is to take place at the Cardiff church on 26 June 2022. We welcome your thoughts, views, insights, or concerns, so that together we can work unitedly to strengthen and grow God's kingdom in the Welsh Mission.

What follows is not prescriptive but descriptive, containing thoughts and ideas on how the strategic plan may be implemented in the local church and community context. It is a basic framework from which the local church members can best determine how the strategy can work in their geographical locations. Hopefully, this flexibility will encourage a more creative approach to evangelism within the Welsh Mission.

INTRODUCTION

The Welsh Mission Strategic Plan for 2019-2021 focused on using the GROW model and iCOR initiative as its way of "Seeking and Serving to Make God Known."

GROW Model

1. PREPARE the soil of the heart with friendship and service.
2. PLANT the seed with spiritual conversations or with literature and media.
3. CULTIVATE spiritual interest with ongoing Bible studies.
4. HARVEST decisions with appeals to follow Christ and be baptized.
5. PRESERVE the harvest with ongoing discipleship of new members.

iCOR

The iCOR initiative envisions an all-inclusive church made up of all age groups, cultures, and social classes. The iCOR values are connecting, caring, participating, worshipping, teaching, serving, reconciling, mentoring, training and leading. These values are incorporated in the different stages of the GROW model.

Unfortunately, the pandemic which struck at the start of 2020, and the ensuing nationwide restrictions and lockdowns, greatly limited the ability of the Welsh Mission members to carry out what had been planned.

It will be noted that all aspects of the above initiatives feature in the strategic objectives below.

The Welsh Mission territory, encompassing Wales and the border counties of Herefordshire & Shropshire, contains a great diversity of people and cultures. While we are deeply grateful to God for the numerical

growth in the Mission during the last triennium, we actively need to explore/seek ways in which to train our members to become disciple makers, reaching out to and engaging the indigenous population in our geographical area.

There are 13 churches and 6 companies in the Welsh Mission with a combined membership of 727. The total population of Wales and the border counties is just under 3.7 million. This equates to just 0.02% of the population being Seventh-day Adventists – 1 in every 5,100.

The pastoral team propose that we incorporate the existing GROW and iCOR initiatives into a new strategic plan, under the theme/vision of:

REVIVED / EMPOWERED / DISCIPLE-MAKERS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1	
REVIVED Members, Congregations, Pastors, and Facilities	
Revived members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurturing of personal spiritual life – ideas/modelling for devotional life/family worship; Bible study groups; prayer seminars.
Revived congregations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess whether current internal practices/ways of doing church meet the objectives of reviving, empowering, and making disciples. Flexibility and a willingness to change enables the church to survive and flourish. • Combine/streamline ministry efforts - have more interconnection with a common purpose, networking to achieve more. • Give congregations an opportunity to meet with a church growth consultant to discuss strategies applicable for the growth and development of that congregation. • Dialogue with the pastor, local church board, and Welsh Mission leadership to develop a strategic plan to revitalise the congregation. • Reclaiming members – identifying former members and reconnecting with them with the aim of seeing them become part of a local church family. • Members organised into Life/Small groups bringing diversity, renewed energy, purpose, and natural growth. • Prayer ministries – revival, in-reach, and out-reach.
Revived pastors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular pastoral meetings • Spiritual retreat • Ministry to pastoral families

<p>Revived facilities</p>	<p>The Welsh Mission Officers and administrators to engage each congregation during this next triennium for the purpose of carrying out a feasibility study to determine how our church properties can be adapted to become multi-purpose centres of influence within their communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a thorough assessment of church properties to establish whether our church structures and facilities create a welcoming first impression and are fit for purpose. Determine refurbishment goals or decide whether to sell and buy other more suitable properties. • Refurbishment should create a welcoming environment and multi-purpose hub to enable the premises to be used as a centre of influence/community focal point, as well as a place of worship. • Create a team of contractors, businesses, marketing professionals who can advise on maintenance of church buildings and ways in which premises can be used to generate income for the Welsh Mission. • Encourage every member who pays income tax to return their tithe and offerings through gift aid to generate income that can be used for capital development.
----------------------------------	--

<p>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2 EMPOWERED Members and Pastors</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer ministries – revival by the Holy Spirit, in-reach, and out-reach. • Undertake a detailed demographic analysis of the local community to enable churches to plan effective out-reach strategies and community involvement based on information gained from the demographic study. • Contact local authorities, other charities, and local organisations to ascertain the relevant needs of the neighbourhood - both material and spiritual needs. • Training for Life/Small groups • Welsh Mission School of Evangelism – witnessing & community outreach initiatives • Training members to give Christ centred Bible studies and teach them how to encourage people to make decisions for Christ. • Empowering/permitting youth to take a more active role in the church, particularly in communications and social media. • Enable media-savvy members to develop innovative, creative, and relevant local material that can be used to share the Gospel within the Welsh Mission. • Empowering pastors through sabbaticals. • Encourage members and pastors to learn the Welsh language to reach their Welsh-speaking communities more effectively. • Encourage members and pastors to create ties to Welsh speaking communities to reach them more effectively. 	

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3

DISCIPLE-MAKERS

- Job description for members – go and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20)
- De-centralised approach to mission – pastors providing training and equipping members to become actively involved in the official mission of the SDA church which is to: “**Make disciples** of Jesus Christ who live as His loving witnesses and proclaim to all people the everlasting gospel of the Three Angels’ Messages in preparation for His soon return.”
- Ongoing discipleship training by local pastors and guest presenters.
- Ensure that all aspects of church life/programmes focus on the three aspects of discipleship - genuine worship, fellowship, and witness.
- Every church attendee taking the “Talking Jesus” course or similar
https://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Groups/324865/Talking_Jesus_the.aspx
- Each church to start at least one new felt needs ministry after consultation with a local councillor or grow/strengthen an existing community project.
- Church members join a gym/club etc and attend at least fortnightly, with the aim of making genuine friendships.
- Establishment/expansion of Life/Small groups based around serving/volunteering opportunities or hobbies - each member to join at least one group to build friendships/relationships, etc.
- Collaborate with local authorities, other charities, and local organisations to meet the relevant needs of the neighbourhood, both spiritual and material.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #4

AUDIT OF MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

- Each congregation to carry out a full audit of their membership records and work with the Welsh Mission Executive Secretary and Church Clerk to complete the audit during this next triennium. This will provide a realistic awareness of the true picture of the membership in the Welsh Mission, allowing churches to recognise their growth potential and be aware of the need for member discipleship, retention, and support.

The Welsh Mission pastoral team present this proposal to the membership and solicit their thoughts, ideas, concerns, and prayers, as we seek to partner together to bring these strategic objectives to reality.