

CHURCH PARTNERSHIP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

PREAMBLE

The intent of this document is to outline the purpose, expectations, and success criteria for the partnership and possible merger between Christ Church Mortdale (CCM) and Church@thepeak (C@P). It seeks to ensure there is clear understanding between both churches about our best intentions, whilst at the same time, recognising the need to be flexible and gracious as we move forward together.

PURPOSE & PRINCIPLES

As Wardens, Parish Council, and Staff of CCM and C@P, we agree that:

1. Our partnership is first and foremost about achieving what is best for God's glory and the growth of his kingdom in Mortdale and Peakhurst
2. Any partnership or merger between CCM & C@P must produce a better outcome for the gospel than if we remained independent
3. CCM & C@P will partner together in ministry for a period of one year¹ during which the two churches will continue to assess the possibility of formalising the partnership in the form of a merger
4. During the time of partnership, Stuart Maze will provide unifying leadership to both churches by continuing as the rector of C@P and becoming the Acting Rector at CCM
5. The desired outcome is that the partnership between CCM and C@P proves to be productive and effective, thereby leading to the two churches merging to become one church (parish)

PARTNERSHIP EXPECTATIONS - MINISTRY

1. EVANGELISM

Evangelism will be at the centre of partnership and is expected include:

- Mission week (leading into Easter)
- Evangelistic services – Easter, Christmas, and others as determined
- Evangelism course (Life) held onsite at CCM (biannual)
- Community outreach / connection activities such as
 - o Eat Love Laugh
 - o Carols
 - o Toys n Tucker
 - o Door knocking
 - o Coffee Cart
 - o Leafletting (train station)
 - o Mainly Music
 - o Youth group

¹ This is an approximate time frame with the intention to make a final decision by 30 Nov 2023

- Gingerbread Night
- Card Making
- Scripture (local public schools, Penshurst Girls, and possibly other GRC campuses)
- Evangelism training

Evangelism initiatives will be both combined and location specific, depending on the initiative.

2. MISSION & VISION

Whilst our visions are slightly different, both churches have the same mission of wanting **to be/grow and make disciples of Jesus**. It will be important to reiterate this constantly (in service leading, preaching, ministry teams, formal and informal communications) as an expression of our partnership unity and intention.

3. CHURCH SERVICES (TIMES, STYLE, LOCATION ETC)

Our starting intention is to maintain a ministry presence in both Peakhurst and Mortdale. However, there are significant opportunities to gain ministry momentum by bringing some services/ministries together. For the course of our partnership our services would run as follows:

- CCM 8am remains as is, with pastoral oversight by Karen Ray
- CCM 10am remains as is, with pastoral oversight by Alan Wood
- C@P 10am remains as is, with pastoral oversight by Stuart Maze
- CCM & C@P 6pm merge and meet on site at CCM, with pastoral oversight by Dan Tooma and Alan Wood

Merging the two evening services will require consultation and planning and would not happen straight away. A possible time frame would be to commence in January 2023.

All services would participate in the same teaching programme, with C@P running one week behind CCM (or vice versa). This will require preachers to preach the same sermon at both sites across two consecutive weeks. Having one teaching programme across both churches will help create unity and be a tangible expression of our partnership together. It will also have the benefit of not requiring more than one preacher to be preparing a sermon each week. Preaching will be undertaken by male members of staff or gifted laymen, with Stuart aiming to preach 50% of the time.

Stylistically, each service would retain its own flavour, although it is hoped that members of the C@P music and kids' church teams would be able to serve at CCM to help rebuild these ministries.

In addition, we prayerfully hope that a small number of C@P members (approx. 10 adults / 5 families) would feel led to join CCM 10am to help rebuild ministry momentum at this service.

4. SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

It is envisaged the small group ministry would come together under the one umbrella including:

- Encouraging all groups to study the same material
- Encouraging all group leaders to meet together for quarterly training

Other possibilities worth exploring include:

- Evening groups meeting together onsite at CCM for supper and fellowship before splitting off into groups for study
- Establishing a women's small group (with creche) onsite at CCM where members gather for morning tea and fellowship before splitting into groups for study

During the partnership phase, it is not expected to intentionally mix members from CCM and C@P into the same groups, although some mingling may happen if helpful.

5. YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS MINISTRY

It is envisaged that CCM and C@P Youth groups (both youth and leaders) would merge into a combined youth group meeting at CCM under the leadership of Dan Tooma. This would free Alan Wood to focus on other (yet to be discussed) ministries.

Merging the two youth groups will require consultation and planning and would not happen straight away. A possible time frame would be to commence in January 2023.

Discipleship groups for youth and young adults (15-23yo) will continue under the leadership of Dan Tooma, with the view to start new groups or invite into existing groups those Y&YA from CCM.

6. MAINLY MUSIC

This will need to be discussed with the MM team as to whether this stays at Peakhurst South Public School or re-locates to CCM.

7. KIDS MINISTRY

A partnership priority would be establishing a Kids' Church team and programme at CCM with members from both churches. Recruiting a student minister to assist with this is also a possibility.

It is envisaged Liana Maze will oversee Kids' Ministry at both C@P and CCM.

Leaders from both sites would come together for periodic training.

8. MUSIC

It is envisaged each congregation would initially continue to use its existing song repertoire.

It is hoped musicians from C@P would be able to serve at CCM to enable having increased live music at the CCM services.

In time, there will be opportunity for combined training, development, and song selection etc.

9. SERVING

Initially, ministry teams will primarily be church and congregation specific (e.g., welcoming, AV, Bible reading etc). Immediate opportunities to serve across both sites exist for music and kids' church. This will require administrative coordination.

During the partnership period, both churches will maintain and continue to use their respective church management systems (Jethro and Elvanto). This will also allow time to assess which system might be preferred should we proceed to a merger.

10. PRAYER MEETINGS

Monthly prayer meetings at Mortdale will continue, with invitation extended to members of C@P. These will be a great opportunity for the two churches to come together to intentionally pray for our ministry partnership and our mission to Mortdale and Peakhurst.

11. OTHER PARTNERSHIP POSSIBILITIES

There are many possibilities we can explore and consider to enhance the ministry partnership between CCM and C@P. This could include (but are not limited to)

- All in celebration / thanksgiving service
- Church weekend away
- Men's and women's events
- Hospitality Sunday
- Training

PARTNERSHIP EXPECTATIONS - ADMINISTRATION

12. STAFFING

It is envisaged that Stuart Maze will be the Senior Minister (Rector/Acting Rector) overseeing:

- Alan Wood (F/T Assistant Minister)
- Dan Tooma (F/T Assistant Minister)
- Maddie Gillham (P/T Student Minister)
- Karen Ray (P/T Lay Minister)
- TBC (P/T Women's Minister)
- Margaret Winney (P/T Administrator)²

John Delezio is moving to Albion Park Rail Anglican from Jan 2023.

Ministry roles and focus areas for Alan Wood and Dan Tooma will need to be determined. Both will preach and lead (as required) across both churches.

Maddie Gillham (Student Minister) will maintain her focus on Youth, Discipleship Group, and Night Church.

If CCM finances allow, it would be good to recruit an additional student minister to assist at with kids' church at CCM, preaching, etc.

The part-time Women's Minister that C@P is currently recruiting for will serve across both churches, albeit in a limited capacity due to the part-time nature of the role. Her focus will be discipling and training existing and future leaders.

Additional administrative support is likely to be required. Discussion with Wardens and Margaret Winney about the possibility for this will be required.

13. WARDENS AND PARISH COUNCIL

Wardens and Parish Councils will remain unchanged and continue to oversee the finances, risk, staff, and property of their respective churches.

Parish Council meetings will take place once a month on the same night with a time for both Parish Councils to come together to work on and address partnership matters and common agenda items.

14. FINANCES

² Reporting also to CCM Wardens

The Wardens of both CCM and C@P will maintain separate budgets and financial management throughout the partnership period, whilst at the same time collaborating for the common good of each other. This may necessitate some cost sharing at times that will need to be negotiated as required.

Staff will continue to be paid according to current arrangements.

CCM will reimburse C@P on a monthly basis the agreed costs³ of Stuart Maze as Acting Rector throughout the duration of the partnership period.

Parishioners of both churches will be encouraged to continue giving to their existing church. Consideration is needed for giving arrangements of any newcomers to the merged Night Church service.

15. LINK MISSIONARIES

Partnership with link missionaries supported by both churches will remain unchanged.

16. SAFE MINISTRY

Wardens and Safe Ministry reps from both churches will continue to monitor and oversee the Safe Ministry requirements of their respective church, as per diocesan requirements.

17. OFFICE SPACE

Staff will work primarily at CCM to maximise team unity and cohesion. A work from home policy will need to be developed.

18. TIMING

Whilst timing is flexible, a preferred time frame is as follows:

3 Aug	First draft MOU circulated to Wardens of CCM and C@P
9 Aug	Wardens meeting to discuss and work on draft MOU
23 Aug	CCM Parish Council discuss and make suggested amendments to draft MOU
25 Aug	C@P Parish Council discuss and make suggested amendments to draft MOU
29 Aug	Wardens meet to finalise MOU and develop communication plan
4 Sept	Partnership announced to both churches
TBC	Parish Councils approve final MOU
31 Oct	Partnership commences, and Stuart Maze becomes Acting Rector of CCM

19. CONSULTATION AND FEEDBACK

Throughout the partnership period it will be important to enable members of both churches to provide feedback and where appropriate be consulted about partnership initiatives. This could include:

- Holding 'Town Hall' style meetings at both churches post the partnership announcement

³ Reimbursement amount to be discussed and agreed between the Wardens of CCM and C@P

- Members of both Parish Councils being available for congregation members to ask questions, raise concerns, and make suggestions
- Standing agenda item at combined Parish Council meetings to include 'Partnership Progress'
- Provide updated Frequently Asked Questions on church websites for churches members to refer to
- Quarterly (anonymous) survey feedback of congregation members and staff of both churches to assess:
 - o Extent to which the partnership between CCM and C@P has been good for the gospel
 - o Level of buy in to the vision of a merged church
 - o Concerns or issues for people about moving to a merged church
 - o Other

PARTNERSHIP EXPECTATIONS - MERGER

20. SUCCESS CRITERIA

To assist the Wardens and Parish Councils of both churches to assess the possibility of moving from a partnership to a merger, the following criteria may be used:

- A church 'vote', by both churches, on the proposal to merge with an appropriate majority to be agreed upon by both Parish Councils
- Ability of Stuart Maze (and the staff team) to deal with the complexities of leading a combined parish
- Attendance numbers have increased for both church and youth beyond the combined total of CCM and C@P⁴
- Partnership initiatives have proven to be 'fruitful'
- Financial viability of both churches
- Other criteria as determined by the Rector, Wardens, or Parish Council

This review will take place at time to be determined by the Wardens of both churches, but no later than 30 November 2023.

21. DISSOLUTION PROCESS

Should CCM and / or C@P determine that partnership between our two churches should not proceed to a merger, the following shall take place:

- A review of ministry activities will be undertaken to determine if they ought to continue or separate
- Stuart Maze will cease to be Acting Rector, and CCM will recommence the process for nominating a new rector
- Other details to be worked out by the Wardens in love and grace

⁴ To be defined as the total adults, youth, and children at both churches considered to be 'regular.'

22. SIGN OFF

Agreed and finalised by wardens and staff of both CCM and C@P on Monday 29th August 2022.

Karen Ray (CCM Warden)
Tony Dobson (CCM Warden)
Malcolm Street (CCM Warden)
Alan Wood (CCM Assistant Minister)

Michael Canning (C@P Warden)
Jordan Derley (C@P Warden)
Katie Maclean (C@P Warden)
Stuart Maze (C@P Rector)
Dan Tooma (C@P Assistant Minister)