

## A New Vision for 'The Hub'

### Introduction

Pre-Covid *The Hub* was doing a great job serving meals to mainly elderly clients, some from the local community and some from further afield. Obviously, due to Covid, we had to close. As part of the *Building Back Better* Vision we are keen that *The Hub*, along with everything else we offer, will not be the same. Whilst most things have re-opened up now *The Hub* has not, because we have been prayerfully considering what God wants us to offer. Whilst it is good to feed people physically we have much more to offer than physical food and this somehow needs to be reflected in *The Hub*. I have heard many great stories of what *The Hub* did in the past and that's fantastic. But we cannot go back to the past as the world is a different place. So this vision follows a meeting with past leaders of *The Hub* and other interested parties. Please read through prayerfully with an open heart and mind.

### Vision

Our long term goal is for CoGS to be at the centre of our community and for us to see people coming to Christ regularly. Among other initiatives we would like to see:

- \* A coffee Shop at CoGS (or on the precinct)
  - \* Open every day
  - \* Serving proper coffee & tea, sandwiches & cakes
  - \* Linked to the current Bus Stop Ministry
  
- \* A drop-in centre for advice
  - \* CAB
  - \* Police
  - \* Finance (CAP)
  - \* Form filling
  - \* Help with computers
  - \* Etc
  
- \* A recovery course
  - \* For addicts

Obviously this is not going to happen overnight and we will have to start on a smaller scale, but whatever we do, we want to be intentional in sharing the good news of Jesus and seeing people coming to Christ.

### Where we began

In our praying and planning we have felt strongly led by the following scripture from John 21:1-17.

*21 Afterwards Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: <sup>2</sup> Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other*

disciples were together. <sup>3</sup> 'I'm going out to fish,' Simon Peter told them, and they said, 'We'll go with you.' So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realise that it was Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> He called out to them, 'Friends, haven't you any fish?'

'No,' they answered.

<sup>6</sup> He said, 'Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.' When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

<sup>7</sup> Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, 'It is the Lord,' he wrapped his outer garment round him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. <sup>8</sup> The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred metres. <sup>9</sup> When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.' <sup>11</sup> So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn.

<sup>12</sup> Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples dared ask him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.

<sup>14</sup> This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

<sup>15</sup> When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?'

'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs.'

<sup>16</sup> Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.'

<sup>17</sup> The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?'

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.'

Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep.'

Having spent time meditating on this scripture several points have come out.

1. After Jesus' death his disciples went back to what they used to do, but caught nothing
2. They caught a huge amount of fish after Jesus' told them to do something different (something which didn't really make sense)
3. It was early in the morning
4. When they recognised it was the Lord, the disciples followed him
5. Jesus provided breakfast for his disciples
6. They used some of the fish which had just been caught
7. Jesus' first command to Peter was 'feed my lambs'

8. He also commanded him to 'take care of my sheep' and 'feed my sheep'

## Our Aims

Following this scripture we feel that God is leading us in this way:

1. We should not go back to what we were doing, either before Covid or years ago when we had paid staff and *The Hub* ran every day.
2. We will see fruit if we put our 'nets out on the other side'
3. We need to do something in the early morning
4. We need to follow Jesus' promptings
5. We should offer breakfasts rather than lunch in order to reach wider
6. Those we serve will eventually become servers
7. Reaching out to a younger age group first. Breakfast potentially has a wider reach:
  - a. parents taking children to school;
  - b. toddler carers;
  - c. students and others at the bus stop;
  - d. shoppers
8. To take care of the sheep by supporting the needs of the community and showing the love of Jesus. Offering advice on things like money, and form filling etc. by partnering with other organisations such as CAB, CAP, the police. Eventually we would like to offer meals for those on low income in the evening and possibly set up a food bank in the future.

## The Vision

Having prayed, meditated and talked about the future of *The Hub* we have come up with the following vision:

To open a café in The Hub area serving breakfast, cake and drinks five days a week from 7am – 10am. We would offer Full English breakfasts, or any combination thereof (eg. sausage/bacon sandwiches etc), cereals, cakes and proper coffee and a selection of teas. We would charge by donations only, so only expecting people to pay what they can afford. We clearly felt that the ministry needed to be connected with, and complementary to, the current Bus Stop Ministry. And strongly believe that the team should not be paid.

We would be offering food obviously but also:

- A place for people to socialise
- Prayer ministry
- Practical support (by partnering with other agencies)
- Signposting (pointing people in the right direction for help)
- Befriending

One way of linking it to the Bus Stop ministry is to rename *The Hub* as *The Bus Stop Café*. This tells people what it is.

We don't expect all these things to happen all at once but as we make relationships with clients we will gradually get to understand what the needs of the community of Crookhorn are by listening to that community and getting to know them.

We propose, hopefully, to begin in January 2022 by offering breakfasts and for the ministry to expand gradually. It will, therefore, be necessary to get a prayer team together to specifically pray into the vision.

## What is needed to make it happen?

### Personnel

We have a couple of teams of people ready and willing to cook and serve 5 days a week but we don't want to rely on just a few people. This venture needs a full team of volunteers:

- Project Manager(s)
- Cooks
- Washer-uppers
- Befrienders
- Cake makers
- Buyers
- Partners to offer services

And most importantly we need pray-ers. This whole venture needs to be covered with prayer.

### Summary

This is a vision which will develop with time.

It is God who is in control and he is calling us to new things. He doesn't want us to do things our way and he doesn't want us to do things the way we've always done them.

We are not alone but God does want us to step out of our comfort zone and into exhilarating life with him, trusting that the wind of the Spirit will lead us where he wants us to go. And the more we trust, the more like Jesus we will become. And as we learn to live as Jesus, we will show what God is like. Like Jesus we will be incarnational where we are.

### Excited?

I hope you are excited by this vision. But, of course, none of this can happen without TEAM and before that none of it can happen without prayer.

The current Bus Stop Ministry is successful because we cover it in prayer each week. We want to do the same for the Cafe. So, I'm looking for a group of committed pray-ers who are excited by the vision and want to seek God for the way forward for this project.

### Prayer

Prayer for the Bus Stop Cafe meeting will take place on Thursday evenings from **2nd December** at 7pm on Zoom (Prayer ID) for 20 minutes. We will also allocate some of the prayer breakfast time to praying for the cafe (Wednesdays at 7am in CoGS).

### "Ask the Lord of the harvest"

In Luke 10:2 Jesus says *'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'*

So as we pray we will be asking the Lord of the harvest to send more workers. Could you be one of these workers? Look at the list of personnel in the section above and see if there is anything God may be calling you to offer.