



**HCC AGM 2026-Pastors report.**

If I was to sum up the last year at HCC in a word, I would pick “New”. As I have reflected on who we are now, and who we were before, lot has changed. We have new members who have not been part of an AGM, or a decision-making process. We have new members who were either born this year, or end of last year. For many of you reading this report, you are probably serving in a new area/ministry, and that has been a new experience. HCC as we know it has inadvertently changed.

This era is also new because as we look forward, the change is not done. As we seek to fulfill our mission and vision as a church, there will be more to contend with. As someone once said, it is very peaceful, organized at the graveyard, and very loud, disorganized and messy at the Nursery. We are birthing something, and that means mess and change all rolled into one. I know that makes those of us who are organized very uncomfortable, but Obedience to God isn’t always comfortable. It is peaceful, but messy. The core of our DNA does not change, but our practices and operations may change, because God continues to a new thing among us, and we do not want to miss the move of God. A verse that was shared with me at the beginning of the year, that sums up where we are at is Isaiah 43:18-19.

*“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.*

**Just a quick summary of our vision and Mission**

**Vision (The Why)**

Halswell Community Church aims: to proclaim the name of Jesus and spread His love in the local community and beyond, through **inspiring leaders, building community and making disciples.**

Inspiring Leaders	Building Community	Making Disciples
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**STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We are an **inter-denominational community church** that believe Jesus Christ is the son of God, who lived on the earth, was crucified, died and was buried, and on the third day rose again. He is seated at the right hand of the father. We believe in the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. We believe that the bible is the inspired word of God and is our ultimate authority which guides our actions.

## The Mission (The How)

Our mission is to inspire leaders, build community and make disciples.

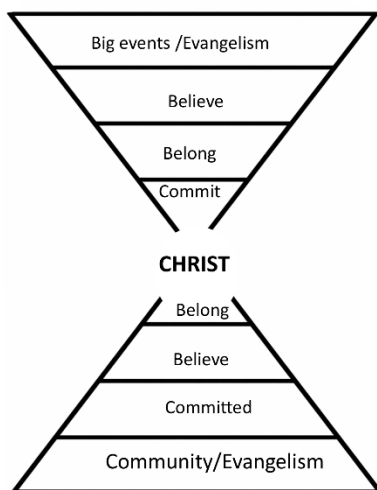
**INSPIRING LEADERS.** (The What) Our ultimate goal is to see mentally healthy, spirit-filled God-centred leaders in the church, community and marketplace

**BUILDING COMMUNITY.** (The What) At H.C.C, we aim to provide a safe space where we can share our Joys and triumphs, but also share our deep pain and struggle with others who can guide us in God's love,

**MAKING DISCIPLES** (The What) At H.C.C we endeavour to make mature disciples of Christ. We believe that the essential quality of a disciple is to become more like Christ.

**What I will share is a snippet of highlights and lowlights of HCC within the last year, and comment on a way forward.**

## HIGHLIGHTS AND LOWLIGHTS



At the beginning of the year, I shared this diagram as a model of church. The model that most people have grown up with, is the funnel one, (Inverted Triangle) with big events that lead to decisions and then belief and commitment to Christ, and the church family over time.

The second model is the organic model, where people have a sense of belonging, and they make decisions to believe and commit. This then leads to building authentic community and doing evangelism.

I celebrate that HCC has followed the organic model. I do not think this was the plan initially, but over time, we have endeavoured to build an authentic community that those who come along feel part of, and are then challenged regarding their beliefs and encouraged to be

Mid last year was a difficult time for me, because I felt I was doing too much and would eventually burn out. You, as the congregation of HCC heard this, and stepped up considerably. Starting with the consultative process that we had over the month of June 2025. During that time, there were several suggestions put forward. This led to a change in church set-up, and the formation of our incredible admin team (Thank you Kirstie, Nikki and Zack) and so many of our congregation members stepping up into new roles for them, even when they were unsure. Your hard work does not go unnoticed, and I appreciate all of you.

NB: This has not come without its challenges, particularly regarding communication, and changing roles and responsibilities. I recognize that there was a sense of frustration as we sorted out the right communication and serving channels. I applaud all of you for being patient as we sorted this out. Even now, I recognize that we have not fully sorted everything but thank you for still being part of the family. I would like to encourage you to come and share any reservations you have with me, or the elders, so that we can solve it. Otherwise, I have a false sense of who we are as a congregation.

## **UNSEEN MINISTRIES**

I recognize that many ministries serve faithfully behind the scenes and are often overlooked, not intentionally, but because of the nature of their work. Yet they are a vital part of our church and pastoral care. I want to thank everyone who helps in the background—those who organize morning tea, ensure there are clean cups, enough snacks, and suitable options for everyone after the service; our tech team, whose work is often only noticed when something goes wrong; those who clean and vacuum each week; those who make sure the toilets are clean and the children's area is safe; those who put out and pack away signs; those who provide transport for our youth; and those who manage the logistics for events such as after-church lunches and the family fun day. May God bless you for all you do: "Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you" (Matthew 6:4).

## **FRONTLINE MINISTRIES**

These are equally important. I would like to thank you all for your sacrifices, and the work you do even when it is difficult and many times unnerving. This goes to all those who plan and lead worship on a Sunday morning, led by Phil. We can all agree that we have been blessed by the Sunday morning worship. Those who plan and lead the services from the front, led by Lizzie. And those who teach our lovely children every morning, led by Kathy and Kirstie McAuley. Thank you to all our bible readers, led by Vernie. A lot of these volunteers are new to their roles, and they have all embraced it with strength as well as vulnerability and I appreciate you all. I could say a lot in this area, but I would like to share the words in Philippians

*I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:3-6)*

## **SPECIFIC MINISTRIES**

I would like to highlight our children and youth ministries. I am grateful for all the work that has gone into the children's ministry. All the volunteers who have stepped up, and all the groups that are now running is an answer to a prayer we prayed years ago. It is such a joy to watch and listen to our children every Sunday, as they sing, pray, laugh and cry during the service and during their lessons. In accordance with our vision and mission statements, "building community" we would like to offer even more support to this ministry. We continue to pray and search for a children's co-ordinator, who is able to help us take this ministry to another level of service and for our children and families.

Our youth ministry continues to grow (see Zack's report). I want to highlight it here to thank you, the congregation, for the support you have given throughout the year. According to the budget, this ministry is well resourced, and we are especially grateful for your support during Easter Camp and beyond. We also thank our four dedicated leaders—Zack, Sinead, Nicola, and Micah—who care deeply for our young people. This, too, is an answered prayer: that we would have a thriving youth group led by committed leaders.

NB: Our youth continue to struggle with mental health concerns, and that is something that Only God can bring healing to. While we continue to support them, I ask you to continue praying for them consistently, and that God will guard their hearts and their minds in Christ Jesus, now, and in the future.

Home groups.

HCC has several home groups. I have always believed that real spiritual growth happens in circles, not rows. Sunday teaching is important, but it is only part of how we engage with Scripture. Home groups help us grow by giving us space to go deeper into Scripture, build deeper relationships, and ask questions we may not have time to explore in a Sunday gathering. I strongly encourage you to join a home group.

*Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

*(Hebrews 10:23-25)*

Here are the groups, and their details again.

<b>Life groups</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Frequency/time of day</b>	<b>Leaders</b>
Men's	Rob's place	Fortnightly Thurs evening	Richard
Women's	Alisia's place	Fortnightly evening	Margaret & Paula
Young adults	Mato's place	Wednesday nights	Mato & Anna
Wise old friends	Various	Monthly Sunday afternoon	Rob & Kathy
Young families 1	Chris & Allie's?	3 weekly in term time	Chris & Allie
Young families 2	Penny & Michael's?	3 weekly in term time	Penny & Michael
Daytime Bible study	Rob & Kathy's?	Fortnightly	Rob & Kathy
Mum's group	Sevenoaks	Fortnightly	Nikki & Anna S
Prayer group	Mato's place	Weekly Tuesday evenings	Mato & Anna K
Evening Bible study	Sevenoaks	Weekly (Monday?) evenings	Tim & Liz
Youth Group	Sevenoaks	Weekly Thurs evening terms	Zack Howe
Cashmere Project	Cashmere high	Friday Lunchtime	Mato

### **Last but definitely not least, the Elders**

For the past few weeks, we have been discussing eldership as the current elders step down and we began the process of nominating new elders for the next chapter of HCC. I want to emphasise that none of the current elders stepped down because of disqualification. Rather, this process has been about clarifying the difference between the roles of elders and deacons, (ministry leaders). For some time, the elders have been carrying many deacon-type responsibilities, which has meant that the core work of eldership—prayer, discernment, planning, and big-picture leadership—has often taken a back seat.

Ministry leaders, on the other hand, can focus on the practical leadership of specific ministries without carrying the broader responsibilities of church governance. This distinction has shaped our decision to call for nominations of new elders.

Thank you to everyone who submitted nominations, and to those who were nominated and have taken this seriously, spending time in prayer and seeking God's guidance before responding. In my conversations with the nominated elders, I have sensed both the weight of this calling and their willingness to rely on the Holy Spirit as they step into it. The elders we are praying for and presenting for ratification at this AGM are Tim and Lizzie Hodge, Rob and Kathy McAuley, Matt McFedries, and Richard Howe.

This report would not be complete without recognising and honouring the work of the previous eldership team. They have been part of HCC since its beginning—when it was still only a prayer, before the meetings, conversations, and structures were in place. They listened as I shared my sense of calling and what God had placed on my heart, and although it was new, unclear, and not yet fully formed, they believed. They stood with us through COVID, through bereavements, through plans that changed, and through difficult decisions, including times when we thought we might need to find a new venue. They have led with integrity and faith, even in seasons when fear was real and the path ahead was uncertain. Even when unwell or under pressure, they served without complaint. I have always felt deeply supported by this remarkable group of people. They continue to serve in other areas and still offer support when needed. The Lord continues to use them in ways they may never fully see. I share the words of Psalm 118 with them:

<sup>23</sup> the LORD has done this,

and it is marvellous in our eyes.

<sup>24</sup> The LORD has done it this very day;

let us rejoice today and be glad.

<sup>25</sup> LORD, save us!

LORD, grant us success!

<sup>26</sup> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD.

From the house of the LORD we bless you.

<sup>27</sup> The LORD is God,

and he has made his light shine on us.

With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession

up to the horns of the altar.

Thank you everyone for all your support.

Mato,

Lead Pastor @ HCC.