**Some reflections from Ian following the Church conversation on Sunday 14th May 2017**

* There was a fairly good turnout and folks seemed quite engaged.
* There seemed to be an appetite for ‘change/growth/development’
* There was a concern about it ‘just being about numbers’
* There is a strong emphasis on the community nature of the church
  + People value the community character of the church
  + People place a high value on what the church does for them in terms of helping them get through life.
* There is a ‘head’ acceptance of the fact that as a church we should be helping each other become better followers of Jesus and that we should, therefore, be helping others become followers of Jesus. But it is possibly not well expressed or a deep value.
* There is a feeling that being part of the church does help people to live well (as ‘Christians’) but a frustration in terms of being able to verbalise our faith or help people come to Jesus.
* There is a feeling that we as a church could be ‘doing more’ whilst at the same time acknowledging that we ‘do lots’ throughout individual lives. This feels like a real tension.

There are perhaps some practical things which we could work on:

Using/strengthening the value placed on community: for example the place of ‘breakfast’ in the service could be revisited so that it regains its community forming function. This could be a catalyst for re-invigorating the whole service. [For example, breakfast could be moved to the middle of the morning so that the flow was – approach God in worship, take time to share our lives around a meal (including the sharing of news, prayer requests and thanksgivings), share in the Lord’s Supper together, learn/think/plan (through sermons and other means together or in other ways)]

Developing the value of being disciples together might cause us to think about how we ‘grow disciples’. We could re-emphasise small groups for example, or concentrate on developing leaders within the church who then ‘lead’ others in discipleship, or focus on teaching and equipping people in various ways. We could focus on serving the community/our individual communities in some way and use that to also grow as disciples.

Alongside this we might think about how we continue the work of Jesus in the world in making new disciples. We might do some learning together around sharing and showing our faith. We might begin to think about what it would take to develop new communities like Stocket grange/the community centre and what changes we would need for that.

All of these things above are inter-related and they are by no means the only way forward.

I recently had my attention drawn towards this programme: Fruitfulness on the Frontline, from the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, which seemed to tick some boxes. <https://www.licc.org.uk/resources/discover-fruitfulness-on-the-frontline/>