



Newsletter #1

Establish a Hope25 Working Group

Welcome to the Hope25 newsletter! Our plan is to produce newsletter each month between now and the commencement of Hope 25 at Easter next year, packed full of easy to follow steps, interesting ideas, resources and prayer materials. We know that the success of this venture will be in our ability to collaborate with each other, so if you've got a good idea, then please share it with us.

Hope25 - "How-to" Guides

Over the course of the next 10 months, we are going to step each parish through a plan to help you respond to the opportunity to proclaim the hope we have in Jesus during the season of Easter in 2025. We will have editions focussed on establishing a working group, on prayer, on working out who you are trying to reach, on making community connections, on offering hospitality, on telling your own story, on running an outreach course and so on. We hope that by following these steps you will be well prepared for Hope 25.

Of course, you can prepare any time, but the sooner we make a start, the more chance we will have for success. Why not put Hope25 as a standing item on your Parish Council Agenda so that you can all track your progress? Why not take the first step below this month, and get your planning underway?

Starting well - Establish a Hope25 working group

The writer of Ecclesiastes observes the following:

- 9 *Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor:*
- 10 *If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.*
- But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.*
- 11 *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?*
- 12 *Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.*
- A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Here is an invitation to work together! And what better project to work together on, than preparing to share the hope we have in Jesus with our community, with our neighbours, friends and family?

Who should be in a Hope25 working group?

Step 1 of our preparation is to form a local team to begin planning what you will do. Now if you are in a very small Parish, that might just be a series of conversations over morning tea with everyone involved. It might be a discussion of the whole Parish Council each month. But if you are in a larger Parish, having a dedicated group of people on your planning team is a must.

It is probably good if the Rector or Vicar of the Parish leads this team, and invites people to join him or her. Be on the lookout for people who might have gifts of administration and organisation, gifts of hospitality, gifts of evangelism and talking to others about faith.

Make sure you look out for someone who has creative ideas, and others who have gifts of prayer. That way you will have the balance of gifts to help make planning a success.

An ideal group would be somewhere between 6 and 12, depending on the types of activities you would like to be involved in. Make a time to meet each month, (newsletters will be out at the beginning of the month) and make a commitment to work together.

What do we do in our first meeting?

1. Dream

At your first meeting make sure you spend some time just dreaming together about what might be. What could happen if we invite people to come and hear about Jesus and their lives get changed? What would happen if we ran an outreach course, and people known to us in the community who never come to church, came along to hear about Jesus? What would happen to our church if even one or two, but maybe 5 or 10 people started coming regularly to learn about the Christian faith?

Make sure you also share your fears and apprehensions and those of your congregation as well. It is no good going into this with our eyes shut. Spend sometime thinking about how you might address those fears.

2. Brainstorm ideas

Spend some time brainstorming the types of activities your parish is good at, that might be turned towards proclaiming Jesus. You might have a eucharist that is "invite a friend day" with a special sermon and a morning tea. You might host a wine and cheese evening with a guest speaker. You might put some literature on your stall at the local market. You might run a hymn singing session in your nursing home with a special address. You might run an evangelistic course like Alpha or the Pilgrim Course. You might have a Parish Open Day and Festival, and invite your community.

The ideas are limitless. You might like to look at the [Hope25 website](#) with your group for some inspiration. Write all these ideas down now matter how bold they are, so you can return to them later.

3. Pray

And don't forget to pray. Pray for your local community to come to know Jesus. Better still each of you think of the names of three people you will begin praying for now to find hope in Jesus next year. Pray that God would guide you as you plan. There will be more next month about praying for Hope 25.

Once your group is up and running, drop us a line at Hope25, and let us know, so we can pray for you too. Please send us any questions you would like us to address.

Hope25 Contact Details:

Website: <https://www.hope25.com.au/>

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Hope25 Parish Working Group Meeting Notes:

Dreams of what God might do:

Brainstorm ideas for possible activities: