

Reflections upon the reorganisation of a church as it becomes intentionally  
'mission-shaped'- A case study of Holy Trinity Church Barnstaple.

A project submitted by Andrew J Dodwell to the Department of Theology,  
University of Exeter as part of a Postgraduate Certificate in Practical Theology.

I respectfully dedicate this work to the memory of Brian Strange,  
my friend and pastor who inspired and challenged me  
to take my first steps upon this path.

I would like to acknowledge the support of my project supervisor, Dr Mike  
Williams for listening to my gibberish and guiding it towards clarity. I would like  
to thank the congregations and leadership of Holy Trinity Barnstaple and St  
Gregory's Goodleigh, especially my training incumbent Rev Simon May for  
permitting me enough freedom in my work for this to reach completion, and  
above all, my wife Carolyn and our children Emily and Lois.

I certify that this project is my own unaided work, and that any work or material  
included in it which is not my own has been identified as such.

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August 2010.

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## **Chapter 1- Introduction: the journey so far.**

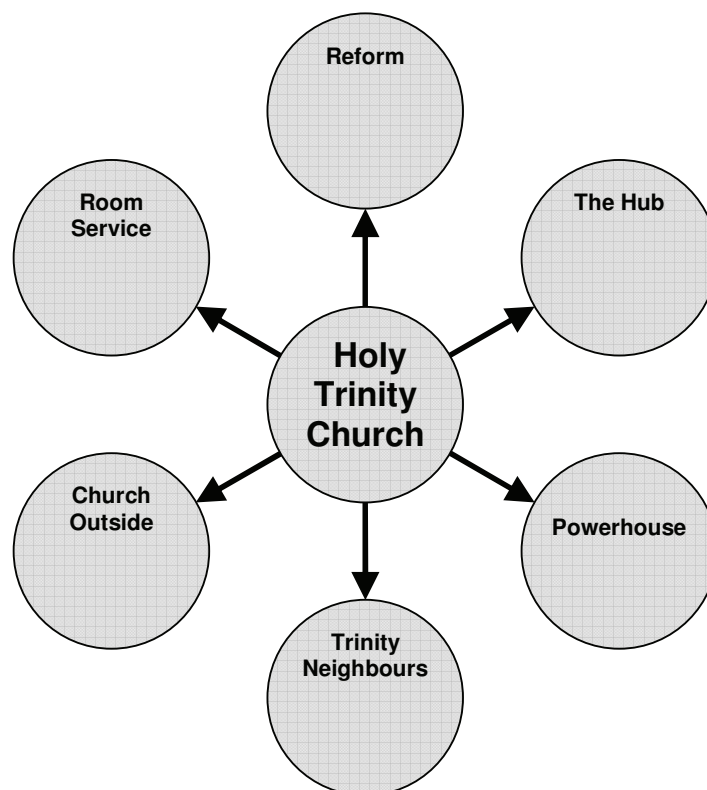
Since January 2009 Holy Trinity Church has begun reorganising its structures and rethinking its identity in response to a long felt sense that God has been calling the church to 'get out of the building'. This has led to an appraisal of what church is and its purpose, and at Holy Trinity this process (often referred to as becoming 'mission-shaped') has involved the development of several '4<sup>th</sup> Communities'. These are each formed around a vision for reaching out with the Gospel to a particular place or people and are informed by a set of shared values, as further detailed in this chapter. In chapter 2 key concepts that frame and inform this process are outlined from a range of literature, both theological and from business theory, including the work of Lings. Chapter 3 applies Lings' model of 4 criteria (In, Up, Of & Out) to methods of corporate reflection and action research to evaluate the development of Holy Trinity as a mission-shaped church. The results of these methods are shown in chapter 4 and discussed in chapter 5. Finally in chapter 6 I outline some conclusions about the usefulness of Lings' model as a practical tool and outline areas for its future use.

Holy Trinity Church (referred to hereafter as Holy Trinity) is a church in central Barnstaple, with average congregations of 90 and an electoral role sitting just over 100 during recent years. Barnstaple is one of the largest towns in North Devon (population 24,000), and is the transport and retail hub for the region, with good road links to Exmoor and the surfing beaches to the west. It is also the site of the regional hospital and FE college (Petroc). One of 5 Anglican churches in the town, Holy Trinity is situated in a residential area made up of Victorian terraced housing with some larger houses (mostly subdivided into flats), with a large slum clearance council estate nearby.

For a number of years Holy Trinity has been disconnected from the local community and the congregation mostly come from more affluent parts of Barnstaple and the surrounding area. The church has an informal worship style, with extensive lay leadership and contemporary worship music. The

recent reordering (removing pews, installing a fully carpeted floor, improving the sound system, as well as essential restoration work on the tower and roof) has released the congregation from the burden of raising funds for the first time in many years as well as breathing life into the building. The leadership is based around a group of 10 elders (plus the incumbent and me as curate) who meet weekly to review, plan and pray together. The elders all lead worship or preach regularly and have responsibility for various parts of church life.

During 2008 a period of teaching on mission and outreach culminated in a period of reflection where the congregation was invited to consider how God might be calling each of us to 'get out more' and engage in mission activity as groups operating within the Barnstaple area. This came in response to a sense that God was calling the church to make mission more central to our identity as a church and more obviously part of our structure. Over the years Holy Trinity has supported missionaries overseas and established a number of local mission initiatives, but although mission has always been in the church's DNA, it had only been expressed directly by a few people. Following this period of prayer and reflection, individuals were encouraged to share visions and dreams to discern God's calling to us as a church. Out of this process several possibilities emerged, which were commissioned as 4<sup>th</sup> Communities in January 2009:



The 4<sup>th</sup> Communities go out each month on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday instead of gathering to worship at Holy Trinity and are informed by these shared values:

They have a distinct purpose to reach out with the Gospel and serve others.

They are church, and so are expected to develop, alongside their mission activity, some form of worship and active engagement with God.

Each community has a core group or coordinators who are responsible for the actions of the group and accountable to the eldership.

The communities are open to all to join, and there is an expectation that not only will new communities emerge, but that in time they may grow to a size where it becomes necessary to divide into multiple groups.

Each group will give itself a name as it develops to reflect its ethos and purpose.

Every member of the church has a part to play in this, and it is the responsibility of all of us to encourage one another to listen for God's calling.

Each of the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities formed around a central vision of a place or people they reach out to:

Church Outside- a vision for reaching out to people who enjoy the outdoors, primarily involving families, always involving fun.

Powerhouse- a vision for reaching out to pupils at Ashleigh Primary School, and their families.

Room Service- a vision for reaching out to older people in residential homes in the parish (focussed primarily on one particular home).

Trinity Neighbours- a vision for reaching out to people living in the streets immediately surrounding Holy Trinity and connecting with the community.

Reform- a vision for bringing Bible-based discussions on topical and political issues into a neutral environment (the Reform Inn!)

Alongside these communities, a service still takes place at Holy Trinity on 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, called the Hub, to welcome visitors and pray for the mission activity of the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities.

After a few months it was recognised that holding the groups to meeting only on a Sunday morning was limiting their outreach effectiveness and so the decision was taken to allow groups to meet at any convenient time. At the same time it was recognised that another community that had started in Wetherspoons was unsustainable, and that a further community forming around the existing 'Interface' team who reach out to local homeless and vulnerable people was not coalescing around a vision. This process is, however, continuing to unfold, as during the last few months the Interface community have begun to see themselves as having a mission purpose. Alongside this another 4<sup>th</sup> Community has started around a toddler group based in the church building, while at least one more is in the prayer and planning stage.

As a founder member and coordinator of Church Outside, I have been well-placed to observe and reflect on its development as a 4<sup>th</sup> Community. My position on the elders has also enabled me to be part of the discussions about the structure of Holy Trinity both leading up to and since the commissioning of the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities. I have felt privileged to be in such a position and hope that these reflections may be of some use in my own and others future ministry.

## **Chapter 2- Literature Review: mapping the territory.**

In this work I shall be examining how churches are 'structures', and the changes that occur while reorganising that structure. This will be approached theologically (how Christians understand the Church) but also using insights from business and systems theory. I will also examine the meanings of 'mission' and 'mission-shaped' both within the Christian context and elsewhere. Various models used to describe the elements of a mission-shaped are introduced in this chapter, including that of Lings which I shall use as a lens to evaluate church and the process of becoming mission-shaped by means other than attendance figures.

To understand structures we need metaphorical language, as organisations (including the Church) use metaphors to create and communicate insights, which allow deeper understanding of a situation or challenge (Morgan, 2006: 2). Any image demonstrates not only how people feel, but affects how they think: words like 'stagnant' or 'breathing life' display an organic mindset and direct thoughts towards ideas of life or death rather than efficiency or responsibility: while metaphors broaden understanding, they also distort thinking (Morgan, 2006: 4-5). Many churches have adopted 'machine-based' metaphors to achieve efficiency and professionalism, with centralised control and responsibility; but this mode has limited responsive flexibility (Morgan, 2006: 22-28). Using multiple types of metaphors generates a fuller understanding of situations while reducing distortions (Morgan, 2006: 341-2).

'The Church is the people, not the building' is an oft-repeated phrase, but as a structure it is composed of buildings (as signs of Christian presence (Gamble, 2006: 94-5)), hierarchies (such as PCC's and synods- all originally established to aid God's work (Sledge, 2006: 112-121)) and leaders of various titles (Frost and Hirsch, 2003: 21). Scripturally, the Church is understood as both the Body (1Corinthians 12:12-27) and Bride (Jeremiah 2:2, Revelation 21:9) of Christ and its members as ambassadors of Christ (2Corinthians 5:12) and citizens of heaven (Philippians 3:20). Strands of traditional ecclesiology hold that the Church is both a community where Christ is present primarily through the

preaching of the Word and also through the celebration of the sacraments (McGrath, 2001:487-490), and that Christians are pilgrims journeying to our eternal home while called to be like yeast or salt in the world (Billings, 2010: 37-42) . The difficulty is that in many places the theological and ecclesiological emphases on people and practice don't match the existing structures of the Church. So what is to be done?

Responses range from 'there is no problem, we just need to do things better', to those who would discard the whole institution and start...another church. Others have developed churches that are better suited to the current context and to the purpose of the Church. These include those that retain denominational links, such as the Fresh Expressions movement and missional church communities (e.g. Mid-Sized Communities at St Andrew's Chorleywood-see Stibbe and Williams, 2008); emerging churches that emphasise cultural awareness and holistic faith in their mission and worship (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 43-45); forms that emphasise reproducibility (Cole, 2005: 9); and those working for renewal within existing churches in the UK (Atkins, 2007: 17-22) and the US (Wilson, 2006: 11-23).

Reasons given by those who see a need to change might include: the leading of the Holy Spirit (Stibbe and Williams: 2008: 54), the diminishing influence of the Church (Davie, 2006: 41), shrinking congregations (McNeal, 2003: 2-4), or the shift from Christendom to post-Christendom (Frost and Hirsch, 2003:8-9, described elsewhere as the cultural shift from modernity to post-modernity (Grenz, 1996: 15-17), or the transition from locality-based communities to network-based communities (Archbishops Council, 2004: 4-6)). All of these describe the same thing: on one hand the world is changing in very substantial ways, while on the other hand there are questions over whether the Church is fit-for-purpose. Hirsch describes this as an adaptive challenge: a situation that is either a threat to existence or a compelling opportunity, suggesting that if the Church responds to these changes then not only will it survive, but thrive; and if it does not respond sufficiently, then it will cease to exist in its current form (Hirsch, 2006: 247-248).

If the Church is in partnership with God in making known the person of Christ and the Gospel to the world (Atkins, 2008: 17), then ultimately all Christian activity should further that purpose. Collins describes this as the ‘Hedgehog Principle’- one idea that lies behind all activity (Collins, 2001: 91). The ultimate purpose of God (or Gospel) is revealed through the Biblical salvation narrative: God’s people are saved to become the means by which God’s message is to be proclaimed to others (Archbishops Council, 2004: 84-5). Mission is simply this: joining in with God’s purpose, through any and all means. Talk of fit-for-purpose or ‘mission-shaped’ churches is simply to ask how well they are structured for their Hedgehog Principle.

	Atkins (2008: 25-26), Wilson (2006: 116-131)	Lings (2000: 15)	Breen- (2005: 87-108)	Gibbs & Bolger (2006:44-5)	Hirsch (2006: 24-5)	Cole (2005: 113-6)
Elements of mission-shaped churches	one	In	In	living as community	communitas / disciple making	nurturing relationships
	holy	Up	Up	transforming secular space	Jesus is Lord	divine truth
	catholic	Of				
	apostolic	Out	Out	welcoming the stranger	mission impulse/ apostolic environment	apostolic mission
Key image	Marks of the Church	Axis of growth	Triangle shape	Intentional practice	mDNA	DNA

Table 1: terms for practice and values found within mission-shaped/missional churches/communities- Mission-shaped Church uses the first and second columns (Archbishops Council, 2004: 96-99).

The phrase 'mission-shaped' entered widespread use following the publication of 'Mission-shaped church' (Archbishops Council, 2004), but its thinking is not unique (see table 1). The phrase captures the sense that church structures must intentionally enable mission. The writers cited above each describe the elements that mission-shaped churches contain using different yet overlapping ways. Lings' model (as used in 'Mission-shaped church' (Archbishops Council, 2004: 99)) is derived from the marks of church, yet uses accessible language to describe the values and practice within mission-shaped churches. A specific element to evaluate catholicity- how a church is part 'Of' the wider kingdom of God makes it more comprehensive than others. Each element describes movement along a different axis:

- **In (developing internal community):** A community must therefore be small enough to know one another, with an expectation that numerical growth will lead to multiplication. This may be seen within housegroups and small congregations, but needs to be consciously promoted in task-oriented communities.
- **Up (engaging with God through worship, prayer and Scripture):** A community may need to be released from pre-existing forms of worship, without losing sight its transformational purpose or becoming simply an alternative worship style. The community will explore integrating contextually appropriate worship into their shared life.
- **Of (relating to the wider Church)<sup>1</sup>:** A mission-shaped church must be aware of its own past and story, and its place as part of God's Kingdom, by developing links to other churches within and across denominations. To sustain this, a community needs to develop accountability and training relationships with others. Focussing purely on this can lead an ecumenical group without any purpose.
- **Out (connecting with the context for mission):** This requires a shared commitment to intentional engagement with its context to

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<sup>1</sup> The absence of a specific heading that emphasises this in several models is notable and highlights a tendency to distance oneself from what is not working or is perceived as 'controlling'. However, several writers make implicit references to catholicity in terms of the early church (Cole, 2005: 117), other Christian movements (Hirsch, 2006: 18-21) and eschatology (Gibbs and Bolger, 2006: 43).

reach out with God’s love to people who are both ‘de-churched’ (not currently in a church but with some previous link) and ‘non-churched’ (have never been linked to church) (Archbishops Council, 2004:37-9). The exact form will be context-driven, but formed around the purpose of mission. This aspect is often missing from the small groups that do exist within churches, or else those groups exist solely for mission without the other elements.

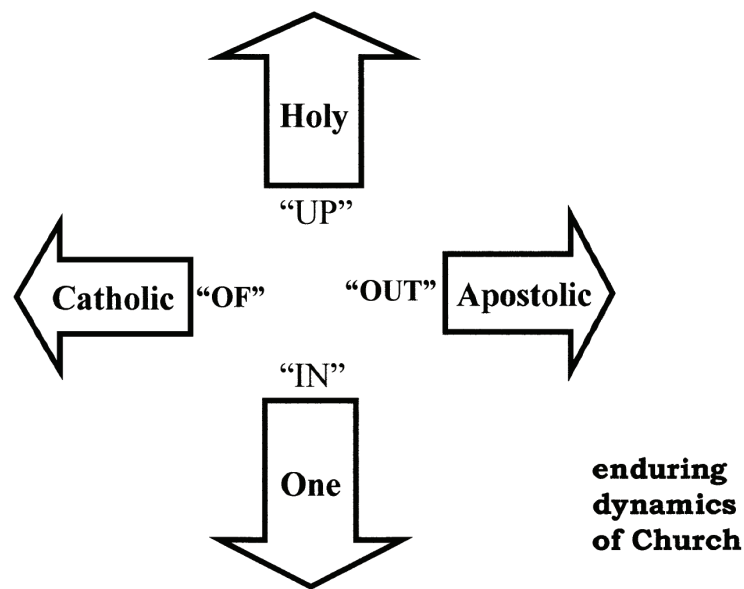


Figure 1: Lings’ model for evaluating mission-shaped churches (from Lings, 2000: 15)

As churches become mission-shaped it’s important to hold these 4 in balance to avoid the pitfalls that each can hold. Each involves change at both personal and structural levels. While all are necessary, it is clear that the term ‘mission-shaped’ emphasises the ‘Out’ aspect more strongly than the others- mission as the very essence or DNA of what church should be about (Archbishops Council, 2004: 85). As a church discerns more than one response to its context (i.e. multiple communities) then its leadership structure needs to encourage development of leaders based on function and calling rather than office (Frost & Hirsch, 2003: 165-8).

Becoming mission-shaped, therefore entails serious engagement with a process of change, in order to bring about transformation- of individuals, churches and communities, and requires ongoing evaluation (Patterson & Scoggins, 2002: 14). However, evaluation is often limited to numerical growth (Lings, 2007: 1924), church multiplication (Patterson & Scoggins, 2002: 12) or financial independence (Archbishops Council, 2004:121-2). These have limited use, as they do not directly illustrate any of the 4 criteria previously outlined for developing a mission-shaped church.

How else to evaluate success if not quantitatively? Collins suggests that success does not have to be measured quantitatively, but must still be measured, even if indicators are subjective or flawed (Collins, 2007:7-8). The presence of a preaching team does not guarantee great teaching in a church, but it at least indicates that it's prioritised, and it can be evaluated qualitatively. Collins, researching in businesses, found indicators of 'greatness' that transcended business sectors and apply equally to other organisations. Whilst Christians should not simply look to business to answer questions of how churches should operate- the aims and assumptions are set in a capitalist worldview (Pattison, 2007: 85); Collins observes that the important thing is seeking to be 'great' rather than simply 'businesslike' (Collins, 2006:1-3).

Alongside the Hedgehog Concept, several of Collins other principles (Collins, 2001:13-14) can be applied to the process of becoming mission-shaped. His first two concepts are about passion: the importance of passionate but humble leaders (his definition of 'Level 5 Leadership' contains many unwritten references to Jesus (Collins, 2001: 22-3, 30)), and the importance of faith and commitment to 'the cause'. These can easily transfer to Lings' 'Up' (modelling ourselves on Christ) and 'In' (faithful committed relationships) criteria. The Hedgehog Principle expresses the importance of finding and holding to our ultimate purpose: understanding where a church can excel and working towards that, while not being distracted by other things (Collins, 2001: 98). The process of developing 'Out' involves discerning both what a church should and should not be doing. The necessity to 'Confront the Brutal Facts Yet never Lose Faith' (Collins, 2001: 86) engages with the reality that the Church seems to be

struggling despite our faith in Christ's ultimate victory (developing the 'Of' element helps keep that wider picture), highlighting the importance for different ways of seeing situations (Morgan, 2006:341). Collins is realistic: the process of achieving greatness requires sustained discipline of thought and action. However, he consistently uses 'greatness' in a competitive sense and while St Paul talks of 'pressing toward the goal' (Philippians 3:14) the sense is of continuing on a course rather than competing against others (a posture unfortunately adopted by too many churches).

Responding to the challenges that face them, churches are developing their structures to become more mission-shaped and achieve their ultimate purpose. Numerical methods of evaluating churches do not sufficiently describe the ways in which churches need to change as they develop- more qualitative methods are required. Lings' model provides a framework to evaluate churches as they change shape, while Collins and Morgan provide concepts to describe the process. In the context of Holy Trinity Church I have applied Lings' model to establish whether it helps in the process of becoming mission-shaped.

### **Chapter 3- Methodology: learning to walk.**

This project investigated Holy Trinity Church's response to the challenge of becoming mission-shaped, using Lings' 'In, Up, Out, Of' criteria for evaluation. Collins' concepts and Morgan's organisation theory provide tools and language for developing Lings' criteria in practice. Action research, arising out of a desire for transformative practice (McNiff & Whitehead, 2000: 51), provides suitable methods for this type of research. It involves partnership between researchers and local groups, producing a community where evaluation becomes routine and process is valued (Gibson, 2004: 4-6). At Holy Trinity action research-based methods of contextual listening and action-planning cycles are already operating (in various ways across the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities). This project provided the opportunity to focus on and develop those methods within Church Outside using an action research cycle, while interviews and questionnaires were needed to reflect on the previous year.

Corporate reflection upon a church's self-understanding (Graham et al, 2005: 135-6) can be done by individual interviews within the congregation. Attitude measurement questionnaires using closed statements and category scales produce quantifiable results from a people's self-description (Preece, 1994: 112-8). Conducting a questionnaire also allows a broader scope of response. Action research and interview methods are both vulnerable to researcher bias, however the more objective results of questionnaire responses and attendance figures enable the evaluation by Lings' criteria to be discussed alongside numerical data.

Attendance figures are often the only consistent record that exists for churches. However they don't explain specific reasons for growth or decline and the link to Lings' criteria is indirect (e.g. developing INwardly may reduce likelihood of members leaving → reduced decline). Within 4<sup>th</sup> Communities, more detailed comment is possible because notes refer to known individuals. This highlights the shortcomings of a purely statistical approach: for instance those who've attended twice in the last two months appear more committed than those who've missed two events during a year. Statistics provide support for

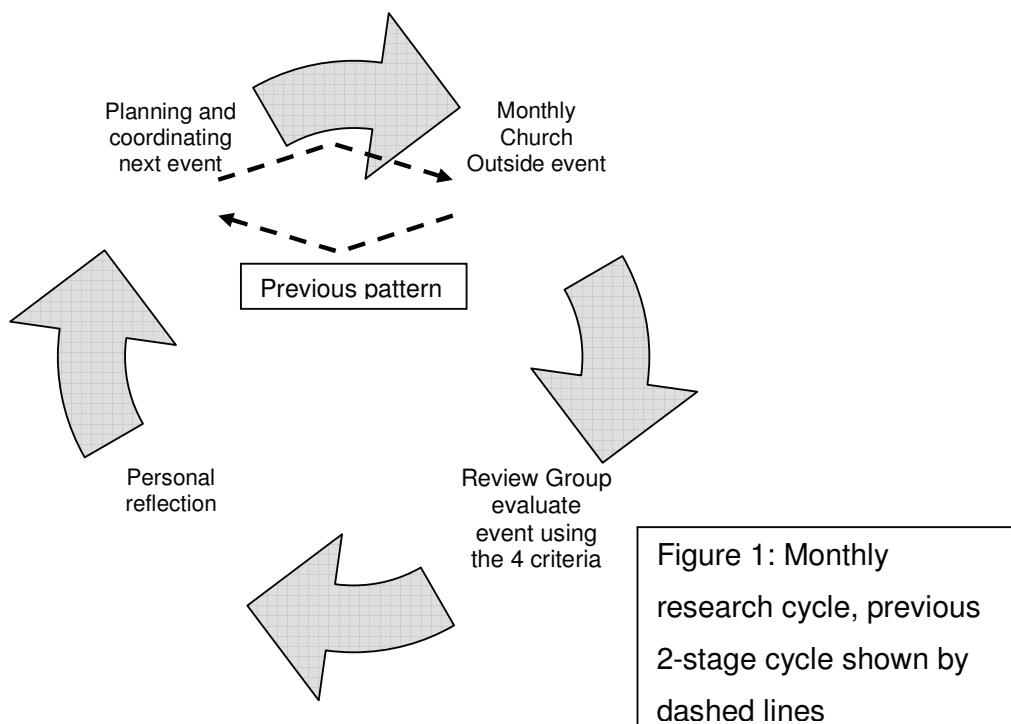
instinctive feelings, while intuition and personal knowledge highlight those cases where the numbers do not tell the whole story.

Moving from questionnaires to interviews, the time each method requires increases. Interviews allow flexibility and discussion of interesting comments, but are time-consuming and rely heavily on the interviewer's skill and sensitivity. They also allow people to articulate ideas themselves, rather than responding to a questionnaire, and this in itself can develop understanding.

Microsoft Excel was used to analyse and graphically display questionnaire and attendance data. Appendix 1 contains details of interview structure, questionnaires and research group meetings. A timeline was also drawn up of the changes that have taken place at Holy Trinity since the departure of the previous incumbent in 2006 (see Appendix 2).

#### Research Cycle:

The shape of the monthly research cycle is shown below. It developed the previously existing pattern by formalising group evaluation and reflection. Previously this took place at 3-6 monthly intervals, with a 2 stage monthly pattern as illustrated.



The review group met 6 times after the monthly Church Outside events Jan-June 2010 to discuss and give feedback. The group used Lings' criteria to discuss the event as follows:

- IN- how did this further our community life?
- UP- how did this reach toward God?
- OUT- how did this engage with the world at large?
- OF- were we conscious of the wider Church?

This identified areas of strength and opportunities for development and these findings were then incorporated into the planning for the next month's Church Outside, or adopted as general principles for the community. I emailed a summary of each monthly event to the community and noted personal reflections. The 4 criteria provided structure, enabling discussion to focus on how events fulfilled each of them, avoiding 'I'm not keen on the beach'-type comments, but allowing room for discussion of planning and coordinating the events. There was at times a sense that events were focussing on one criterion after another. However at the same time there was a clear sense of direction- the movement was more of an upward spiral than a pendulum.

The research cycle was easy to use, producing usable outcomes very quickly. Summarising group discussion to a few bullet points for each event meant that the group had to decide exactly what they'd like to develop in the next month, without producing an endless list of things to improve.

#### Questionnaires:

A draft questionnaire was produced and shown to a pilot group. The questionnaire was then distributed to 200 members of Holy Trinity Church, for return by email, or to the church office. A series of statements asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement (measuring their attitude towards those statements); while age and gender data gave an indication of how representative the survey was of the whole congregation. Some questions asked how members of the church perceived the structural

changes (including those who are not part of any 4<sup>th</sup> Community), while others addressed the 4 criteria directly:

IN- I feel more connected to/cared for by the church than 2 years ago

UP- I feel my faith has become deeper/ stronger in the last 2 years

OUT- I feel more involved in God's mission than I did 2 years ago

OF- I feel that this church is involved in God's plan for Barnstaple

#### Interviews:

Interviews were conducted with 3 members of Church Outside (one founding member, one core member, and one member of the group who does not attend other services), plus the incumbent of Holy Trinity Church. Each of these has a slightly different relation to the community, yet all are 'experts'. Using interviews as a method of corporate reflection allowed discernment of underlying metaphors being used by interviewees as they expressed themselves. Notes were taken, typed up and emailed to interviewees for comment/correction. The interview used a series of open questions to explore Lings' criteria as follows:

IN- personal connection with Holy Trinity and 4<sup>th</sup> Communities

UP- description of personal faith, feelings about service styles

OUT- perception of 4<sup>th</sup> Communities, understanding of 'mission'

OF- understanding of the wider Church, Holy Trinity's part in things

Each question provided opportunity for further conversation about the changes that have been taking place at Holy Trinity, particularly those associated with the development of 4<sup>th</sup> Communities. Language used, images and comments from interviewees were placed under criteria where relevant and similar threads were noted.

#### Attendance Data- 4<sup>th</sup> Communities and whole congregation:

Attendance data for the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities was collected from January 2009-June 2010, with figures for individual Communities as available from coordinators. This included whether individuals were 'visitors' or not.

Attendance data from Church Outside also included whether visitors and members of Holy Trinity were 'returning' or 'new', as well as details of whether and when visitors became members of Holy Trinity.

Attendance for Sunday morning services from June 2003-June 2010 was recorded from the register of services at Holy Trinity Church (excluding identifiable 'unusual' attendances such as Easter, baptisms, church camp etc). From annual averages the changes from previous years (including percentage) and overall changes during the sampling period were calculated.

Summary:

The different methods allow increasing insight into how Holy Trinity has changed in recent years- from simple attendance, through some measure of 'return visitors' at Church Outside to expressions of feelings drawn from the congregation through questionnaire and interviews. Lings' criteria act as a set of lenses for interviews and questionnaire responses, focusing attention on particular aspects of the process of becoming mission-shaped. The research cycle provides a tool to both evaluate and guide ongoing development of the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities.

**Chapter 4- Results: The ongoing journey.**

The combination of a research cycle and corporate reflection using interviews and questionnaires allowed me to look back over what has already happened while informing the continuing development of Holy Trinity and the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities. Applying Lings’ model for mission-shaped churches to those methods acted as a framework for evaluating practice, and the semi. Attendance figures, although included, are less significant to this process.

**Research Cycle:**

The research cycle led to developments and changes every month, and provided a structured way of critiquing and changing practice. The results from the first review group are shown below as an example, with points for development underlined.

January Event- Walk followed by drink in pub.	In	Up	Out	Of
Strengths	<u>Time for conversations</u> , shared struggles through the mud!	<u>Meeting God</u> in creation, linked to <u>discussion about world</u>	Room to build <u>relationships</u> , time in pub was good- do this more. Good to be out in public	Remembered to give out noticesheets!
Weakness/ Opportunities	How to do introductions within group and <u>welcome new people</u> - have role for this?	Difficult to focus due to the cold! <u>Express faith creatively</u> , but avoid becoming ‘just spiritual’	Make it easier to invite others- not just a church jolly but <u>intentional</u>	<u>Disconnection</u> from Holy Trinity, no links in prayers Use lectionary, consider pilgrimage

Developments from this cycle were:

- Core members were challenged to take responsibility for introducing themselves to people at events.
- Worship to include some obvious prayer and Bible link alongside any reflection or discussion.

-Connection to Holy Trinity was restored through meeting at the Church for prayer before starting.

Conclusions and reflections from other months are summarised below, under Lings' criteria:

IN- the importance of including introductions within events and mixing up friendship groups (in cars, discussion groups and over food), giving time for conversations, sharing responsibility for the community and supporting others (especially families with children).

UP- stretching and developing worship beyond 'spiritual thoughts' without losing visitors, using music and poetry during journeys, discussions and reflections enable people to find their own level, but need good framework/clear objectives, the importance of not missing this part due to time pressure.

OUT- being visible in the place and developing continuity, balancing engagement with the public (contact without offence) and accessibility for guests (inclusion without pressure), having time to develop relationships, raising public awareness of Christians- people 'touching God' through brief contacts.

OF- connecting to Holy Trinity and other 4<sup>th</sup> Communities through publicity, start location and prayer, linking our theme to lectionary readings and Christian festivals.

The community started meeting together socially and for Bible study between the monthly events, however while members with young children appreciate the opportunity for time without children, these have struggled to develop momentum. Most recently a 'Church Outside' banner and business cards to hand out have been introduced, increasing the sense that Church Outside is public (developing Out), alongside inclusive prayer activities to help visitors and members of the public engage with God.

Reflections on other 4<sup>th</sup> Communities:

**Reform** meet in the Reform pub on Sunday evenings for discussions relating Biblical and political issues (their UP). Few from outside the church have joined in, although it has become an important link for one couple who no longer attend other services (IN). Contacts with other people in the pub cannot be defined either by number or quality, but it is developing OUT.

**Powerhouse** originally intended to meet in the church hall to reach out to local children and families; they now meet at a church-linked primary school during term time, consciously identifying themselves as part of Holy Trinity (OF). A 'space exploration' theme is the basis for Bible dramas with prayer at the start of each session (UP). Some parents join in or stay for coffee during the session (developing OUT). Powerhouse caters for many of the children within Holy Trinity (IN), as well as meeting three times each month for prayer and planning.

**Room Service** originally intended to develop a services network for elderly people across the area, but now focuses on one residential home (OUT), leading a short service of traditional hymns and prayer (UP) in the lounge followed by drinks. The community involved in leading is fairly small (approx 6) but they are developing strong relationships with residents and visitors are committed. The community meet at Holy Trinity before each event to pray and have also started meeting together for Bible study during the month (IN).

**Trinity Neighbours** has a format of Bible study followed by prayer walks in the local community (UP), with distribution of cards at Christmas and Easter. They also organise occasional events alongside local residents (OUT), however the monthly format is difficult for non-church members joining- individuals more easily enter the main congregation rather than this group (OF), though they have started a small group for prayer and support (IN). The community of 5-7 does not reflect the contacts with over 300 people in the neighbourhood.

The morning service at Holy Trinity (sometimes referred to as '**The Hub**') has continued on 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays. It was originally anticipated that this might cease as

the whole congregation moved out into mission, but this has not been the case for several reasons:

- 1- it was felt that 'something' needed to be offered for visitors (OUT)
- 2- a number of people within the church have not yet committed to a 4<sup>th</sup> Community (some are seeking a group to join or are still settling in to Holy Trinity (IN)
- 3- 4<sup>th</sup> Communities that aren't meeting on Sunday mornings still desire to gather for worship (UP).
- 4- its not 'real church' if we aren't using the building (a distorted OF)

The Hub has become a scaled-down version of the normal morning service, with a focus on prayer for the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities and space to try different formats (such as café-style church). Attendance averaged 35 in 2009-10.

There is considerable variation from month to month- one of the most significant aspects being whether Powerhouse takes place or not. There is also a cumulative aspect of the growth: an increase of 2-4 people in each community becomes overall growth of 10-20 across the whole congregation.

#### Interviews:

It was apparent that certain criteria from Lings' model were more clearly expressed in interview than others- mission and were mentioned a number of times by all interviewees, there was less reference to Holy Trinity's place within the wider Church. One comment which came up a number of times in different forms was 'nothing has changed, but everything has changed', while another interviewee expressed that the congregation at Holy Trinity is growing, without being able to give any reasons. Comments have been listed by criteria:

IN- Terms such as 'community', 'fellowship' and 'family' were used, with mentions of how well many people know each other, the support given to individuals and the few social barriers. The 4<sup>th</sup> communities were described as 'a means for individual participation', building 'togetherness' and being in the company of others. One interviewee noted that the communities could disrupt

the cohesion of the whole church, especially those who are not joining in, and the importance of retaining the family sense within a growing church.

UP- Holy Trinity was described as a church where gifts of the Holy Spirit are encouraged both publicly and privately and there is an expectation of meeting with God in worship, and most interviewees noted the 'spiritual input' of 4<sup>th</sup> communities. Terms such as 'God's timing/calling', and 'vision' were used, indicating a strong perception that this reshaping of the church has direction that comes from God rather than man. One interviewee commented that worship should have an equal weight within them, another made no mention of the worship while a third appreciated the absence of hymns and sermons within Church Outside- describing the 'guided personal reflections' as more engaging.

OUT- Interviewees spoke of Holy Trinity as 'outward looking' and 'very welcoming to people coming in- easy to enter', several noting the arrival of new young families. The 4<sup>th</sup> communities were described as 'putting emphasis on our mission as a church', 'bringing God to people who don't come to church', 'doing something interesting with Christianity' and 'church that isn't obviously church'. However comments were realistic about things- that things had not always worked, recognising the developing nature of the communities and that 'some but not lots of non-church folk' had attended.

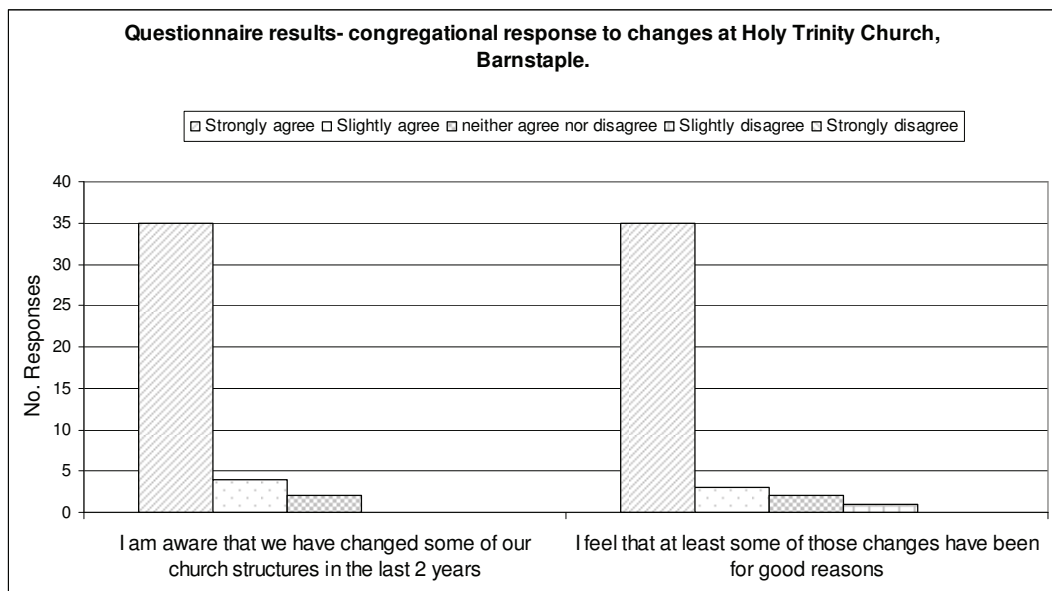
OF- Holy Trinity was described as sitting 'lightly' to being Anglican, but as fully involved in the Anglican and wider Church in Barnstaple, while the 4<sup>th</sup> communities were 'not just going on a Sunday like some churches'- displaying a negative pre-conception of other churches. Interviewees recognised that the 4<sup>th</sup> communities are not separate congregations themselves but part of Holy Trinity, described as 'times when the church is split into smaller groups', acting as a reminder of our group identity that includes the other criteria. One interviewee commented on the importance of accountability from the core group to the church leadership in prayer and discussion.

The language used by interviewees suggested various metaphoric images. Words such as 'heart', 'incarnated', 'body', and 'family' show an organic

perception of Holy Trinity- its not surprising that interviewees talked about a 'growing church' rather than 'church growth'. Description of the developing 4<sup>th</sup> Communities circled around ideas of flexibility rather than set goals. Language such as 'community', 'serving' and talk of 'social barriers' suggested a perception of church as a culture, and while there was little use of machine-like imagery, ideas of 'being useful', 'task' and 'means of participation' show that this thinking is not totally absent. From only a small number of interviews it's possible to see that thinking is not limited to only a single model.

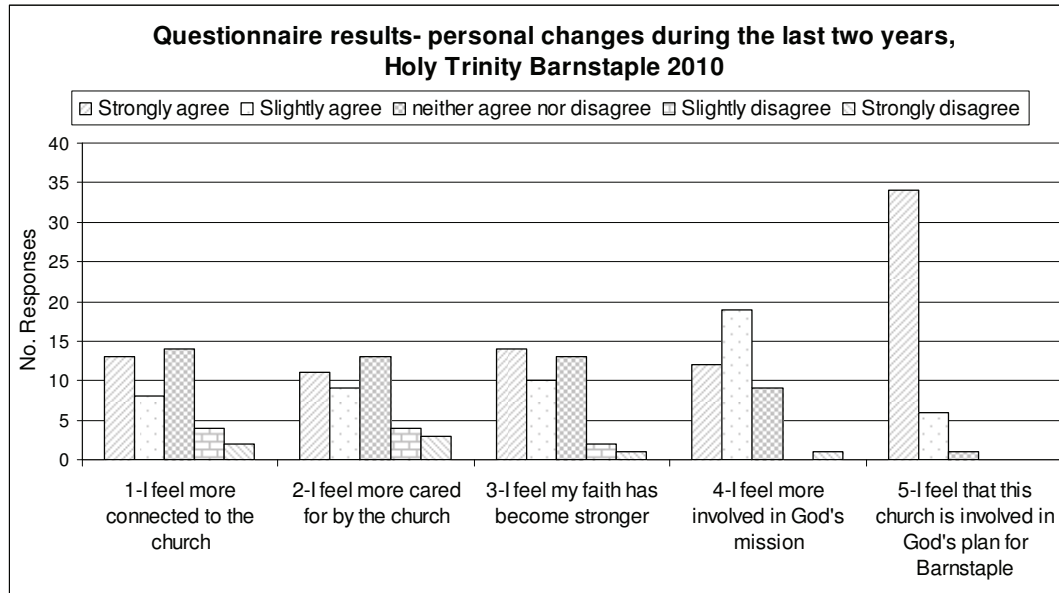
Questionnaires:

The response rate of 20% (41 returned) included 60% women and 50% aged 40-54, figures which are broadly in line with the most recent church membership list. There were disproportionately few respondents under 16 (only 2 from a possible 32), however this age group includes those too young to read. Respondents had attended Holy Trinity for periods ranging from 3months to 40 years, with an average of 12 years. 69% attended at least weekly, with the remainder attending several times a month, suggesting that the sample was biased towards committed members rather than fully representative of the whole church.



The chart above shows the responses to the first two questions and clearly illustrates that there is a strong awareness of the change (95% strongly agreed with the statement), and equally clearly that 'at least some' of the changes have

been well received (93%). It is impossible to draw conclusions about specific changes that respondents are referring to in these questions, but they indicate good communication and acceptance of change.



The chart above shows people's perception of personal development during the last two years (the period during which the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities have developed). The results are described under the criteria which they reflect.

**IN- Questions 1 & 2:**

These produced the most diverse responses, with 50% in agreement, 33% neutral and 17% indicating that they disagreed to some extent. Of those in disagreement, half disagreed with both statements, suggesting that these two questions, deliberately separated in the questionnaire, are to some extent linked.

**UP- Question 3:**

This also illustrated a diversity of perception- 7% were in disagreement, 60% in agreement and 33% neutral. Of those who were in disagreement, only 1 indicated they felt less connected to church. The large numbers who indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with these questions may have been due to uncertainty about what they meant rather than true ambivalence.

OUT- Question 4:

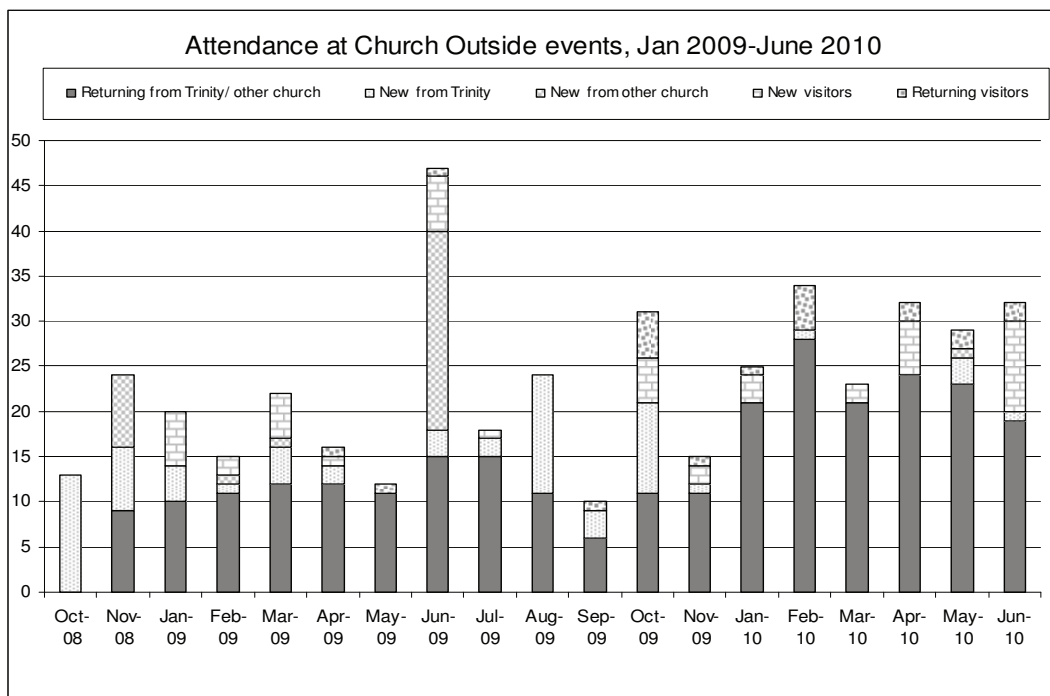
Here the pattern was more clearly one of agreement- only one respondent disagreed with this statement (this person signed their name and said that their disagreement didn't mean they weren't involved in mission, just no more so than 2 years ago), while 31 (75%) agreed to some degree.

OF- Question 5:

40 respondents (98%) agreed with the statement- clearly people feel that Holy Trinity is part of what God is doing in this area. What is not clear from this statement is how people feel about other churches within Barnstaple- 'this church is involved...' has quite a different meaning to 'this church is involved'!

Attendance- Church Outside:

Average attendance during 2009 was 18, rising in 2010 to 29. From my notes I know that this increase has come largely from two families joining the church (one moved to Barnstaple, the other was de-churched). Notes also identified 146 different people as attending Church Outside since October 2008, with a growing core of returning members (see below). 26 people have attending >50% of events since they joined, with 15 people involved in coordinating events.



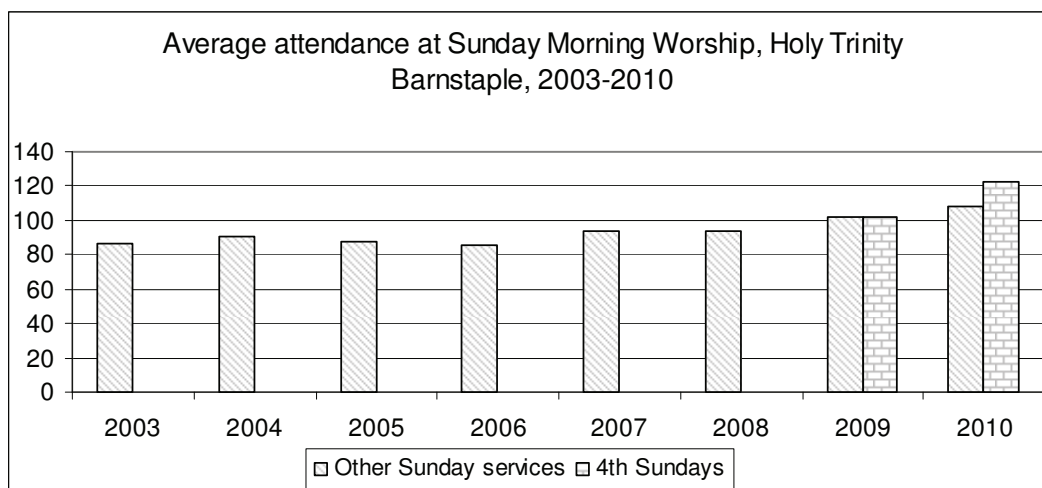
45 visitors have attended events, with 14 returning at least once (excluding 22 visitors from my previous church in June 2009). Of those, 6 now attend Holy Trinity (moving from 'visitor' to 'member'); while 5 others currently attend Church Outside but no other church. 4 people have moved away, 2 have stopped attending church altogether and 2 have joined other 4<sup>th</sup> Communities. The added depth given by observation and note-taking means it is possible to break attendance down into these sub-groups providing evidence of people moving from 'new visitor' to 'returning member' and becoming involved in coordinating events.

Annual average Sunday morning attendance:

During the last 8 years average attendance at Holy Trinity has increased slowly, although not consistently, as shown below:

Year	Annual average attendance	% change from previous year
2003	86	
2004	91	+5.5
2005	88	-3.4
2006	85	-3.5
2007	94	+9.6
2008	94	0
2009	102	+7.8
2010	113	+9.7
Overall change (2003-2010)		+24% (+3.4% p.a)
2003-2008		+8.5% (+1.7% p.a)
January 2009-June 2010		+16.8% (+8.4% p.a)

The only consecutive growth years have been 2009 & 2010, which may be the start of a more consistent upward trend. The chart below illustrates these figures (with the 2009-10 figures split to compare 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays with other weeks). In 2009 the average attendance on 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays was 102, the same as other weeks; however in 2010 it rose to 123, compared to 108 for others weeks.



Summary:

From questionnaires and interviews it can be seen that the corporate self-perception of Holy Trinity is of a church involved in mission and in God's plan for Barnstaple. There is a strong awareness of and appreciation that the structural reorganisation (including the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities) is part of becoming mission-shaped. However, the community life of Holy Trinity is perceived by some members as less caring as it becomes more oriented towards those who aren't yet part of the church. Within Church Outside the community that has developed around the vision supports families well; however it has not developed into a community of discipleship.

Since the launch of 4<sup>th</sup> Communities the attendance at Holy Trinity and rate of growth has increased. Congregation figures do not allow analysis of the cause of this growth, and electoral roll data doesn't show frequency of attendance or whether someone has grown in faith- conclusions relating to Lings' criteria can only be drawn from personal knowledge of the church alongside this data.

## **Chapter 5- Discussion: The view from here.**

This project investigated how one evaluates the reorganisation of a church as it becomes mission-shaped. Developing mission-shaped churches contain various elements, defined by Lings under the headings 'In', 'Up', 'Out' and 'Of', which do not equate simply to numerical growth. I have used Lings' criteria as the basis for evaluating the reorganisation of Holy Trinity as a mission-shaped church, both in terms of reflecting on the previous year and also during the first half of 2010. The question that arises is where those criteria help in evaluating the process, and where they do not.

### **The elements of mission-shaped church:**

Combined with the vision that each 4<sup>th</sup> Community hold, these provided headings and a framework to evaluate the success of the developing 4<sup>th</sup> Communities. One of the most useful things about Lings' model is the simple language- 'Out' is easier to discuss than 'apostolic' or 'missional', even though as headings they need explanation: as with the Hedgehog Concept simplicity is essential (Collins, 2001: 94-5). Using it with each of the methods in this project tested its breadth of application. At times the criteria felt like checkpoints rather than goals to aim for, especially where outcomes were either very simple (meeting and praying at Holy Trinity showed our link to the main church) or uncertain (we offered prayer and publicly advertised our presence, but don't know what conversations that may have started among those who saw us). More often, however, they provided a starting point for planning and evaluation (whether quantitative or in dialogue).

**In (developing internal community):** Several 4<sup>th</sup> Communities have started meeting to pray and study together between events, in order to develop their internal community. However interviews and questionnaires identified the perception that this area is a cause of concern for some in the church. This may be because the hope that 4<sup>th</sup> Communities would replace housegroups as a place for discipleship and support has not been fully communicated; but has been misheard as mission replacing community. Resolving this requires ongoing communication of the vision for mission, and careful use of metaphor:

images of 'birth' introduce a sense of newness and life, while overuse of terms like 'vision' can paralyse people who don't feel spiritual enough.

Within Church Outside supportive relationships are developing through the monthly events, however discipleship is not just occurring through the expected small group meetings, instead various peer groups are meeting at different times. This indicates that people are taking responsibility for their spiritual growth within community rather than in isolation. Assessment by this particular element highlights the importance of intentionally developing friendship groups at Church Outside, and values the strength of relationships within the church family. Attendance figures cannot evaluate this dimension, as attendance frequency doesn't reflect the depth and strength of relationships. It can be evaluated by people's language and commitment (not the same as attendance), and whether they enjoy spending time together. This raises a tension when there is an expectation that ongoing development will lead to community multiplication: those who've started a journey together will no longer travel as one company.

**Up (engaging with God through worship, prayer and Scripture):** Holy Trinity is a church with a charismatic song-based worship style, and it has been challenging to worship in different ways as 4<sup>th</sup> Communities develop. This has involved 4<sup>th</sup> communities moving out of their comfort zones: Trinity Neighbours have focussed more on prayer walking while Room Service provide music that caters to guests' tastes rather than their own. The questionnaire responses support this- although 60% agreed their faith had grown stronger, 33% were neutral to the statement. Interviews and the research cycles identified a tension at Church Outside between accessibility and depth of worship, one that has resulted at times in events that have been lacking in worship or overly 'preachy'. The research cycle provided an objective means to evaluate this aspect: opening up discussion about how worship can include guests while also taking mature Christians deeper into God's presence. Its worth noting that this criterion does not define how a community engages with God or specify any style of worship but constantly challenges a mission-shaped church to continue

growing towards God. Again, evaluation of this cannot be based on simple attendance but must engage with people's perceptions.

**Of (relating to the wider Church):** This element is not specifically included in several models, but it gave rise to some simple yet profound developments for Church Outside and other 4<sup>th</sup> Communities as we, along with Room Service and Trinity Neighbours now all meet and pray in Holy Trinity on 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays. It identified a potential lack of direction in our use of the Bible and provided a solution- the lectionary and calendar. Publicity material for 4<sup>th</sup> Communities includes references to Holy Trinity so that people won't mistakenly think that yet another church is starting. Both interviews and questionnaires revealed a strong sense of being 'part of the whole', and being involved in what's happening locally. Holy Trinity has also been involved nationally in a churches learning community and acted as a consultant to a church from Cornwall about reorganising for mission, reinforcing the sense that this process is about the wider Church rather than 'my church'. The challenge when using 'Of' in evaluation is to use it in positive rather than negative ways: a community that identifies itself as one among many and fosters positive relationships with other churches is developing God's Kingdom more than one which is built around developing a 'brand' or drawing disillusioned Christians from other churches.

**Out (connecting with the context for mission):** Interviewees spoke clearly about mission but recognised that results are more than the purely visible, while questionnaires showed that the congregation has become more involved in mission. This element can, to some extent, be measured by attendance- assuming that developing mission will lead to people attending events and services. Most visitors who've come to Church Outside are those who've either left churches, are in the process of leaving, or have some previous church background: those who are 'de-churched', and its difficult to distinguish whether someone is 'de-churched' or 'non-churched'. Trinity Neighbours and Reform connect with more non-churched people; but those relationships take time to bear fruit- 3years or more (Male, 2008:153-4).

The visible reality is that 4<sup>th</sup> Communities, including Church Outside, have succeeded in reaching people with God's love, and some have responded to become part of the community and Holy Trinity, but the results have been limited, and with a different group of people, than originally expected. However, recognising the 'Of' element, visitors to Holy Trinity who take the idea of becoming mission-shaped to different churches should be valued as much as those who join our congregation. Its in evaluating this non-visible success and in the complex of balancing criteria that Lings model is most useful here: if an event connects with people but guests do not flock into the main congregation, it is possible to evaluate it by the qualitative criteria of engagement and visibility, and by how it developed the faith of those already within the church, allowing space for longer term mission work rather than feeling pressured for numerical results.

#### Do numbers count?:

Based on attendance figures, the reorganisation of Holy Trinity has been successful- during 2009 the congregation grew by 7.8% and by 9.8% in 2010 to June. Prior to that point the rate of growth was in line with regional population growth (Devon County Council, 2007: online), so in relative terms Holy Trinity was not increasing in size. However, the causes of the increasing congregations at Holy Trinity over those 18months cannot be determined from attendance figures, just as the reasons for the peaks and dips during the previous 7years are also impossible to explain. It may be entirely due to the developing 4<sup>th</sup> Communities drawing people into closer relationship with God (or at least being able to count them), but attendance at other services has also risen during the same time. From observation I know that this has largely been caused by people moving to Holy Trinity from other churches and increasing 'random' visitors.

Its impossible to say for certain what other things may also have caused to the growth, such as the repairs to the tower and internal reordering, or even serving filter coffee after services. Conversely, it might equally be because some who've not joined a 4<sup>th</sup> Community are choosing the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday to be elsewhere each month, but are present more consistently at other times; their absence

being masked by the number of people from outside the church attending 4<sup>th</sup> Communities.

At a Diocesan level, the strategy paper 'Moving on in Growth' (Exeter Diocese, 2009) set a growth target of 25% increased attendance over 5 years, while at the same time stating that growth is only partially about numbers. The other aspects of growth- in faith and loving service cannot be evaluated numerically and their link to numerical growth in specific church congregations is unfounded. Lings' criteria would prove useful in evaluating development and growth before and in place of looking for increased attendance.

#### The Process of Change:

The structural changes that have taken place at Holy Trinity fit within Morgan's model of organisations as culture: shared values and beliefs generate understandings about practice, the place of leadership and corporate identity that create a social reality (Morgan, 2006: 134) and they can be summarised under these headings:

Changes in practice: As part of developing 4<sup>th</sup> Communities the pattern of services on other Sundays has altered, and within those services there are frequently references to the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities both in testimony and invitation. Having been a church that supports mission, Holy Trinity has become a church that is in mission, and this changing balance has unsettled some while energising others. The 4<sup>th</sup> Communities are now central to the structure of Holy Trinity, and are becoming part of what it means to belong to the church. For this new insight to develop into a continued process of discerning God's voice and moving into mission will require discipline of thought and action to transfer innovative enthusiasm into long-term commitment (Collins, 2001: 121-2). While it may have been expected that these changes would lead to a decline in the place of worship, interviewees did not indicate this to be the case.

Changes in leadership: The role of the incumbent at Holy Trinity has become that of a prophetic enabler: rather than saying 'we ought' or 'I shall', the language has become 'you can'. In concrete terms he reviews and holds the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities accountable for themselves, and in turn is accountable for them to

the wider church. There has also been a broadening of leadership as 4<sup>th</sup> Communities developed- the increasing number of coordinators includes some who have previously had no leadership role within church but have either self-selected or been identified as potential leaders. Collins notes the importance of identifying those who have leadership potential and are flexible in organisations that turned from mediocrity to greatness, rather than relying on leaders with the required competencies (Collins, 2001: 42). A secondary role of experienced leaders has been to equip those entering into leadership with practical skills and encourage them in spiritual formation.

Changes in self-perception: This has been one of the deepest but most subtle areas of change. The interview comment 'nothing has changed, but everything has changed' reflects that while many parts of the corporate life of Holy Trinity have undergone only slight adaptations during this period (3/4 of main services remain largely unchanged, PCC and other structures are unchanged), there has been a sea change in the church's self-perception- mission has become a key reference point in all areas. The 4<sup>th</sup> Communities and all that lies behind them have given people at Holy Trinity a sense of self-confidence about their faith: God is calling them to something, they have responded, and God is blessing their labours.

#### Summary:

Overall, the process of developing 4<sup>th</sup> Communities and the increasing centrality of mission at Holy Trinity have made us assess things differently: everything, whatever else it is or does, should fit within this mission-shaped pattern. The elements of mission-shaped church, as expressed by 'In, Up, Of & Out' are useful for evaluating the ongoing development of the church with greater confidence and in much greater depth than attendance or membership figures allow.

## **Chapter 6- Conclusion: The road ahead.**

The conclusions I have drawn surround the usefulness of Lings' model in this project and its potential for future use.

1) For a process of reorganisation in an organisation such as a church to be sustainable it must be communicable and easily put into practice. There are various theological models for this process, but Collins' concepts for transforming organisations provide good practical foundations for transferring theory into action.

2) Using Lings' model has enabled deep reflection both on past events at Holy Trinity and the development of Church Outside. He uses two sets of headings interchangeably but the language of 'In, Up, Of & Out' is more accessible to new Christians than talk of the '4 marks of the Church'. Just as each element can lead to problems if developed to the exclusion of others, so when held in balance they each have their own strengths:

IN- evaluating the development of internal community not only encourages the church to consider how discipleship and supportive relationships can be encouraged, but also identified and highlighted concerns over lost pastoral relationships within the church as structures change.

UP- assessing a church or communities activities by this criteria prevents a lapse into 'church outings' and helps to maintain the sense that the mission activity is still 'church'. It also promotes wider thinking about how we worship and exploration of creative responses to God.

OF- consideration of this element promotes unity and generosity across churches, and sharing of resources for training. Being accountable locally and denominationally reduces the concerns of other churches that a mission-shaped church is trying to draw Christians from other churches. This element is not contained within some other models as a specific criteria, however if a church does not consciously evaluate its part within God's Kingdom in a specific place it can perceive itself as fully functioning while in fact operating contrary to God's work in other churches. For the simple fact that Lings gives this element equal

priority I find his model to be more useful than others in a context where expressing unity among Christians is so important.

OUT- this is used in place of numerical evaluation, but discussion of 'effective engagement' goes beyond simply increasing numbers, allowing greater insight into long term mission and identifying positive outcomes long before the seeds planted have led to lives transformed by the Gospel. This element is the most obvious aspect of becoming mission-shaped, but the shape of Lings' model (and others, in this respect) means that it does not exclude other parts of church life.

3) Morgan's insights about the importance of using multiple metaphors to generate fresh insights help to avoid the distortions caused by viewing things from one perspective. Churches that are committed to one single set of images may find themselves limited and controlled by the metaphors that they themselves create.

4) Lings' model has proven helpful in developing Church Outside events and also in evaluating the restructuring across Holy Trinity. The research cycle could be usefully applied to the other 4<sup>th</sup> Communities to help formalise the action-reflection processes that are already taking place and to reflect on the shape and practice at the Hub. New developments at Holy Trinity including a weekly toddler group and a community climbing wall would benefit from using these processes as they start to grow intentionally mission-shaped communities.

5) If using this model to reflect on similar processes in the future, I would endeavour to include all the aspects of a community's corporate life within the reflection and research cycle. One area that has not been fully explored within this project is the development of small groups for study and discipleship within 4<sup>th</sup> Communities (how do we create a culture that fosters commitment while encouraging busy people to engage with their context?), and the process of community replication (at what point and how does a single community become 2 separate communities?).

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Appendix 1: Data collection forms- interview outline, questionnaire and review group forms.

Interview Outline and questions.

In the interview process, interviewees signed a consent form including assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. The interview was conducted as a 1 hour structured conversation during which notes were taken. These notes were typed up and given to the interviewee for their approval prior to being filed. During the interview opportunity was given for any part of the notes to be removed from the record.

The following areas were discussed:

- 1 Describe your current connection to Holy Trinity Church,
- 2 What is your current perception of Holy Trinity Church?
- 3 What is your current connection to a 4<sup>th</sup> Community?
- 4 What is your current perception of the 4<sup>th</sup> Communities?
- 5 What changes are you aware of in the church within the last 3 years?
- 6 Do you feel that there are reasons for those changes- and if so, please describe those reasons?
- 7 Can you try to compare the present church to the church 3 years ago- or shorter if you joined within that time.

Further notes and comments were noted if applicable.



Review Group information sheet.

The review group met monthly, shortly after each Church Outside event, to discuss and reflect on the event, and to make broad suggestions for future events. The review group consisted of 4 members of the Church Outside community, one external member of the church (a coordinator of one of the other 4<sup>th</sup> Communities), and myself.

Review Group meeting number:

Number present:

Date:

Event Discussed:

Any amendments to previous notes:

	In <input type="checkbox"/> (engagement with existing members of the church- socially and giving support)	Up <input type="checkbox"/> (engagement with God through worship and prayer)	Out <input type="checkbox"/> (engagement with the world and people outside of the church's previous members)	Of <input type="checkbox"/> (engagement with the wider Church- being part of the Body of Christ)
Strengths- what was good in what we did				
Weakness/ Opportunities/ Threats- what could have been better in what we did/ what might arise that we need to be concerned about				

Things of interest:

General Conclusions for next month:

Appendix 2: Timeline.

Italics= preparation/ training

Bold= structural change

Nov 2006	Previous incumbent (Rev'd Mike Jones) leaves.
August 2007	Current incumbent (Rev'd Simon May) arrives.
July 2008	<i>Weekend of teaching about mission at Church Camp</i>
September 2008	Curate (Rev'd Andy Dodwell) arrives.
October 2008	<i>Period of discernment- 2 Sunday services given over to prayer and listening to God's voice. Church Outside and Room service start.</i>
January 2009	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Communities launched. All-ages Holy Communion service started on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month.</b> At this point there are 7 Housegroups in Holy Trinity.
March-Oct 2009	Building closed for repairs and internal re-ordering- Sunday services take place in church hall.
June 2009	<i>Holy Trinity join learning community of churches in transition at St Andrew's, Chorleywood.</i>
June-Aug 2009	<i>Review of 4<sup>th</sup> Communities- Wetherspoons group stops,</i> <b>communities released from always meeting on Sunday mornings.</b>
July 2009	<i>Weekend of teaching about mission-shaped churches at Church Camp</i>
January 2010	<b>Sabbatical for Housegroups until Easter (4<sup>th</sup> communities encouraged to meet monthly socially, weekly 'spiritual fitness' sessions at church). 4<sup>th</sup> Community leaders commissioned by church.</b>
March 2010	Interface (church drop-in) team discuss meeting for small group Bible study and reforming around mission.
April 2010	Room Service, Trinity Neighbours, Powerhouse and Church Outside plus two former Housegroups and a mum's group start meeting for small group Bible study.
Jan-June 2010	Study period for this research project.