

## DISCOVERY CONVERSATION #2 PREPARATORY REFLECTION

### OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES (looking outwards)

All ministries are contextual. God has placed us within particular neighbourhoods and communities to be a reflection and model of Christ's love and teaching. When planning, it is important to consider our context - where we are located and who are our neighbours. Now, thanks to the pandemic and the adoption of digital ministries our context is no longer as clearly defined by geography as it once was. So, the definition of context is expanded. Who, near or far, is God calling us to reach and to serve?

In this second conversation the focus will be on looking outwards and identifying the opportunities and challenges you see in your mission field.

**Preparing for the discussion: Some questions for reflection and prayer before the session**

#### **Biblical reflection ACTS 1. 6-11**

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

- What word or phrase stands out to you or catches your attention?
- What is being said about the Church?
- What is God saying to us our congregation through this passage today?

#### **REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

How would you describe the context for St Helen's ministry; what do you see as our mission field?

In Acts we heard Jesus calling his disciples to be his witnesses in ever-widening circles of geography and diversity – in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria. Who do you feel are the closest and easiest for St Helen's to reach and serve? Who do you think are more challenging to reach and why?

Do you have examples or stories to share of our church (or another church you were part of)- through its leadership, programs, congregational members, or presence in our neighbourhood or community - making good connections with people in our context. What made these interactions and ministries so effective?

What have you noticed or learned from the connections made during the pandemic that the parish needs to keep or develop? Is there something that we could be doing to take up and develop the opportunities and mitigate the challenges presented by our context?