

GLEN WAVERLEY UNITING CHURCH

RE-VISION for 2022

Discussion document for Church Council

GWUC Re-visioning proposal

In 2021 a sub-group of the Church Council, consisting of Alane Hearnshaw and David Fraser, was tasked with drafting a 2022 re-visioning proposal for the Glen Waverley Uniting Church (GWUC).

The hope is that the Church Council and the church community will not only endorse the suggested proposal but, after discussion and refinement, will take ownership of it.

The sub-group is proposing that four projects be endorsed by the Church Council

There is the need for members of our church community to form leadership teams to drive the different projects forward.

To this end the nominated projects already had core groups of people whom it was hoped would be inspired and excited by the re-visioning of the specific project areas.

Context

The church community was emerging from two years (2020-21) of multiple lockdowns associated with controlling the COVID-19 virus. This meant that during this time the Glen Waverley Uniting Church community was only able to meet online. Worship services were for the most part live streamed each Sunday over the Internet. Maintaining the church as community proved difficult and this lack of face-to-face contact took its toll on many people, especially the ministry team.

For 2022, the ministry team and Church Council decided that the church community needed to experience a rebirth of mind and spirit to bring back that sense of being the community of Christ's followers.

It was decided by Church Council that a fresh look at the Glen Waverley Uniting Church vision was needed with the hope of focusing on some exciting initiatives designed to reinvigorate and refresh our community going forward.

History and reasoning behind this approach to re-visioning

The re-visioning sub-group went into the archives as far back as 1977 in an attempt to build on what has been done in the past in planning and nurturing the Glen Waverley Uniting Church to what it is today. The sub-group came to the conclusion that the existing visions for the Uniting Church (UC) in Australia and the UC in Glen Waverley were still applicable in today's world.

The Basis of Union (1977)

The Uniting Church 'stands in relation to contemporary societies in ways which will help it to understand its own nature and mission' (Basis of Union). This is an ever new and renewing call to embody Christ's mission in the changing and unique contexts in which the Spirit of Christ leads us.

Glen Waverley Uniting Church Vision Statement (2014)

GWUC is a faithful, Christ-centered community that meets God and shares unconditional love.

Mission

To have a diverse ministry that encourages and empowers individuals, families, youth and children to explore their faith and purpose in a community environment of unconditional love.

4/12/2021

Re-Visioning for today's world

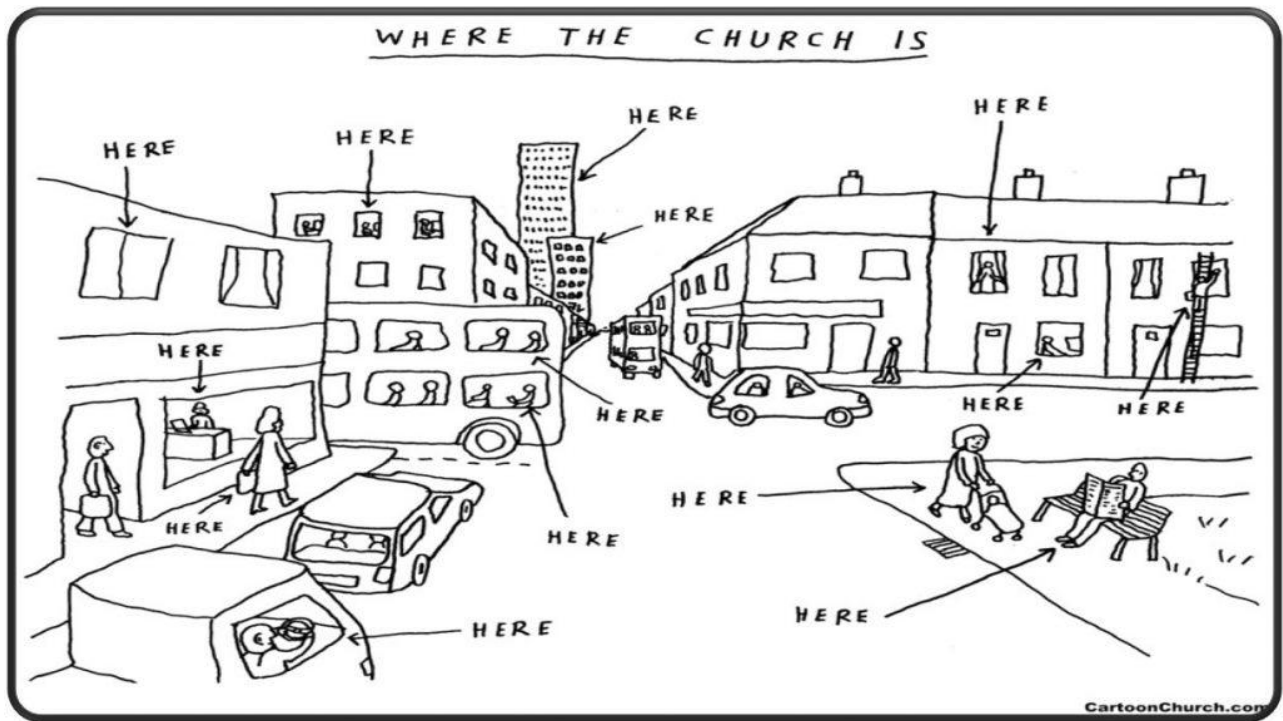
The re-visioning sub-group discerned that what was needed were projects that were outward looking and that embraced the local community.

At a special Church Council meeting in 2019, the Reverend Neil Peters expressed that “*The Uniting Church at its core is a missional Church. The church is not just in existence for its members. The church should always have an inward focus and an outward focus.*”

Alongside of that, there was a growing desire for our congregation to more accurately represent the changing make-up of our community.”

The sub-group decided that for our Glen Waverley Uniting Church re-visioning projects we should adopt the Brad Banducci idea that we “*focus on the world we live in, not the world we’ve come from.*”

The cartoon below sums up where we believe our efforts should be directed.



The figure below attempts to reflect how, in our Australian society, there are certain norms that we mostly take for granted. Our life journey is attuned to these norms.

Our spirituality and the church as a communal home for people with a common spiritual belief system, seem to be increasingly sidelined.

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<p>SOCIETAL</p> <p>The norms in western society, developed over time, which have associated rules, customs, expectations and desires.</p>	<p>Our world / our community (Context)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Individuals, families, youth, children (Focus)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Life journey/stage (Situation)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Needs and wants (Foundation)</p>	<p>VISION</p> <p>All members of society will have common positive development experiences.</p>	<p>INDICATORS</p> <p>Common:</p> <p>Prosperity Health Happiness Opportunities Respect Power Love Concerns</p>
<p>SPIRITUAL</p> <p>The search for meaning & inner peace by believing there is ultimately a greater power in control of our world.</p>	<p>God, Jesus, Holy Spirit (Leadership)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Bible (Guidance source)</p>	<p>VISION</p> <p>Deep understanding of God's presence and the underpinning reasoning.</p>	<p>INDICATORS</p> <p>Bible knowledge Prayer commitment Actions Acts of compassion Living out faith</p>
<p>COMMUNAL</p> <p>The church as a communal home for people with a common spiritual belief system</p>	<p>The church (Support structure)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Vision (Purpose)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Strategy (Implementation)</p>	<p>VISION</p> <p>Reaching out to our communities through our transformed lives and radical generosity.</p>	<p>INDICATORS</p> <p>Radical shift in focus to community action & missional projects</p>

While acknowledging the focus needs to be on the world we live in, the sub-group has not attempted to create a new vision statement for our church. If we did then perhaps the following is how it would be expressed:

Glen Waverley Uniting Church is an inclusive assembly of Christ's followers passionate about worshipping God, growing in faith, sharing our lives & faith with others, reaching people who don't have a relationship with God, and reaching out to our communities through our transformed lives & radical generosity.

(Adapted from the Willow Creek Community Church vision statement)

2022 PROJECTs that REFLECT our VISION for the FUTURE

The sub-group decided that what was needed were projects specifically designed to build on the intent of the existing GWUC vision.

Project areas already under development were explored and four were selected, each with its own vision statement.

Two critically important components for each project were **milestones** designed to provide targeted deadlines and **indicators** designed to measure the success.

The Rev. Denise Liersch, Moderator; Uniting Church of Australia, on the 8th October 2021 gave us a guide as to how we should move forward with the projects. She said, *“When we discern and make decisions as people of faith, we do it communally. We listen and attend to the wisdom of others gathered in community.”*

It was determined that the Port Phillip East Presbytery should be made aware of our re-visioning so that they can provide input based on their knowledge of what is available in the way of support.

It was also determined that funding opportunities should be investigated.

What follows is an outline for each of the four proposed projects:

Project 1: **Welfare**

Project 2: **Program of multicultural and intergenerational events**

Project 3: **Integrated social media and streaming presence**

Project 4: **Outreach to the Glen Waverley Community**

Project 1: **Welfare**

FOUNDATION

The members of the Finance Committee are working on a sustainable way to fund the ongoing cost of the GWUC Welfare Coordinator. Funding is being sought beyond the congregation.

Our welfare program is a key component of the GWUC organic vision.

The leadership and guidance of the Coordinator is needed in relation to all elements of our welfare program

There is an ongoing need to fund the Welfare Coordinator who is attentive to the hopes, concerns, and needs of individuals in the community. We need to determine how the congregation might best serve the Coordinator.

VISION

We wish to follow the Christian principle of being inclusive in our love and care of others, especially the vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged.

2022 - Fund the Coordinator for 5 hours a week and maintain the work of the Welfare Committee.

2023 - Grow the welfare work and increase the time fraction of the Coordinator to become a one day a week position.

RATIONALE

The Welfare Committee (established in 2003) needs the ongoing commitment of a professionally qualified Welfare Coordinator working within the framework of the Glen Waverley Uniting Church. There is a need for the Welfare Coordinator who is coordinating the short term and long term support provided to members of the church community, the local community and those seeking to become more integrated within the Australian community.

MILESTONE 1 (2022)

- The welfare coordinator continues to liaise regularly with members of the GWUC Welfare Committee who meet informally and formally as required:
- The welfare coordinator continues to facilitate a team approach, utilising the expertise of the Welfare Committee, Ministry Team, specific congregation members etc, within the bounds of confidentiality;
- [The Welfare Coordinator or Welfare Committee member to actively participate in the Monash Welfare Network and Monash Homelessness Network;](#)
- The welfare coordinator to access community-based resources, referring clients to alternate agencies when appropriate;

MILESTONE 2 (2023)

- The Welfare Coordinator to actively explore opportunities for improvement, seek learning opportunities for self and encourage the exchange of skills and knowledge within the Welfare Team;
- The Welfare Coordinator to identify and prioritise the common welfare issues within the local community such as gambling, substance abuse, poverty, unemployment, homelessness, mental health, physical health, disability, child and family welfare, family violence, trauma, offending behaviour.
- The Welfare Coordinator in conjunction with the Welfare Committee develop a project in response to an identified need in the community.

MILESTONE 3 (2023-24)

- The Welfare Coordinator and the Welfare Committee implement the project and then review effectiveness.
- The Welfare Coordinator and Committee to enhance GWUC's positive welfare provider image within the local community

SUCCESS INDICATORS

Associated with the Welfare Coordinator and the Welfare Committee:

Milestone 1 (2022)

- Establishment of a framework for all involvements. (What's working what might change?)
- Identification of the support group drawn from the GWUC community. (Open to enlarging team!)
- Review the established systematic record keeping.
- Creation of a resources file, adapting as our community changes.
- Report on the level of active participation in the Monash Welfare Networks.

Milestone 2 (2022-2023)

- Report on clearly identifiable improvements.

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- Report on the learning opportunities accessed for the Coordinator and Welfare Committee.
- Report welfare issues identified and prioritised by the Coordinator and Welfare Committee.
- Report on a possible project in response to an identified and prioritized issue.

Milestone 3 (2023)

- Report on how GWUC's "welfare provider" image and service within the local community has grown and been enhanced.
- Report on the implementation of the identified project.

Project 2: Program of Multicultural and Intergenerational Events

FOUNDATION

- GWUC needs the injection of new blood, in particular families and young people, to ensure her long term viability.
- Currently over 50% of the population of Glen Waverley were born overseas.

VISION

- The Glen Waverley Uniting Church to become known in the local community as the place where exciting and creative and collaborative events take place for the purpose of sharing and growing our faith in God.
- The development of a meaningful, effective and safe multicultural and intergenerational program of events to assist with the integration into GWUC of individuals and responding to the mental health needs of individuals.

PROPOSAL

- Set up an events space. Easy access for the public from outside the complex is available from Room 1 which is the ideal location for this. It is a small area, easy to manage and with windows providing an interface to the outside world.
- The program of events to be associated with booking Room 1 for time slots not booked by other groups.
- The program of events is to be associated with promotional materials (eg. Real-estate board, Monash event portal, poster, flyer, brochure, Kingsway, bulletin, GWUC website, letterbox drop) which highlight the times and content of specific events.
- The events space to be physically present only when the programmed event is taking place and only in the minds of those engaged in the program of activities.
- The events may be associated with activities designed as input to worship services such as for Easter and Christmas.
- The events space (Room 1) may be associated with:
 - Creations by talented people involved in art, dance, craft, music, painting, sculpture, literature, poetry, puppetry, storytelling, performing and cinema.
 - Exhibition material pinned to moveable partitions or on tables (artworks, photographs, craft, and poetry).
 - Tutorials associated with learning.
 - Virtual presentations using computer generated images and videos.
 - Experimental and innovative ideas displayed on a large screen.

RATIONALE

(Adapted from Peter Cheung's Proposed Intercultural Project)

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- Emerging studies have shown not only clinical treatments, but music, art, craft, exercise, pets, especially practised in a group setting can be therapeutic.
- The project is based on the premise that being more multicultural and intergenerational is to be more inclusive.
- The project will aid in promoting the integration of participants into Australian society for mutual benefit.

“An emphasis on our role as neighbour as part of our identity ... [reminds] us of our shared cultural and geographical spaces and the fact that proximity brings responsibility. Even apart from Jesus’ call to love our neighbour, we know that our common flourishing depends on one another.” Makoto Fujimura

APPROACH

Preparation of a program of events by and for members of the church community, and the local community, on topics selected from the following:

- art / craft
- dance/ mime
- music / song
- poetry/ story telling
- literature / book publishing
- drama/ acting
- environment/ nature
- meditation/ tai chi
- mental health/ physical exercise
- nutrition/ diet
- chess/ mahjong
- language/ linguistics
- pets/ gardening
- food/ cooking
- culture/ traditions
- other?

Each event will be designed and led by talented individuals from the church community who have a passion for specific aspects of life.

MILESTONE 1 (Coordinator’s role)

- Assemble a multicultural and intergenerational team to embark on developing a program of events.
- Create a proposed program of events.
- Determine the overall budget requirements and specific funding requirements for each individual event..
- Define objectives for each event.
- Identify the success indicators for each event.
- Identify teams of people tasked with designing and implementing each individual event.
- Flag how the promotion of the program will be arranged for both the church and local communities.

MILESTONE 2 (Event leader and team)

- Event subgroup to meet and define event parameters
- Required resources (human, material, finance and time) to be identified and procured
- Publicity for each event to be organised
- Identify success indicators
- Create a participants feedback sheet.

MILESTONE 3 (Event leader and team)

- Run the event
- Ascertain if goals for event have been achieved.
- Write a report on the statistics (no. of participants, etc.) and the positives or otherwise.

SUCCESS INDICATORS (Coordinator in conjunction with the event leaders)

- Compile the key performance indicators and the pros and cons of each event presented as a written report.
- Determination of the success of each event based on participant feedback.
- Determination of the success of each event based on the original objectives and team member feedback.
- Determination of the overall success of the program of events based on the feedback from participants and team members.

Project 3: Integrated Social Media and Streaming Presence

FOUNDATION

- 'Social media' means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation email, blogs, wikis, forums / online communities and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, SnapChat, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.
- The world of communications and media technologies is ever evolving.
- Social media is now a massive part of our society, with over 483 million daily users of Facebook.
- Social media is an easy and effective way for ministers and churches to engage with their congregations and beyond.
- Posting information about upcoming events adds vibrancy to a church community.
- The Vic/Tas Synod has created a social media usage guidelines webpage. <https://victas.uca.org.au/news-events/social-media/>

VISION

To make available to the church community a professionally designed and integrated social media portal and streaming presence.

RATIONALE

For a church community social media can be used to engage people through healthy faith based discussion, event promotion and church updates.

- People both within our congregation and beyond can be expected to follow the Glen Waverley Uniting Church on social media.
- Social media is one of the main ways of accessing information by Families and young people.
- Social media can be used by people who might otherwise be isolated; for example stay at home mothers with young children.
- Social media can be used to support existing groups within the Congregation.
- Social media can be used as a faith development tool, for example online groups may be established in association with face-to-face study groups held from time to time (e.g. Advent studies, Lenten studies).
- Social media offers an additional channel for the awareness of events such as the Easter and Advent programmes, as well as fundraising events like the book sale and fete.
- Social media provides an outlet for virtual sharing of projects such as the water harvesting, solar power installation, Choir of Hope and the welfare initiative.
- The office manager can take over the role of posting factual information about events in the life of GWUC.

MILESTONE 1 (Communications Committee)

- Develop a priority list of social media capability/functions for GWUC.
- Contract a developer and provide input to the design specifications.
- Identify people to be 'champions' for the Glen Waverley Uniting Church social media presence.
- Review and revise the GWUC social media policy to align with the Synods social media policy.

MILESTONE 2

- Beta version of the portal created, tested, evaluated and revised.
- GWUC information downloaded to the social media portal.

MILESTONE 3

- Final version adopted and implemented.
- Record the pros and cons over a three month period of operation.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- Evaluation of the use and engagement statistics
 - Tweak social media portal based on findings from the evaluation
-

Additional NOTES from selected Internet sites

Social Media through the Lens of the Church

“**Social media** gives a **church** more opportunity to reach its members, the people in their community and those searching for more to life. It’s a way to engage directly with these people in a manner that they’re comfortable with, where they are and in their own time.” [how-to-use-social-media-for-churches](#)

Why?

Churches are not called to sit inside and keep riches for themselves – no, they are called to go and make disciples of all men and women. Therefore, it’s time to use social media to spread the gospel.

Sixteen Powerful Social Media Strategies for Churches

Social media platforms have changed the way that society interacts with and spreads information, and without it, a church will be pretty limited in their own success as communicators. See <https://www.moonclerk.com/social-media-strategies-for-churches/>

A Definitive Guide to Social Media in the Church

Social media for churches isn’t about cool. It’s not about technology. It’s not about promoting your events. It’s about reaching people. See https://www.qb.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/TheDefinitiveGuide_to-social-media-in-the-church-1.pdf

Social media policy

Misusing social media, even if unintended, can damage your ministry’s reputation and even put your church at risk of litigation. In order to enjoy the benefits of social media while also protecting against possible misuse, it’s wise to develop a [social media policy](#) for your church or ministry. See <https://www.agfinancial.org/resources/article/churches-and-social-media.-the-benefits-and-risks>.

Things to Avoid

There are a handful of things you can do (or not do) that can have a bigger and more lasting impact on your effectiveness. See <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/seven-deadly-sins-of-church-social-media>

Ten Powerful Church Statistics on Social Media Use

As a church leader, you need buy-in not only from your leadership team but also from your congregation as a whole to enact church-wide change.

Ten (10) statistics that illustrate just how crucial social media is to church growth, how badly churches currently utilize it, and key takeaways to help you build (or fix) your social media strategy. See <https://blog.capterra.com/church-statistics-social-media/>

Project 4: Outreach to the Glen Waverley Community

FOUNDATION

The Presbytery inspired GWUC Missional Pilot Project was initiated during the COVID-19 periods of lockdown and a team assembled.

Our local community:

- One third of our local community has been here less than 15 years.
- New arrivals are significantly from East and South Asia
- The local community is 10% below the national average of Christian fraction.
- New arrivals are often education focused on both secondary and tertiary studies.
- How do we get to know the new-comers in our area? How do we welcome them? Very multi-faith.

VISION

The Mission Pilot group is exploring the possibility of holding an event day at GWUC, outside in the grounds. The aim is to grow GWUC connections with the local community and to help people ease back into social interaction.

RATIONALE

One of the Mission Pilot group members discovered the Australia wide Neighbour Day. The aim of Neighbour Day is to build strong communities and friendly streets. The purpose of the campaign is to raise national awareness of the importance of social connection and neighbourly actions throughout the year. It encourages people to make meaningful connections that last beyond the day itself. This Missional Pilot Project can contribute to the building of community

APPROACH

The Mission Pilot Team wishes to explore the possibility for the organisation of a Neighbour Day type event to be held on the lawns and in the car park of the GWUC premises at the Kingsway. While the group's over-arching intention is to focus on reaching out to new arrivals to our area from the Chinese Community, they see a general outreach event as an opportunity to explore making links with our local community. The GWUC Intercultural Task Group has been consulted. At this stage they see the activity taking place late afternoon or early evening. It is intended to be family friendly with multiple activities such as: Tai Chi group. Moving to Music. Community Mural. Information Table. Children's craft activity. These presented by church groups and perhaps local community groups. They would be exploring the use of a Real Estate Board to advertise the event, and of fliers for a letterbox drop.

MILESTONE 1

Define project, **KPIs** and create project team.
Formulate the project components

MILESTONE 2

Plan the execution and implementation of the projects

MILESTONE 3

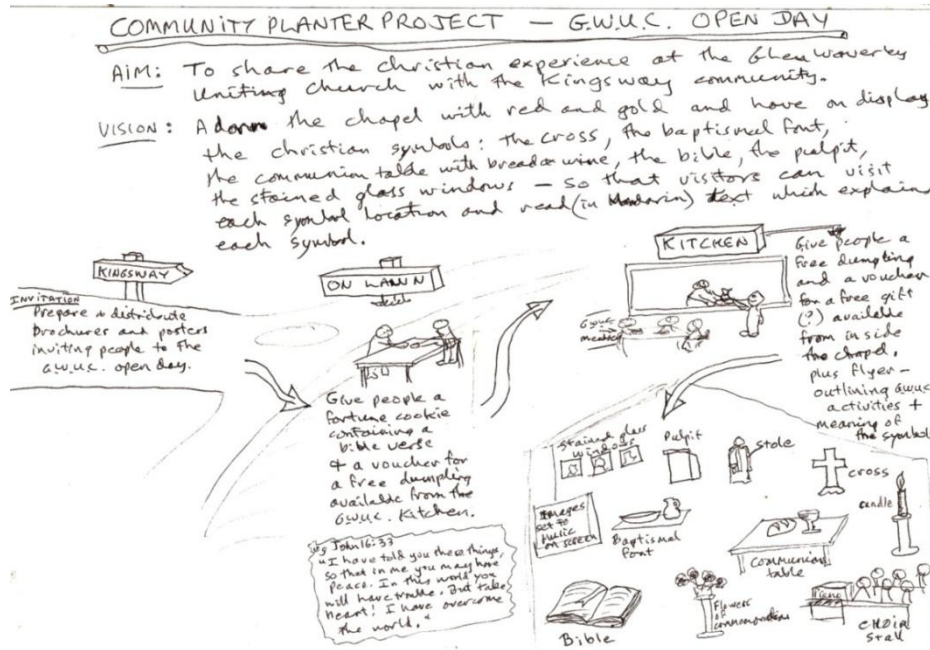
Execute and implement

SUCCESS INDICATORS

Identify the positive outcomes and assess success based on **KPIs**.

NOTES

- This project is to be further developed by the Missional Pilot Project team.
- Other ideas have been canvassed around having readings and other worship service parts in other languages etc
- Choir with hymns in other languages, as the music is cross cultural.
- Different tunes for different music and cultures are in the hymn book.
- Rough sketches of ideas which were penned during the time of the Community Planter, which may be relevant in this context.



OTHER IDEAS

SET UP A MANDARIN RADIO BROADCAST FROM # ABOUT CHURCH ACTIVITIES, LOCAL NEWS + MUSIC

Concert - Chinese orchestra + dragon dance

Advertise: Ping-pong + Badminton activity

White night light show projected onto church building, showing Christian themes

Majiang
- instal a majiang table + stools on lawn outside church

Exhibition of Chinese Christian art and literature

Run a workshop on
- calligraphy
- paper cutting
- shadow puppetry

Chinese kite and lantern making
- with display of lanterns strung between trees

Tai Chi each Saturday on the lawn outside church building

Display word for the week outside church
Mandarin | English