

As the PCC of St Nicholas Church, we recognise that this is a time of upheaval and change and that the church may need to change its shape in response. Over the past month we have spent some time considering who we are being called to be; conversations have begun around an idea we describe as 'Inside-Out Church.'

Inside-Out Church is outward-looking, taking seriously the injunction of Christ to 'be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' (Acts 1:8)

Inside-Out Church expresses itself in four main ways, through **community, prayer, peace** and **creation**. The church looks out through **community**, rather than in to itself, understanding its meetings (Wednesday, Sunday etc.) not as services themselves, but as refuelling points to prepare us for the works of service outside our building. Through its acts of **prayer** and worship, Inside-Out Church tells its story of God's redemption for all people, always asking itself how these acts relate to those who are not in attendance. Inside-Out Church looks to be a **peace**-making church, not just a peace-loving one, actively searching out broken relationships to mend and inviting the involvement of the excluded. Inside-Out Church recognises that the natural is as much a sacred space as a church building, and thus that it has the same duty of care to plants and animal life as it does to the pews and light-fittings. Seeing all **creation** as sacred, Inside-Out Church asks whether its actions in the community, its acts of prayer and worship and its pursuit of peace may be taken outdoors on occasion rather than hidden inside.

'If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change.'

(Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, The Leopard)

As a PCC, we are aware that the whole country has yet to settle into a new routine and that the old patterns are still impossible. As such, as far as our new vision affects our pattern of worship, we realise that there is much that remains fluid. As our vision grows, the future will become easier to discern, but it is important to give time to some of the new ideas to see whether they will flourish. We will have further discussions regarding this vision in the Spring, but in the meantime we will try new things, aware that they do not constitute a concrete new pattern and that they may still be changed or set aside.

Diagram 1 (by Joel Denno)

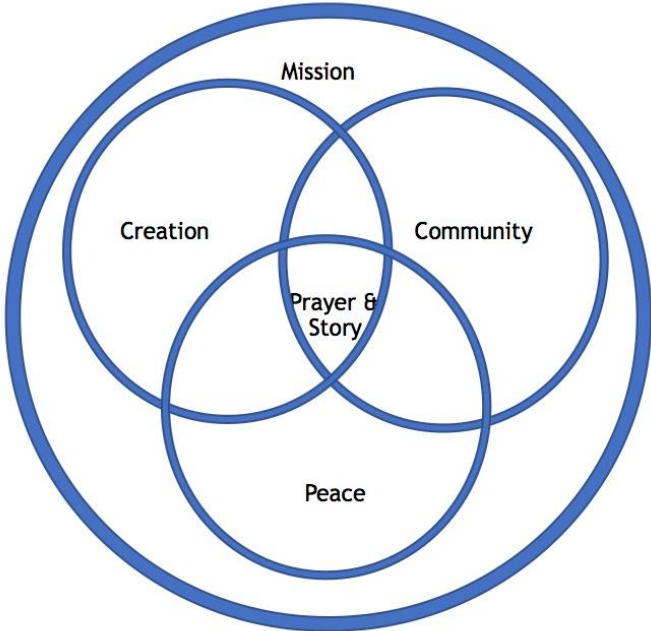
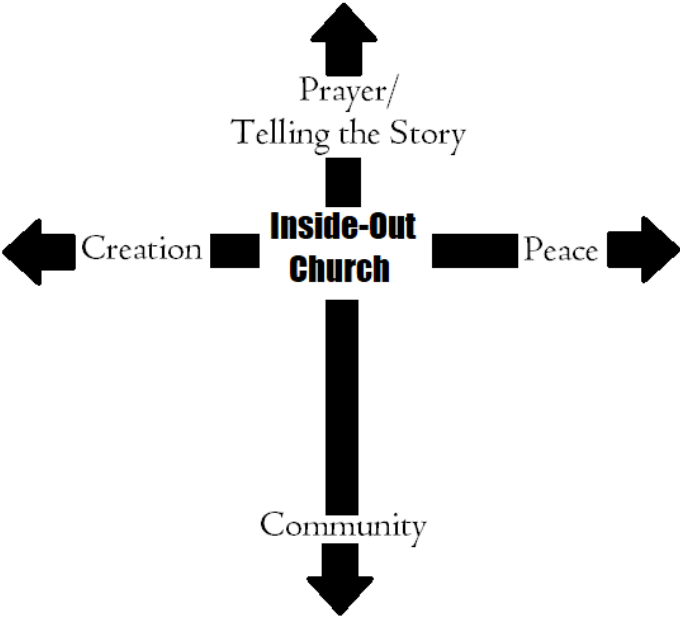


Diagram 2 (by Andy Gosler)