

# THRIVE

## RENEWING THE CHURCH'S MISSION TO GROW LIFELONG DISCIPLES

*Thriving faith! That is our vision for the children, young people and families of Aotearoa, New Zealand. We know that many churches are concerned about the faith of the next generation, and long to see their community thrive.*

*Scripture Union New Zealand (SUNZ) is offering to journey with your church over a year to address this challenge. Our desire is to see healthy churches, where people of all ages thrive in their faith!*

### What does THRIVE involve?

#### Step 1: Consultation

A SUNZ Consultant will meet with you to talk through your church situation and what you need. This consultation will help you to think through how best to approach the year and what steps you might want to take.

#### Step 2: Facilitation

This facilitation ideally is with your whole church. Some churches, however, first choose to run this with their church leadership, or a smaller group of people. This facilitation explores eight key strategies that support lifelong discipleship, and is designed to kick start a conversation among the members of your church. It will inspire lots of questions and ideas, as well as helping you to shape a plan for what your church would like to focus on in the year ahead. This is a 2 ½ hour facilitation, which could be run on an evening or a Sunday afternoon.

#### Step 3: Develop a plan

Following on from the facilitation, we recommend that each church shape their own process and plan. This could include:

##### **Create a working group:**

Create a small working group to progress the ideas and suggestions from the facilitation. This group could consist of church leadership, or key people who are passionate about faith formation with children and young people. They may reflect the generations or groups within your church. The purposes of this group are to:

- Gather together and summarise the conversations from the whole church THRIVE consultation.
- Determine common threads and themes that emerged.
- Discern which faith formation strategies would be a priority for your church to focus on.
- Begin to form a strategy and plan to make this happen.
- Be champions for this change.
- Ensure that the rest of the church is communicated and consulted with.

### **Create a plan:**

This may involve one or all of these. The amount of investment of time and resources is decided by your church, depending on your capacity, time frame and area of focus:

- **Celebrating what is working well:** Develop ways to celebrate and tell the stories of where faith is flourishing in your church community. This can be powerful and inspiring.
- **Strengthening what already exists:** Assess the ministries of the church against the THRIVE strategies and see what small tweaks or changes you could make. How can you add some of what you have learned into existing ministries and programmes? Some examples of this may be: involving children and young people in a community project you already have running, inviting older members of your congregation who are already praying for your youth to sign up to be a prayer partner for one young person in particular for the year.
- **Creating something new:** start a new project! Focus on one or two of the key THRIVE strategies and develop something new. This might be a youth small group, or a community service project, or a smaller project such as inviting families to serve on the door welcoming people to your church service each week. It may involve creating a strategy for how your church explores the Bible and coordinates this across all ministries of the church.

## **Step 4: Ongoing support**

SUNZ is committed to working with you over the course of 12 months to create a plan and to put it into action. We provide:

- **Additional workshops:** We have workshops available on each of the eight THRIVE strategies. These are designed to help your church dive deeper into the area of your choosing, and explore practical ideas and resources.
- **Articles, books and resources:** We can point you in the right direction for further reading on each of the eight THRIVE strategies.
- **Guidance:** While we don't proclaim to be experts, or to have all the answers, we are committed to working alongside you. We can help you to create your working group, consolidate your thinking and set goals, point you to churches who have healthy ministry happening, help facilitate church discussions and be the voice on the end of the phone.
- **Momentum:** One of the most difficult things about bringing about change is continuing the momentum. After the initial excitement and flurry of ideas, it can be difficult to see these ideas translated into action. SUNZ can help keep the process moving along, checking in with your church along the way to see how progress is

going. We commit to making contact with you at key points along your journey to help you address challenges as they arise and celebrate your successes.

- **Review:** At the end of the 12 month process we will provide you with tools to review the year. What progress have you seen and how do you measure this? What are your next set of goals for the future? What role might SUNZ have in this and what support might you need?



*THRIVE is a ministry of Scripture Union Aotearoa, New Zealand.  
It has been created from the Australian initiative, Here2Stay.org.au,  
and we acknowledge their generosity in giving permission for us  
to shape their framework for our context.*



[www.sunz.org.nz](http://www.sunz.org.nz)