Elders Conference Notes - January 2019

**Opportunity - 4 categories:**

1. **More involvement with existing external community groups**

* Greater outreach to community support groups , e.g foodbanks - 5
* To link up with other churches in Presbytery -2
* Co-operate more
* Build stronger links with 37th Henderson Scout group and Brownies/Guides -2

1. **Volunteering**

* Ask different people to do little things
* Encourage younger Elders

1. **More of Existing Church Groups**

* Fundraise to provide technology for housebound members to access church at home -3
* Joint Church pilgrimages
* More interfaith collaboration
* Support Fiona’s new ideas
* Communicate the message of Jesus using diverse methods -3
* Support children, mums, young women, carers, to meet in our building. - 4
* Music /choir for young people
* Development of mixed media and skills
* Church cafe - 2
* More social events e.g Christmas Dinner
* Change time of young church - have more joint sessions with young people.

1. **New Church Initiatives**

* Provide activities to attract young people, youth club , music gigs - 3
* Employ a youth Leader -2
* Have Church open 7 days per week - use sanctuary more, midweek service -7
* Host kilmarnock wide young worship, church for all -2
* Church blog
* Use American ministers
* Town centre outreach, street pastors , tackle homelessness - 3
* Invite schools to visit
* Train Elders to take services, funerals, worship
* Soup kitchen
* Overseas project
* Messy Church
* Prayer groups
* Sports events
* Training events
* Breakfast club
* Bold assertive marketing of our Church

**Threats - 6 Categories**

1. **Reduced Numbers**

* Perpetual need for volunteers puts people off
* dwindling numbers -4
* older age profile -3
* members leaving

2. **Community Issues**

* schools no longer support Christianity in the curriculum.
* relevance of Church to our communities
* lack of use of the town centre

3. **Decline of national Church**

* **la**ck of faith
* relevance of Church in 21st century
* general threat to Christian values
* unwilling to defend misconceptions
* Presbytery structures
* Parish system
* tired “brand”

4. **Congregational apathy**

* Change is scary - 4
* lack of enthusiasm - 4
* limit of our imaginations
* reluctance to get involved -2
* too much talk - no action
* lack of confidence
* lack of time
* same people doing everything

5. **Finances**

* Financial pressures
* over “precious ” about our building
* closure of our Church
* Increasing costs
* no financial viability

6. **Other**

* cold radiators in winter
* ‘decline’ in new Minister