

[What follows is not so much a sermon; rather, it is more like notes for a two-part talk at an all-age service]

# McDONALDS

## McSERVICE ONE

Who likes McDonalds? Why? Why not?

Here's something Alan Forsythe came across – The McDonald's Church.



Turns out it might be a spoof appeal – but given it's coming from the USA it could easily be believable.

Don't know whether you think it's a good idea, but some interesting things that are happening at McDonalds might be useful for our church to think about.



Here's something I came across - the most famous restaurant in the world is starting to decline.

McDonalds isn't doing so well as you might think.  
McDonalds has got some *McProblems*.

When it started out it was new and quick and had great appeal. Despite the fact that it's still popular in 118 countries and serves almost 70 million customers a day around the world its not packing people in as much as it used to. It's over 60 years old now!

Sales are down.

The bosses and leaders of McDonalds have had to sit down and think.

#### DILEMMA

- a) Change what you're doing – risk alienating existing customers.
- b) Start something else new alongside – risk diluting work.
- c) Do what you always do but do it better?

Does that dilemma remind you of anything?

Numbers are down at most churches these days.

It means the church faces the same sort of dilemma.

- a) Change what you're doing – risk alienating existing customers.
- b) Start something else new alongside – risk diluting work.
- c) Do what you always do but do it better?

Can the church learn anything from McDonalds?

### McSERVICE TWO

#### 1) KEEP ON TWEAKING



McLobster, McPizza, Arch Deluxe (\$100 million adverts) – all these new ventures have come and gone – unavailable today.

Despite putting time, effort and money into something you sometimes have to admit it hasn't worked or if it did, isn't working any more.

Despite failures you have to keep on experimenting. What works today might not be popular next year. Cut your losses. If you are in a hole - stop digging.

Be prepared to change and try out new things.



### CHURCH – **Don't get stuck in the old routine...**

That's a funny thing to say about churches because this is often what we are famous for! Its one of our biggest problems. We are stuck in the past.

The most influential and fast growing churches are always trying out new things even if they sometimes seem mad and don't take root.

They don't just play safe and predictable but they dare to use imagination and experiment.

Many things may not work, but other things will be just what is needed.

Churches which are prepared to try new things and test new ideas will end up leading the way.



### 2) SIMPLIFY

There's something to be said for a big menu and loads of choice, but it makes life harder for the restaurant - and it ends up being too much choice for customers. It also means longer waiting times for a company that built its reputation on "fast" food.

McDonalds have cut down items from their menu so they can concentrate on specialising on a few choices.

### CHURCH – **Don't do everything...**

The most vibrant churches around these days aren't the ones that try to cover every base. They are the ones that concentrate on doing a few things but doing them well.

That's better than just doing all the same things and spreading yourself thin.



### 3) YOU CAN'T GET RID OF THE BIG MAC

The number one item on the agenda is what McDonalds is most famous for. The Big Mac. Getting rid of that would be a disaster. It might not be a disaster for us and our health, but it would be real bad news for McDonalds!

Adding new things is fine, but the Big Mac is always going to be there if its McDonalds.

If you got rid of that, you might as well change the name of the company.

### CHURCH – **Keep the Big Mac...**

What *is* that for the church? We can understand it in two ways.

For all churches everywhere – the Big Mac is the central thing we all share.

It's the message of Jesus.

This is why we are here.

This is what we offer the world for it changes everything.

Our central task is to share the message through worship, fellowship, conversation and acts of service.

But there's another angle on Big Mac.

Unlike McDonalds Restaurants that try to be all more or less the same, every single church is a wee bit different.

For each individual church there is something we are particularly known for and good at.

It could be great kid's work,  
helpful and challenging services,  
community projects,  
friendliness and a real welcome to all,  
great music,  
small groups set up.

We need to ask ourselves what is Langside's big contribution?

In other words, how would you describe us?  
What makes our church different from our neighbours?

What makes **us** different from the other churches round about?  
What is it that stands out? What is it that we do well?

And when we work out our Big Mac we must keep concentrating on it and keep it on the menu.

That means whatever we are going to cut down on or stop, we make sure that what we are good at offering the world around us will always remain in place.

So here is something for us all to think about today.  
What is OUR Big Mac?

The leadership team in our church have some exciting new plans we will be sharing with you over the next few weeks. We have got some new ideas about how we do church. It won't affect Sunday all that much but it will affect other things we do.

We'll be sharing them with you very shortly, and we hope they will make for a better way of doing church and using the gifts we all have.

But we all need to keep this question at the front of our minds and of our plans.

What is it that we are good at doing here at Langside?  
What has God blessed us in being able to do that we need to hold on to and build on?

There are so many things we *could* do.  
But no one and no church can do everything.

What do we need to keep uppermost as we try to make sure Langside is as effective a church as we can be in sharing the good news of Jesus?

Psalm 139:1-10

February 8 2015