

St George's Church Purpose, Mission and Vision

The Purpose of the Church

The ultimate purpose of the church is to glorify God through everything that it is and does, and enjoy him forever.

John 4 v23 , 1 Corinthians 6v20, 10 v31, Revelation 4 v11, Isaiah 60 v21, Psalm 86. Psalm 73 v25-26, Ephesians 1 v11-12

The Mission of the Church

The mission of this church is to be, make and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ, to increase in knowledge and love of God, be united in the gospel, live daily lives of worship and love each other, our community and God's world..

Be a Disciple

In Matthew 16 and Mark 8v34 Christ challenges his listeners, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.'

A Christian is someone who believes in, loves and follows Jesus as Lord and saviour. 'If you love me, keep my commands.' John 14v15. A disciple does this not to earn salvation or favour from God but because they have received his forgiveness and grace. Ephesians 1v13, ' When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance...'

Make Disciples

In the great commission, Jesus commands his disciples, Matthew 28 v19, ' go and make disciples of all nations,' a job that would expand, Acts 1v8, ' to the ends of the earth.' The people of God (the church) should continue following that command. Everything we do should have an eye on carrying out Christ's mission. (Col 3v17)

Grow as Disciples

Matthew 28 continues, ' baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.' Becoming

a disciple begins when a person believes in Jesus and begins to follow Him as Lord and saviour. Part of being a disciple of Christ involves growing in that understanding how he calls us to live and change.

To Increase in Knowledge of God

Paul prays for the Ephesians (Chapter 1 v17), 'I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.' Jesus is often found teaching people about God (e.g. Mark 1v21, Luke 4 v21-22, John 7v16) and through Acts, Paul gives himself to teaching the church (e.g. Acts 20v7, v20,v27) and expects elders to do likewise. Our faith is rooted in both history and truth that can be known. Growing in knowledge of God will help us live lives that are fruitful and effective.

To Increase in Love of God

Knowing God properly will help us see his true glory and lead us to worship him. Worship is rooted in love for God and his great gift to us. As our understanding of God's great love for us grows our response should likewise grow. When asked what was the greatest commandment, Jesus replies, Mark 12v29, 'The most important one is this: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."' "

Be United in the Gospel

The bible is full of Christians that disagree over non gospel issues (e.g. Philippians 4v2), and our challenge is not to let them create division, anger or resentment, but Colossians 3v13, ' Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone.' This does not mean the church should ignore sin or downplay its seriousness, but Romans 15v1 we bear with the failings of the weak and even if called to turn from sin, Ephesians 4v2-3, 'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.'

We all have one saviour and are all saved by grace alone, so we must be united in the gospel. Ephesians 4v4, ' 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.'

Live Daily Lives of Worship

Romans 12 v1-2 reads, ' Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.' True worship is not something limited to a church building or prayer or singing, but offering our very lives to God in service every day of the week. As we grow in knowledge and love of God we will be transformed and know God's will for our lives. The challenge is to daily take up our cross and follow him wherever we find ourselves.

Love Each Other

John 15v12, ' My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.' This command appears repeatedly, e.g. 1 Thessalonians 4v9, 1 Peter 1v22 and indeed in John's first letter we are warned in chapter 3v14, ' We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death.' Loving each other can be hard at times, it requires sacrifice and hard work. It is not an emotion we feel, it is action that we take. It requires us being vulnerable with each other, giving time to each other and actively helping each other. This is why being part of a small group is so important as it requires 'each othering' not the pastors or pastoral team doing it all.

1 John 3v16. 'This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.'

Love our Community

In Jesus declaration about the greatest commandment, Mark 12 v29 continues, 'The second is this: "Love your neighbour as yourself."'

Who then is your neighbour? In Luke 10, that is the very question someone asks as they sought to gain approval from Jesus. Jesus replied with the parable of the Good Samaritan. Your neighbour is anyone you come into contact with, even in the Samaritans case, his worst enemy.' Loving our community certainly involves serving its needs as best we can,

but Christian love goes much further than being compassionate. We are charged to make disciples and the greatest love we can show is to bring people to know Christ in whom they can find freedom from sin and spiritual death and find a way of life that God has taught us works best.

Love God's World

Genesis 2 give us a picture where mankind is charged to manage and look after God's creation. Whether standing up against oppression, poverty and injustice or buying ethically, considering the environment or even beautifying our own homes, it should all be done in a way that honours Christ and reflects God's Love.

The Mission of the Church

The mission of this church (St George's) is to be, make and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28v19-20); to increase in knowledge (Ephesians 1v17, Colossians 3v16) and love (Matthew 22v37) of God; be united in the gospel (1 Corinthians 12v12, Ephesians 4v3); live daily lives of worship (Romans 12v1-2) and love each other (John 13v34-35), our community (Matthew 22v39) and God's world.

The Behaviours God calls his people to live out.

The values God calls his people to hold are of no value unless they also lead to Spirit enabled transformation of the holder which leads to godly action in the circumstances of life his people face. Read through the list of values and think. What does each mean for our behaviours?

God's Values for his church

The Lord shows and teaches us the values to which his people should hold dear. These include prayerfulness, thankfulness, humility, unity, Gospel centeredness, honesty, openness, faithfulness, holiness, gentleness, peace making, servant heartedness, self-control, mercy, forgiveness, hopefulness, integrity, other person centredness, patience, zeal, boldness, caring, steadfastness, holding to biblical truth, hospitable, respectful, Spirit filled, neighbourly, repentant, contentment, obedient, wise, orderly, evangelistic and love filled.

Vision

If our vision does not scare you, is it from God? A Christian vision must not be limited by human fear or man-made barriers. If God is calling us to do something, often when we set out we do not yet have all we need to finish the job. He calls us to trust that he provides as we act in faith, and sometime he changes our plans en-route. Just think of Paul on his missionary journeys and plan of going to Spain (Rom 15v24-29).

What is a vision?

A vision is specific but big and rooted in God's values and mission. It gives a picture of where we believe God is taking us at a snapshot in time, e.g. part of a vision statement might read, '...sharing the good news of Jesus with thousands of people in south Washington and beyond,' and/or, 'developing church members to spiritual maturity through small groups, bible studies and deeper theological teaching.' '..be a place where each week dozens of people struggling with hurts, frustrations, illness, addiction, financial issues or doubts can come and find peace, love, support, acceptance, forgiveness, guidance and the good news of Jesus.'

The Vision for St George's

Our vision as an Anglican Evangelical church to make Jesus known to people of all ages and backgrounds through many different activities in church and by living as disciples outside of the church bearing witness to Christ through word and action in our daily lives.

Our vision is to be a prayerful church that teaches and encourages people to pray both by themselves and with others. We see dozens of people praying together each month

Our vision is to be a loving and pastoral church that looks out for the lonely and the left out, resolves disagreements and welcomes people no matter who they are or what they have done in the past. We see a team of people doing pastoral work, but for everyone to look out for each other through connections made in small groups.

Our vision is to be a holy church that in love and in line with Christ's guidance, calls God's people to repent from sin and uphold and follow Christian ethics and beliefs.

Our vision is to be a light in a dark and disconnected world, bringing hope, love, life and opportunity through the good news of Christ.

The vision is to have the church building open everyday and provide the community with facilities to be community through a community cafe, children's work, youth work, work with the elderly, running a CAP debt centre, being part of the Washington Food Bank, providing bereavement support, marriage preparation and enrichment, baptism preparation, evangelistic courses, discipleship courses, life skills development, home and study groups, services of worship and community events.

Specifically there is a vision to develop the building to create a new entrance, a cafe, a youth club, more toilets and new offices along with a lift to the second floor along with a new AV system suitable for 21st Century requirements.

Our vision is to grow the church to over 300 people who are walking with Jesus and connecting with 100's more each year through outreach and mission and within 10 years begin to plant new faithful congregations around Washington where needed.

Our vision is to be training people for full time ministry, be it youth work, pastoral work or church leadership and sending some to start or build other churches. We see some going out to do evangelism and mission work both locally and overseas.

Our vision is to see every member of the church volunteering and joyfully serving in at least one church ministry, utilising and developing the gifts God has given them. We see everyone having a desire to grow in gifting and service.

Our vision is to be a generous church, giving of time, effort, finance and resources to build Christ's kingdom both in the parish and beyond. We see the congregation funding the daily running costs of the church, a minister, a youth worker, two ministry trainees, an administrator and an associate minister/curate, utilising a separate trust to protect the church's mission, ministry and assets.

Our vision is to honour Christ by being a church that holds fast to the gospel message and teachings that are found in Holy Scripture and upheld in the 39 Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordinal as understood in their plain and historical sense but conveying these truths in contemporary ways that make sense within the age we live as well as upholding more traditional Anglican services.

Our vision is to be a positive church, seeking the good rather than focussing on the negative, communicating issues and resolving disagreements with love and grace.

Mission 'strap line'

servng (in faith as disciples of Christ)

building (each other and God's kingdom)

belonging (united by the spirit in love as God's children together)

Is it biblical to have a vision of where we think God wants the church to be in x years time?

Did Jesus have a five year plan for the church? Not exactly, but God had a plan and Jesus knew what that involved. Acts 2v23, Isaiah 53 v5. Luke 24v25-27, John 10v18, John 12v23, 1 Peter 1v20

He has an eternal plan to bring all things under Christ. - Ephesians 1v8-11

God definitely has broad a plan. That is his mission, and ours... to be and make disciples, but what about God's people having a vision, a plan that they believe God is calling them to implement in specifics to carry out that mission? I would argue, yes. God's mission is often implemented in scripture with specific plans for the future, but it is God's plan that we need to discern, not our own plans. e.g. Abraham in Genesis 12, Moses declares a vision in Deut 8v7-10, David and the temple in 2 Sam 7 v1-7, Nehemiah 1v3-4, 11 & 2v5, Romans 1v13, 15v24, 2 Corinthians 1v12-17.

Strategy

The strategy is simply the plan for implementing the vision God has given us.

It is the who? when? how? where? etc. Once we have a vision, this is the journey towards it!

A united vision rooted in God's mission and values does a number of things:

It excites. It energises. It strengthens unity

A vision should be exiting - what excites you about being a follower of Christ and his mission?

A vision builds meaning - what is our purpose as being Christians, what do we do to achieve that?

A vision is bold - what do you think God can do through you/us?

A vision gives a map - where do you think God can take us?

A vision will face opposition from Satan - it will involve spiritual warfare and a lot of prayer.

A vision is a snapshot in time of the mission working.

A vision comes from the soul and the heart.

A vision helps us get past fear of change and fear of the future.

A vision should be clear, but not set in stone.

A vision should come from God and encompass God's core values and God's mission.

Habbakuk 2 v2-3 - Go out and I will provide.

Isaiah 61 v1-4 - rebuild and restore.

be hospitable - cf 1 peter - a command to all. as individuals.

be church when not together - who can i disciple today?

Relationship with Jesus by church members first

Advertise what we do better.

a home of learning replenishment and being home - to enable to go out

church - hub of community -

holy spirit - putting God first

picture - dynamo - requires effort and peddling to get the power flowing - cf - 2 tim 1 - fan into flame

putting our faith as we step out - only as we step do the stepping stones appear. - step out on stepping stones together - confirmed by 2nd.