

St Stephen's Church Shottermill

Purpose, Values and Strategy

I. PURPOSE *Mark 12:29-31; Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; Isaiah 35*

"Honouring God, following the example of Jesus and sharing his love in our community"

We seek to grow deeper as disciples in 3 dimensions:

- ❖ **UP** (Loving and serving God)
- ❖ **IN** (Loving and serving our church family)
- ❖ **OUT** (Loving and serving our neighbour; Witnessing; Seeking Justice; Caring for creation)

2. VALUES (Our DNA) – we seek to be a church that is:

(i) Centred around Jesus (Jesus Centred)

- ❖ A place to **encounter Jesus** and be **drawn closer** to him
- ❖ Learning from the Bible – his living word

(ii) Building Right relationships

- ❖ with **God**; with **each other**; with **ourselves**; with our 'neighbour'

(iii) Welcoming and open to all

- ❖ **A place to love and be loved; to know and be known; to serve and be served**
- ❖ **Different congregations with different styles, but one purpose**

(iv) Encouraging Every member ministry (Every Person Counts)

- ❖ **Valuing and nurturing** everyone from the youngest to the oldest
- ❖ Priority of **developing youth and children**

(v) Open to the work of the Holy Spirit

- ❖ **Embracing growth** and the **change that comes with growth**
- ❖ A **transformative** community (seeking to be continually transformed by the Holy Spirit and in turn be agents of transformation)
- ❖ **Growing larger and smaller at the same time** – putting resources into our house groups and smaller gatherings as well as congregations

(vi) Generous

- ❖ In **time, skills, resources and money**
- ❖ Givers of **grace**

(vii) Compassionate

- ❖ **Caring** for those in need motivated by the **compassion of Jesus**
- ❖ **Outward looking**

3. STRATEGY – How we achieve our purpose and live our values

(i) Embracing Change through Enabling Structures

- ❖ **Transition** – adapting as we grow in numbers
- ❖ **Growth is organic** – need to create the right conditions
- ❖ **Flower pot model**
 - Leaders there to encourage, support and enable the ministries of the congregation
- ❖ **The Jesus model:**
 - watch me do it ⇒ do it with me ⇒ you do it

- ❖ **Enabling structures** – to encourage, enable and support the ministries of the congregation (not to strangle) like beanpoles or scaffolding i.e. secure but able to be flexible and adaptable
- ❖ **Prayerful** – all that we do under girded by individual, small group and congregational prayer

(ii) Creating a culture where Every Person Counts (all member ministry) *1 Peter 2:4-10*

- ❖ **All ages** called to **participate in God's work**
- ❖ **Designed to love and serve** him
- ❖ Continually **identifying and equipping leaders** remembering that we are: Followers First, Servants Second, Leaders Last
 - Equipped to serve by the Holy Spirit** *1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4*
- ❖ Ministry is for the **good of all**
 - Given gifts of the Spirit;
 - To glorify Jesus
 - To build up and serve

Context: In **church community** and in our **daily lives**

(iii) Engaging in mission

- ❖ Running **Alpha** courses
- ❖ Supporting **overseas and home mission** – at least 10% of our budget
- ❖ Intentionally **building bridges into the community**
 - Shared lunches and social events
 - Family and child centred events** e.g. Holiday Club, Kids Praise
 - Partnership** with Schools and community groups; serving the community e.g. The WAVE
 - Making a difference** e.g. debt counselling, parenting courses
- ❖ **Equipping** church members for their individual mission opportunities

(iv) Transformative Public worship and preaching

- ❖ Placing **scripture at the heart** of all we do
- ❖ Preaching **relevant** to being a 21st Century Christian and to seekers
- ❖ Giving **space to encounter and hear from God**
- ❖ Allowing for **intimacy** as well as **awe and mystery in worship**

(v) Life giving House Groups

- ❖ We are to be **in unity as God himself is in unity**
- ❖ To **live and practice** our purpose and values
- ❖ A place of **community and hospitality** – safe, caring, fun!
- ❖ A place of **transformation**
- ❖ Support and training for leaders
- ❖ *Acts 2:42-47* – UP, IN and OUT as a **flexible framework and tool** to help us live our values and purpose (not a straightjacket)