

# Our Vision and Values

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## OUR VISION

Our vision is to gather and develop a body of people to live like Jesus (Matthew Chapter 28, Verses 19-20). This means allowing his character to be formed in us and learning to say the things he said and to do the things he did. We have some way to go in achieving them but we are enjoying the journey!

**In order to fulfil the vision, we have four priorities:**

- **Connect** - build relationships across the community
- **Tend** - care for those in physical, material or spiritual need
- **Train** - develop character and practical skills for Christian living
- **Send** –help each other to discover our calling from God and to serve in the community and beyond

### Connect

*'For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'* (Mark Chapter 10, Verse 45)

- A major goal is to be active in the local community where we live, getting to know and befriend people and introducing them to God's kingdom.
- Led by the Holy Spirit, we try to identify particular points of need, where appropriate working with the Local Authority and other organisations in making a unique contribution as Christians.
- We seek to apply the life-changing power of God in specific personal and corporate expressions where all else has failed and hope has been lost.
- To be effective in this action, each church member is encouraged to be a point of contact between people in his or her immediate area and the church.

### Tend

*'When He saw the crowds He had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd...'* (Matthew Chapter 9, Verse 36)

Jesus promised us abundant life but many of us carry wounds from the past which restrict our enjoyment of it. We long to find a safe place where we are valued, loved, cared for and free to be ourselves. We aim to bring this same compassion to those around us, whether Christian or not, in care for the lonely, sick and undervalued.

- Understanding, counselling and prayer are available to help those who have been bruised and injured by life.
- Home Group and other leaders offer sensitive pastoral care and help with personal development. We give each other support in good times and bad.
- We are developing caring activities amongst the local community as God gives us the resources.
- We encourage the development of a healthy balance of physical, mental and spiritual living.

## Train

*'...Then He called His twelve disciples and gave them authority... (Matthew Chapter 10, Verse 1).*

Our aim is to help one another in the development of character and skills for Christian living.

- The leaders are dedicated to identifying the gifts and abilities of each person in the church and assisting their development. Training is given and opportunities provided to grow in Christian ministry.
- We run regular courses on a wide variety of subjects covering effective ministry, spiritual growth, personal development and practical living. Each course constitutes either an evening, a short series, a day or week-end of training, Home Group sessions or takes the place of a Sunday sermon.
- Training normally includes the offer of practical experience, where we can develop confidence in 'hands on' involvement.

## Send

*'...saying: "Go to the lost sheep... and as you go, preach saying "the kingdom of heaven is near". Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give." (Matthew Chapter 10, Verse 6-8).*

We aren't all called to be evangelists but we are called to share our faith with others in word and action. Amongst other things, this includes creating genuine friendships with those who do not yet know Jesus, speaking of him, being ready to offer counsel, care and prayer and living a Christlike life. We help each other to discover the way of sharing our faith that is most appropriate and natural for us.

## Send cont...

- We encourage every member of the church to give disciplined time to making friends with those who are not yet Christians, whether in the pub, at the sports centre, over a meal or coffee at home or on the school run.
- In various ways and groups we arrange events to connect with those who don't come to church. This is a prime activity.
- We send out ministry teams to other areas both in the UK and abroad.

## WHAT WE VALUE AND WHAT WE DO

### Our Values (Colossians Chapter 3, Verses 12-17).

- We greatly prize integrity, humility and openness between one another. We hold these as very high values.
- Simplicity, ease and humour characterize our meetings together. We want to be relevant to today in the way we do things.
- However experienced, our aim is to be teachable and to welcome ongoing personal change. Equally as a church we will be open to the Holy Spirit to change what we do and how we do it.
- While we wish to avoid superficiality and excessive claims, we are full of expectancy as to what God will do among us; we expect him to act!
- We are outward looking and delight in continually making room for new people to join us. We particularly wish visitors and newcomers to feel included and at home.

### Worship (Psalm 63, Verses 1-8)

- Worship is one of our highest values, affecting all we are and all we do. Most of our meetings, of whatever nature, include worship.
- Our style is relaxed, informal and participative while built on a solid base of reverence and sensitivity.
- We believe that the sensitive use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is an important part of worship and ministry.

## Prayer (1 Thessalonians Chapter 5, Verses 16-18)

- Along with worship, prayer is another vital thread of our life on a personal, group and church basis. We may not always be very good at it but we want to progress!
- We try to hear God speaking to us, to intercede with power and to pray for others, expecting visible results.
- We believe the church will grow vigorously when we pray regularly, initiating only what God has shown us through prayer and then sustaining it in prayer. To this end the church holds regular prayer meetings.

## Teaching (Deuteronomy Chapter 4, Verse 9 and Matthew Chapter 28, Verses 19-20)

- The Christian creeds embody what we believe and teaching is based firmly on the Bible and from experience of God's action. The Vineyard movement's Statement of Faith can be obtained from the office or the table at the back of church.
- We offer teaching in ways that we hope are easy to understand and exciting to apply. We also regularly invite guest speakers.

## Personal Growth (Colossians Chapter 1, Verses 9-12).

- God cherishes each individual, young or old, shy or extrovert. Through discipleship, our goal is that each should grow in spirit and character so that they in turn can disciple others.
- We see the foundation of personal development as a growing relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, spending exclusive time in their company daily, in worship, prayer and bible study. In this way we become more like Jesus, the goal of personal growth. We also value the help and insight we receive from others.
- We regard the baptism of a believer in water and the empowering of the Holy Spirit as very important to spiritual growth. No-one is put under pressure to take these steps but we hope they will.

## How Home Groups Work (Romans Chapter 12, Verses 4-16).

- A Home Group is small enough to be a caring family where personal growth takes place through relationship with others. Everyone is encouraged to join a Home Group; this is where the essence of the church's life is found.
- Each group has leaders, often (though not always) a husband and wife. Their role is to care for each member of the group, helping them in their personal walk of faith. Leaders are primarily facilitators of others.
- Home Groups are informal and welcoming. They may include worship, prayer, ministry, discussion and teaching from the bible or other training. We also enjoy going out together, having fun and helping one another practically. Sensitive and appropriate outreach is also a regular feature.

## Ministry to the Young (Proverbs Chapter 22, Verse 6 and Psalms Chapter 148, Verses 12-13).

- We care about the spiritual growth of our children, helping them to commitment to Christ and to ongoing development of their faith.
- Children share in their own Sunday activities, where we aim to provide a safe and happy environment in which different age-groups can enjoy learning and growing.
- The early and late teens and twenties groups aim to be fulfilling and fun. They are a major strength of the church, sharing time together, growing in relationships, spiritual maturity and ministry.

## When and Where We Meet (Hebrews Chapter 10, Verse 25)

- Sunday is a day for relaxation. We normally meet only once on a Sunday, mainly in the morning. Home Groups meet once a week on a convenient day.
- Home Groups are normally based in the area in which their members live. This deepens their sense of belonging and mission in their own locality and builds a nucleus for local growth. Some groups are 'task oriented' i.e. responsible for a particular area of ministry or work.
- Naturally other events can take up additional evenings or parts of weekends for those who are involved. However, we want, at all costs, to avoid becoming so busy that we become overstrained and tired, dull or rarely at home.

- Although covering a wider area, the church is based in Farnham. We meet on Sundays in All Hallows school. We want our meeting place to be bright, welcoming in atmosphere and of high quality.

### Giving (Malachi Chapter 3, Verse 10 and Luke Chapter 6, Verse 38)

- All we have comes from God and in recognition of this we are glad to give some of our time, money and resources towards the work of His kingdom. Our aim is for people to tithe (giving ten percent of their income) towards the church's work, but without pressure.
- We redistribute a significant part of the church's income amongst its members who face periods of financial hardship (due, for instance, to redundancy, ill health etc.). We also give to individuals and organisations outside the church.
- Annual accounts are available to everyone while naturally keeping confidential details of personal giving.

### Leadership Style (Mark Chapter 9, Verse 35 and Acts Chapter 20, Verse 28).

- Leadership style is relaxed and open. While consultative, it is firmly in place to give clear vision. We can have confidence in knowing that the church and its leaders are under authority and accountable and that problems will be handled responsibly.
- Leaders are identified by their humble lifestyle, their commitment to Christ and to their church. Our guidelines are the Biblical standards set out in 1 Timothy Chapter 3.
- A leader's main task is to help every person they lead to reach their full potential, giving encouragement and opportunity to advance. A particular objective is to identify, train and nurture other leaders—a continuous process of delegation in bringing growth to individuals and the church.
- Above all, leaders should carry God's own heart of love, compassion and understanding for people—the saved and unsaved—teachable servants walking humbly with those they lead.

## The Church's Structure and Links (Colossians Chapter 1, Verses 17-18).

- Farnham Vineyard is part of the Association of Vineyard Churches, a movement which has grown from a small group of people in 1978 to over 1000 churches worldwide. Its worship and style have influenced the Christian Church throughout the world and its vision is to extend God's kingdom by planting thousands more churches.
- Similarly, we plan that in God's timing new churches will be born from Farnham Vineyard.
- We believe in delegated leadership but there must be one person, the Senior Pastor of the church, with whom ultimate responsibility and authority rests—the buck has to stop somewhere! He is in turn accountable to the leaders of the UK Association of Vineyard Churches.
- Ministry and responsibility in all aspects of the church is shared among many.
- The Church is a Registered Charitable Company.

## Our Relationship With Other Churches (Philippians Chapter 2, Verses 1-4 and Galatians Chapter 6, Verse 10)

- We are only a small part of the Body of Christ. We greatly respect and value all other parts of the Lord's family, desiring to love, serve and identify with them.
- Farnham Vineyard is a member of Churches Together in Farnham and plays an active part within it.
- We pray for, and do all we can to support and assist, the growth of God's Church in the area.
- We play an active part in the Christian life of the town and further a-field as opportunities rise.