
St Thomas . Penny Street . Lancaster

Worshipping God together and at home, we serve and proclaim Jesus wherever we are.

VISION FOR St THOMAS'S CHURCH (2003)

KEY SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Over-arching principle or God's Mission Statement for us.

Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

Matthew 22:37-40 quoting Deut 6:5 & Lev 19:17

Jesus's Mission Statement which he read from the prophet Isaiah.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the acceptable year (the Jubilee?) of the Lord."

Luke 4:17-19

Our commission.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them ... and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you ...

Matthew 28:19-20

St Paul's statement about the equipping, function, and purpose of the church, and, its only true source of life.

And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.

Ephesians 4:11-16

THE HISTORICAL PURPOSE OF ST THOMAS

To provide an evangelical charismatic expression of Anglican worship in Lancaster.

St THOMAS'S MISSION STATEMENT

Worshipping God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit together and in our homes, and supporting one another in service and faithful obedience to the Scriptures, we proclaim Jesus Christ, Lord and Saviour, as part of the world-wide body of Christ.

Mission Statement summary strap line:

Worshipping God together and at home, we serve and proclaim Jesus wherever we are.

FIVE PURPOSES IN THE MISSION STATEMENT

Each member of St Thomas's (and each organisation within it) is committed to the five purposes.

1. **WORSHIP**

Worshipping our Creator and Saviour, celebrating the Lord together and at home.

2. **MISSION**

Welcoming others continually as we share our testimony of Jesus Christ. Working with the worldwide Church in God's mission.

3. **MINISTRY**

Serving Jesus by serving one another and our fellow human beings where ever we are; using our time, God-given skills, spiritual gifts, possessions and our money.

4. **FELLOWSHIP**

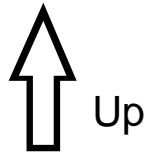
Supporting one another in spiritual growth, Christian ministry and through the joys and sorrows of life.

5. **DISCIPLESHIP**

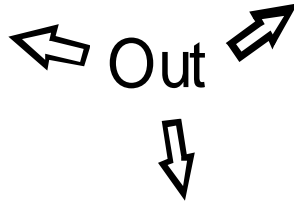
Learning and sharing from Scripture how to live in the real world in the obedience of faith. Developing skills as a soldier of Christ in order to impact society with the kingdom of God.

THE TWO KEY PURPOSES ARE:

1. WORSHIP



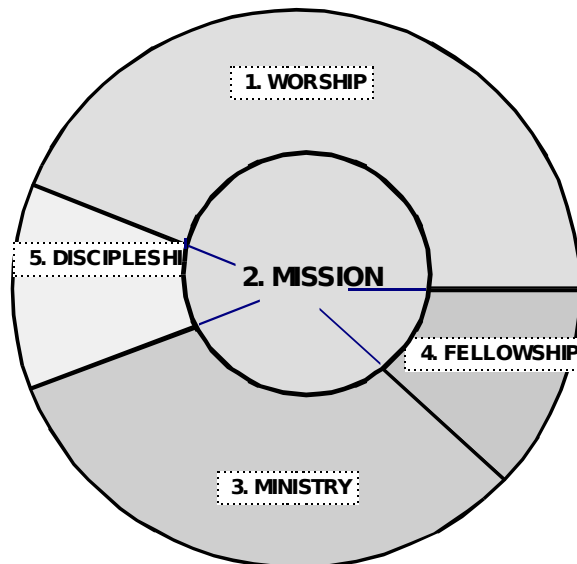
2. MISSION



Mission is about reaching out with God's agenda. John 3:v16 highlights what is on God's heart:

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Therefore this Mission must find itself directing every aspect of our Purposes. Our planning and activities must each consider the mission element at all times. Mission is not a "department" of the church, or an activity done by some.



KINGDOM VALUES

Through our relationship with Jesus Christ and with each other, the reign of God (referred to as the “kingdom of God”) grows in society. The church must therefore display the following:

Love

Loving God - true worship and knowing his commands.
Loving our brothers and sisters in Christ both near and far away, and of whatever age or race.
Loving our neighbour - the people whom God created - and upholding justice in the world.
Caring for creation.

Fulfilling Jesus’s mission

Proclaiming the Good News.
Making disciples.
Healing the sick and casting out demons.

Being the church

Priests to God - worship (corporate & individual praise, prayer and study with holy living).
Active in spiritual warfare, expressed as love and prayer where ever we are.
Rejoicing in and using the gifting that God provides corporately.
Enjoying life together - life in all its fulness.
Using our homes for worship, mission, ministry, fellowship and discipleship.
Maintaining kingdom of God values in our work and workplace.

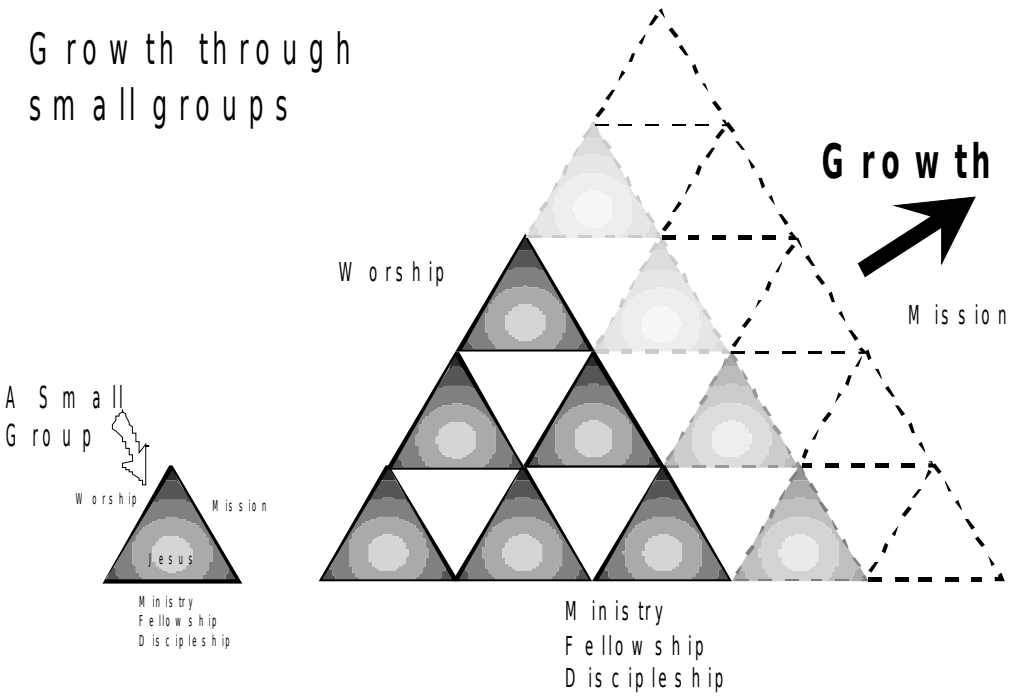
THE RESOURCES TO DO AND TO BE THESE THINGS

God himself.
God’s provision of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.
Those whom he has sent us - every true believer called to serve at St Thomas’s.
Our homes.
The “house of the church” [St Thomas’s buildings].
Partnership with other churches - C of E and others locally, and, overseas churches.
Gifts of money and unpaid time and skills.
Outside agencies, churches and individuals.

VISION AIMS

fulfilling our 5 purposes.
growth
leadership
clusters, small groups & our homes
all ages serving (including children)
sharing what God gives us

GROWTH
by developing small
GROUPS
within which we discover and develop our
GIFTS
to serve God and our neighbour



GROWTH “(person A) planted and (person B) watered, but God gave the growth.”
1 Corinthians 3:6

In order to grow (amongst other things) we shall have:-

to accept responsibility to pray to the Lord who gives the growth.

to accept the grace of God.

to accept leadership and respond willingly to it.

to accept new leaders whom God is gifting - servants who will take responsibility for tough decisions.

to accept change.

to accept hard work in “planting” and “watering” and not shirk responsibilities.

GROUPS “And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts.” Acts 2:46

Small groups are essential for learning, genuine sharing and developing true friendship. It is in small groups that we learn to pray, to prophesy, to share our stories (testimonies), to develop real friendships, to discuss and learn the Scriptures, to handle situations in the work place, to nurture children in community and show them how to fellowship.

GIFTS “See, I have called by name, (person C) and have filled him/her with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and craftsmanship, to devise ... And I have appointed with him/her, (person D) to” Exodus 31:2-6

God gifts people to do his kingdom building work in the church and society. We must rejoice in the skills he gives others and support them both in the church and in the world. We also need to notice the gifts that God has given to others and encourage them without jealousy or envy.

VISION STATEMENT 2003 - 2008

(This is a draft Vision Statement which the Church Council is currently discussing.)

In fulfilling its five purposes in the power of the Holy Spirit, St Thomas's will:

Raise Mission to its proper key place in the life and work of the church.

Recognise that prayer is the spiritual weapon to defeat the prince of this world, who blinds the eyes of unbelievers.

Outgrow its buildings, by developing a network of loyal and accountable clusters of small groups with anointed leaders.

Encourage and nurture children in a living faith in Jesus Christ.

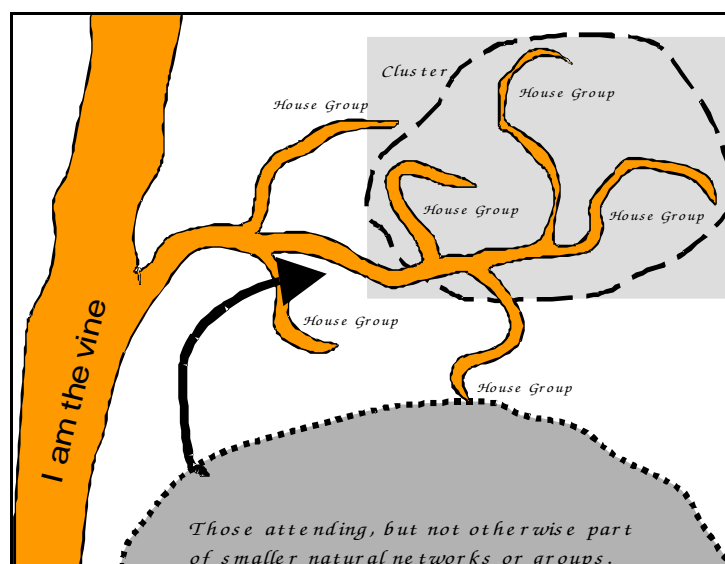
Develop and use young leadership and ministry.

Humbly be a resource to the wider church, and also humbly receive support from the wider church.

Encourage creativity in all aspects of its work.

Be prepared for constant change.

Encourage the formation of clusters of small groups and help more people not currently in small groups to join.



APPENDIX
SOME OF OUR VALUES

WORSHIP (Purpose 1.)

Inspired use of liturgy.

Music to the best of our ability.

A blend of traditional, modern and other styles.

Adaptability of the buildings.

Expression of worship through the arts including the building itself.

A place, set aside for worship in which numinous* is developed visually and through holy use by us.

The priority of prayer, liaising with the Head of the Church, being empowered by the Holy Spirit and being dependent on God ("Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit says the LORD.").

[*numinous means, "a sense of the presence of God"]

MISSION (Purpose 2.)

Relationships with others, especially those outside of the church at work and at home is a vital element in evangelism. Encouraging every Christian to be a witness of Jesus at home and at work or school, remembering that evangelism is a process. Inviting people to Alpha courses is our key strategy for them to explore the meaning of life without pressure or coercion.

To forge links with mission overseas and to have a world awareness of the church.

To acknowledge our partnership with other local churches and the diocese.

Social action and the support of ecology.

MINISTRY (Purpose 3.)

Caring for others.

Supporting those working and caring in the community whether paid or voluntary.

Offering prayer for healing.

Encouraging and developing vocations to secular and Christian work.

Managing effectively the church's resources, both of people and finance and its assets.

Developing all the giftings that God provides through his people (1 Cor 12, Romans 12, Eph 4).

FELLOWSHIP (Purpose 4.)

Use our homes and the "house of the church" (our buildings), as well as our skills and gifts.

Encourage genuine love in action.

Foster deeper relationships.

Allow freedom to be ourselves and rejoice in diversity.

Encourage all_age activities together and in small groups.

Fulfil tasks and projects in small groups or support others in theirs.

Value everyone and welcome newcomers.

Work closely with other churches that are in *New Wine Networks* and/or running *Alpha* courses.

DISCIPLESHIP (Purpose 5.)

Inspiring and relevant biblical preaching and teaching on Sundays, using a variety of styles: expository, devotional, and thematic, for all ages. Seminars on relevant topics.

Teach and train children and adults in biblical ministry.

Use external resources where appropriate.

Offer resources to other churches.

Nurture new leadership and especially young leadership.