

# WOOTTON NEW LIFE METHODIST CHURCH

# MISSION 20:20

## OUR VISION & STRATEGY

We aim to know God better, to love others more and to share the Good News of Jesus. This strategy aims to capture a sense of who we are and where we feel God is leading us as a church. The ideas contained within it will shape the future of Wootton New Life for many years as they describe our vision, the key areas of our ministry and the people that we want to serve.

This paper has been written so that every member of our church family may understand how they can be part of God's people here in Wootton. This is a rolling 4 – 5 year strategic plan that we hope to see implemented by 2020, with regular reviews by the Church Council along the way.

*At this point in time we are 3 years into this strategy with less than 2 years until 2020. We have seen some great achievements in the last three years but also shared frustrations and disappointments.*

*It is important now that we review and re-focus to make sure our vision and strategy is still appropriate and encourage everyone to engage and prayerfully consider their part in our church's mission.*

### **We long to grow . . .**

As a church family we're from many different backgrounds, we're single, married, widowed and divorced, young, old and somewhere in between. But we share a common aim to deepen our love of God and to develop a community that sees His Kingdom thrive here in Wootton and beyond.

We are a church where everyone matters, from the youngest to the oldest member. We believe that everyone has something to bring that will add colour and creativity to the church family. For Wootton New Life maintaining the 'status quo' is not an option, we hunger to respond to God's love, to be transformed, to grow.

We want to inspire everyone in the church to have a passion for Jesus and His Kingdom, beginning in our own community and wherever God sends us. As a church family we are committed to the principles of church life that we see in the New Testament. Here the church is revealed as a community of people who not only love and serve Jesus Christ in obedience to His teachings, but are also committed to love and care for each other and to being a blessing to the area in which they live. We try to be just that. We don't always get it right but we are committed to trying.

### **We believe that we will do this through . . .**

**Worship, prayer, discipleship & teaching** - Providing structured Biblical teaching, a Church grounded in prayer, nurturing spiritual growth and encouraging participative, expressive worship.

**Reaching the community** - Working with and in the local community, serving others to make a radical difference in Wootton and beyond. Encouraging, equipping and supporting each other to exercise our faith where we live, work and relax.

**Children & Young People** - Building on our work with children & young people, helping them to grow into confident and responsible adults and wherever appropriate integrating children & young people into the whole church life.

# We believe that we will achieve this through a number of key areas:

## The Bible

We will **seek to obey God's Word**, ensuring dynamic, Biblical preaching and teaching and the application of the word through small groups.

## Prayer

It is our desire to encourage every member of Wootton New Life to **pray more**, especially to listen for God to speak and lead us. We will nurture spiritual gifts including that of prophecy and discernment and encourage those with ministries of intercession.

We will do this through encouraging times of prayer together and in small groups seeking to ensure that daily prayer underpins the life of individuals and the church as a whole. We will encourage people to pray at home, at work, on the streets and together in our building, aiming to show that prayer can be exciting, dynamic and essential for the growth of the church. We want to develop people willing to pray with others – both from inside and outside the church, being sensitive to the Spirit and channels for healing and wholeness.

## Ministry and pastoral care

We want to develop the ministry of every believer, discovering their gifting from God and developing a passion for service and mission. We want to encourage young people into leadership and nurture and develop their gifts, so that they can be a blessing to this and other churches as some of them move away to a life elsewhere.

We seek to **love and care for one another** and those within our communities through good times and bad, offering practical and spiritual support and friendship. Everyone will be assigned to a Pastoral Visitor to ensure regular contact is maintained and support offered where appropriate.

## Worship

We will offer a **welcoming, contemporary and inclusive style of worship**. We will offer a range of services including 'Fresh Expressions' to provide an opportunity to reach the community and those who would not usually come to 'church'.

We will use the best and most appropriate resources to deliver visual and verbal clarity.

## Leadership and membership

The leadership team is responsible for ensuring that the church works effectively in the community, organising worship services and maintaining the different aspects of the church's life.

Leaders will be good role models, effective communicators, hearing from God, discerning the way forward and able to inspire others to follow in that way. Delegated tasks are carried out in trust and encouragement and support will always be in place.

We recognise the need to have **strong communications** both within the church and beyond to the village, the press and the internet, making effective use of social media.

As well as developing people's gifts and giving them confidence to use them, we will encourage people to feel that they are committed to working together in their ministries and actively participating in the life of the church. We will encourage people to recognise their **commitment** to Wootton New Life through formal membership.

## Small groups

Everyone at Wootton New Life will have the opportunity to be part of a small group. Small groups will seek to **build closer relationships** with each other right through the week not simply at the meeting, and offer care and support for each other, looking to develop each others' gifts and ministries.

Small groups will seek to reach out to friends and neighbours in friendship and love, supporting each other prayerfully in their witness together.

## Youth, children & families' work

A great foundation has been laid for seeing young people mature into young adults and make a choice about coming to Christ. We want to see this continue to **grow and expand** through the ministry of a strong youth, children and families team.

We will continue to offer the best for children and families building on links with Pat - A - Cake and reaching out to new families through Rock 'n' Roll (Messy Church), Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade Company and other regular family events.

We need to prayerfully consider how we can strengthen our non uniform work with young people and continue to encourage involvement in services and national events such as Soul Survivor both as an individual church and as part of the Circuit and/or ecumenical partnerships.

## Environment

We are committed, wherever possible, to following an **ethical** buying policy. We are committed to the Methodist Church Environmental Policy and as a church we aim to adopt sound recycling and environmental practices.

## Growth

We aim to grow by **leading others to faith** in Christ as well as seeking to **grow in our own faith and trust in Jesus**. Growth involves learning to draw closer to God ourselves as well as growing together with all who lift up the name of Jesus.

Growth in these ways requires a commitment of every participant in the life of the church to seek and take every opportunity God gives to **share the gospel in word and action** and to be open to fresh understanding, experience and service together. We believe then that the numbers of people involved in the life of Wootton New Life will grow continuously over the next five years.

## Mission and outreach

We will make mission and outreach a priority as the Lord leads us. This will include opportunities for people to explore the Christian faith e.g. Alpha and Youth Alphas. We will develop the The Hub as a place where people of all ages can find a place to relax and build friendships. We will seek opportunities to support the wider community and explore the priority areas identified by the circuit including intergenerational and the third age.

We will aim to **help people in times of crisis** or difficulty whether through offering a listening ear or the practical support of food and/or meals, lifts and fellowship. As a church and as individuals we will foster links with charities e.g. Christians Against Poverty, SMART Prebend Street, Bedford Women's Refuge, Bedford Street Angels and international links through organisations such as World Vision, Samaritans Purse and the Bible Society .

## Ecumenical links

We will take every opportunity to work together wherever possible with the other churches in the village and the wider community.

## Achieving our vision . . .

### People

The whole church needs to **own and be committed** to such a vision for it to be effective. We will need people who are not as yet involved in the life of the church to take up ministry in some of the areas we have out-lined.

### Finance

We will need **regular, generous and sacrificial giving** to fulfil this vision. We believe that God provides and that any vision needs to be totally surrounded by prayer.

### Buildings

We have excellent buildings and facilities that will help us to fulfil this vision. We will ensure that they **maintained to the highest standard** not only for our use at present but also so that they are in good repair for future generations.

## 2018 Priorities

- ✓ *Build up the prayer life of the church*
- ✓ *Review & re-purpose Rock 'n' Roll Messy Church*
- ✓ *Continue to support BB/GB and encourage links with wider church activities*
- ✓ *Continue to develop the worshiping life of the church – stay true to our values*
- ✓ *Review and re-focus our pastoral care for all – how can maintain links with people on the fringe and those who do not attend regularly?*
- ✓ *Prepare to welcome our new minister, Charlie Connor and to say farewell to Caroline*
- ✓ *Continue to maintain the building, upgrade our acoustics and sound system*