

what is our vision?

When we begin to earth our dreams, introducing realism and grounding them in our values and mission, we begin to find our vision. Could this be the beginnings of our vision for the next five years in the life of St Mary's?...

- For St Mary's to be well known within the community as a family church with lots going on, so that people are attracted to the church and numbers continually increase
- For St Mary's to have more organised (mid-week) groups to enable people to grow together in relationship with God. Ideas include mixed youth group, choir, Bible reading groups, house/cell groups, prayer groups,...
- Home groups for prayer, encouragement, reflection and learning
- Going out into pubs and the wider community
- A recognised healing ministry
- A youth group for teenagers
- The building's potential to be maximised
- A fully refurbished church

All of the comments in this document came from the 29 adult and 12 child participants in the St Mary's church 'Vision, Mission & Values' Away Day on 13th September 2008. The comments are presented here for reflection and ongoing discussion, and further ideas are invited from anyone who relates to St Mary's church. The Church Council (PCC) will be reflecting further on this in the autumn months, and invite others to join in these conversations. If you'd like to be a part of this, please chat to Malcolm.

what are our values?

At St Mary's, we seek to be...

- A welcoming, friendly and accepting community, inclusive of all
- A people who value and fully involve children and young people
- A genuine fellowship, where we actively support one another
- A people who meet with God in our worship
- A place where people are able to reach and give their full potential
- A place of welcome and invitation for anyone who is new
- A place of respect, where new views ideas are heard and valued
- A community that seeks to follow the example of Jesus

what is our mission?

We seek to be an 'up-in-out-of' church, growing in relationship with:

- **God the Trinity**, in our worship and learning together
- **One another**, through our fellowship, honesty and respect
- **Our community**, through service, invitation and welcome
- **The wider Church**, recognising our place in the bigger story

So, how are we doing?...

Relationship with God...

Simply attending church on Sunday may not be enough...

- We need spaces and places to pray, engage with the Bible, and grow in faith together during the week, possibly in people's homes
- We should find ways of talking together more about God in church
- We could establish 'cell groups' for discussion and mutual support
- We should seek to be real and honest with each other about our experiences of God, our emotions and our feelings

Relationship with one another...

On the whole they're generally good, although...

- We should be sensitive in how we share the peace with others
- We should pursue deeper relationships without being overpowering
- We could do more to keep touch with people who haven't been around for a while

Relationship with our community...

We recognise that our visible presence within the community is limited...

- We are tucked away and need to make ourselves known... website, publicity, notice boards, possible sign on Mill Lane
- Our youth organisations give us great opportunities for contact with families – how do we communicate and serve here?
- We should develop links with local schools, especially Hey Green
- We need to engage with other parts of the parish
- We should continue to develop links with other local clergy and churches, especially Holy Trinity and St Bridget's
- We should not be restricted by geographical parish boundaries but consider the networks we connect with as a church community

Relationship with the wider Church...

This is an area of weakness for us...

- We should change our mindset so that we stop seeing St Mary's as being at the centre of our universe, and look to find our place in the wider mission of God and story of his Church
- Connections with the Deanery, the Diocese and with other local churches should be developed
- We should connect with the church in other parts of the world through our mission giving, prayer links and maybe even going!

what are our dreams?

Our 'dreams' for St Mary's 2013

(for dreams to be dreams we have to free ourselves from censorship and realism – these are dreams, not necessarily targets!)

- A thriving youth work (5 dreams including a children's group dream)
- A full church (so building is too small!) representing all ages (4 dreams)
- Families and all-ages fully included (4 dreams)
- Both small and larger gatherings – house/cell groups (3 dreams)
- Community projects to reach and help the people of Wavertree (3 dreams including both children's groups)
- Visible in the community with a good reputation (2 dreams)
- Telling people about God (2 dreams – both children's groups)
- A thriving and exciting church (2 dreams)
- Young adults meeting socially (2 dreams)
- A place where non-believers are welcomed and supported (2 dreams)
- A web presence and email communication (2 dreams inc children's group)
- Use of current technology (especially projection)
- More going out days and church holidays (2 dreams – children's groups)
- To be a sending church releasing people into full-time ministry
- A powerhouse for prayer
- Spirit-filled praise with gifts of the Spirit manifest in our worship
- Several different 'expressions' of church and worship side-by-side
- A student ministry
- Good will between every member
- More drink and food (children's group dream)
- Greater involvement of more people
- Further development of the church grounds
- More social events
- To be a church moving with the times
- To still be planning for the future
- Digital notice boards in the church grounds
- To be older and wiser