



VIEW FROM THE PEW

Vision and Mission at St Anne's

Proverbs 29:18 states "Where there is no vision the people perish". Organisations and people grow towards a vision. A good vision enables strong teamwork, attracts resources and people and is essential for growth.

Vision

- Visio = to see
- This is a succinct and compelling statement of the difference the church wants to see in and around Baslow. It is a long term view so it tends not to change from year to year and not is dependent on current resources. It is designed to inspire and create resources

Examples from other churches

- *To be a place where love works*
- *To be a place of relevant and trusted evangelism*
- *We are the voice and the hand that encourages people to change their lives with hope, comfort and peace*

Mission

- Missio = to do
- This is a description of the work we will do to achieve the vision
- It helps with priorities, planning and responsibility. It is a medium term view and reviewed every 2-3 years to check it is relevant to the mission

Examples from other churches

- *We accomplish our mission by creating environments where people are encouraged and equipped to pursue intimacy with God, community with insiders, and influence with outsiders*
- *To build a great city for all people through a gospel movement that brings personal conversion, community formation, social justice and cultural renewal.*



VIEW FROM THE PEW cont'd

Ethos

- A statement of the values that underpin the Vision and Mission: the way things are done
- Something that can be understood and accepted by people outside the church as well as inside

For example

- *We will be inclusive and welcoming, giving particular hospitality to those who are strangers*
- *We will listen to the people we are called to serve*

Developing the vision

The best place to start is with what is happening already –to discern what God is already doing in the church and in the village. We need to take time to hear God clearly so we need a couple of meetings to get started. The meetings will focus on conversations which help people to reflect on questions such as:

1. Tell me a time over the last 2 years when St Anne's was at its best – when it best reflected the life and love of God in the world
2. Tell me a time over the last 2 years when St Anne's was closest to the community
3. Tell me a time over the last 2 years when St Anne's helped you to be more confident in your discipleship

The purpose is to help people to reflect on what God is already doing and their part in it. We need to hear this from as many voices as possible. This process can be highly motivating and help to form a collective vision.

The mission is simply asking "So how do we make this happen more often?".

Once this has been done with the congregation we do a similar exercise with stakeholders outside the church community - people on the fringes of the church and those who are further away. We need to know what people

expect of the church and the barriers that prevent them coming.
Conversations with people outside the church serve as a reality check.



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The outcome of these meetings would be

1. A clear, relevant, and achievable vision which everyone is inspired by and which we believe reflects God's call for the church and for the people in it
2. A high level set of actions which enables that vision to be achieved (the mission)
3. A 3-year plan of the main events/activities which will energise people and deliver the mission. The plan will ramp up over the 3 years in the expectation of more people and resources being attracted
4. The support of the people of Baslow that this is a worthwhile enterprise for the church and their willingness to get involved.
People don't like being "done to"

This process is building on Mike Gilbert's recent paper about an invitational church. We should hold the meetings as soon as possible over the summer so that we have a positive message for Mike on his return from sabbatical.

Increasing Resources

In parallel we need to be intentional in creating the leadership required to deliver the vision over 3-5 years. CPAS have developed a course called "Growing Leaders" which has been used with great effect in a church in a deprived area of Derby. Leadership in church is normally seen as a chore and a burden. The course takes a holistic approach which sees leadership as a part of the formation of Christian character and begins with how people have been called by God. It helps to align the personal aspirations and hopes of people with God's call on their lives and the mission of the church. It is a great way of getting newer people involved in the life of the church and is driven more by a sense of personal growth than grudging obligation.

It is done in groups and runs once/month for a year. We should discuss this with Mike on his return from sabbatical as a benefice project which would

help to create bonds between the churches and enable a shared model of leadership across the benefice.



VIEW FROM THE PEW cont'd

At a time when the future Vision and Mission of St Anne's church is currently being reviewed, it is particularly encouraging to find that there is a regular time of prayer and Bible study taking place in the church on Friday afternoons at 3pm, and all are welcome – regardless of whether you count yourself a member of the church or not.

This informal time together, started with just two ladies praying together but at the last get-together, no less than eight of us met to share in what is proving to be a very uplifting time together.



Over the past month the group has looked in some detail at the Apostle Paul's letter to the church at Philippi – in the Bible, known as the Epistle of

Paul to the Philippians. Do you know who the Philippians were? Where Philippi is? No, neither did most of us until we took time to study the subject. Does it matter who the Philippians were? Well that rather depends on your take on the Bible and all that it stands for and still has to say. Our time spent in it is clearly proving of value to those who come along.

Maybe you are put off by the thought of being expected to pray in others company, or possibly to read scripture verses that you struggle to understand. Do not worry. There are no such expectations but if you would like to contribute or join us in prayer you are most welcome.

We are now about to commence a seven-week course simply entitled "Jesus". As the saying goes: "Come on in – the water's fine"!

