

*"A genuinely mixed East End church with a passion for straightforward Bible teaching."*

As we approach our tricentenary in 2030, we want to go deeper, wider and further:

- a) ***Deeper*** relationships with God and one another  
growing more loving relationships with our heavenly Father and our brothers and sisters in Christ
- b) ***Wider*** outreach and diversity of ages and backgrounds  
especially teens and twenties, and non-white and non-middle class people
- c) ***Further*** growth in our capacity for ministry  
including training gospel workers and substantial progress towards the renewal of our building

### 1. Deeper relationships with God and one another

*"... make disciples... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20*

- We will pray and work for progress in discipleship and service for every individual we come into contact with. We aim to grow in discipleship<sup>1</sup> by more than we grow in overall Sunday attendance.
- We will grow deep church family relationships across demographic boundaries through social interaction and hospitality, ad hoc groups such as prayer triplets, and occasional trips and events, as well as regular services and small groups.
- We will develop a culture of joyful service without undue burden, and grow our resilient capacity as a church. We accept that this may mean a slower pace of new initiatives or stopping doing good things.
- We will deepen practical and pastoral care both through small groups and outside of them.
- We aim to support families in Christian discipleship, such that children develop a clear grasp of the gospel and strong Christian friendships from a young age. We aim to establish thriving cohorts of pre-teens, teenagers and beyond, who will encourage one another to deepen in radical discipleship and reach out to their peers.

### 2. Wider outreach and diversity of ages and background

*"Go and make disciples of all nations..." Matthew 28:19*

- We want to grow in remarkable diversity, including amongst hard-to-reach groups in our community. This diversity honours God, reflects our community and will be deeply attractive to outsiders as they see authentic gospel relationships.
- As people grow in discipleship we will prioritise unity amidst diversity. We will actively develop a diversity of leaders and role models. Our key leaders<sup>2</sup> will not be overwhelmingly white and middle-class. We will accept compromises on inessentials in order for our corporate life to be heterogeneous.

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<sup>1</sup> Measured approximately by numbers in regular discipleship groups and attending prayer. Benchmark: pre-Covid 19 (early 2020), there were three home groups, four daytime groups, Christianity Explored, and an occasional pre-teens group. Perhaps around 45-50 people regularly part of small group discipleship. The monthly prayer meeting was usually attended by 15-20 people.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. staff, wardens, service leaders, preachers.

- We will make our corporate life together accessible, attractive and explicitly Jesus-centred, so that church members have confidence to invite others. We will also aim to train believers through our services even if that means not everyone understands everything that is said.
- We will develop our outreach to identifiable groups, whether through our own programmes (such as Chatterbox) or through other networks (such as schools).
- We will harness the language and cross-cultural skills of church members, and pray for and reach out especially among hard-to-reach groups. We aspire to have Sylheti speakers and specific outreach among the Bengali community.
- We will make the most of the opportunities afforded by a significant and landmark building to share the Christian message with the wider community and those interested in heritage.
- St Anne's will be well-known in the wider community and barriers to entry will be low. We will foster this through events at church, third party events, meeting community needs and through online engagement and witness. We will make the most of cultural points of contact such as Remembrance, Christmas and Easter; baptisms, weddings and funerals; and hospitality.

### 3. Further growth in our capacity for ministry

*The work of ministry is the job of every Christian (Ephesians 4:12). We will need to pray for and grow many labourers for the harvest if we are to reach others (Matthew 9:37-38).*

- We want to grow in number in order to reach our community better. We hope to grow to 150 adults at our main service and consider steps for growth beyond that, e.g. adding senior staff and/or planting another congregation. We will explore opportunities for other churches to send people to join our evening service.
- We will work to foster every member ministry, develop new generations of leaders and deepen the quality of our Bible teaching in small groups and Sunday Club. We will increase the size of our staff team in anticipation of growth, and invest in the development of staff and other leaders.
- We will train church members in confidence in the gospel and the priority of mission so that many are regularly sharing the gospel with outsiders in various ways.
- We aim for our building to be fully realising its huge potential as a resource for gospel ministry by 2030.<sup>3</sup> We will be alert to dangers of compromise, distraction from gospel ministry and burnout. We will strive to secure our building for long term gospel ministry, or re-direct our resources elsewhere.
- We will encourage joyful and sacrificial giving from every member of the church family, and we will model joyful and sacrificial giving in our commitment to outside partners.

### Partnerships and networks

*There can be no such thing as an 'independent' church – we are a local manifestation of the heavenly gathering (Hebrews 12:22-24). We seek mutual encouragement with other faithful churches and ministries, and pray and work towards greater faithfulness where needed.*

- We will be a net contributor to the wider church in terms of sending leaders and resources, rather than a net receiver.

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<sup>3</sup> This may specifically involve lift access and developing space for shared working and increased capacity for children's ministry, as well as restoring the existing fabric of the building.

- We will develop a limited number of deep partnerships in our local area, such as GrowTH, London City Mission and CrossTeach; and internationally, such as in Brussels and Accra. We will engage a wide range of church members in these partnerships and extend partnership beyond prayer and financial giving. We will serve other churches and be served by them through East End Gospel Network, London Gospel Partnership, PT Cornhill and ReNew.
- We will pray for and work towards Stepney Greencoat school thriving as a place for Christian families to send their children and as part of our outreach. We will pray for and encourage Christian secondary schools in the area.
- We will be well informed and discerning regarding developments within the Church of England and Anglican Communion. Where necessary, we will take bold steps to distance ourselves from error and to safeguard future gospel ministry.
- We will show a healthy concern for wider events in the church and world, locally and internationally.

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- We re-commit ourselves to God and to one another. We will pray boldly, specifically and frequently for these things, and preach and teach the gospel as plainly set out in the Bible.
  - Our progress in fulfilling this Mission Action Plan (or deviation from it according to circumstances and God's prompting) will be evaluated at each APCM, and it will be fully revised in 2026.
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#### 4. Why a Mission Action Plan?

Every Church of England church is expected to have a 'Mission Action Plan' setting out the church's human ambitions under God and outlining a strategy for getting there.

There is a sense of course in which any ambitions other than to preach the gospel and live it out are worldly (James 4:13-15). However, even the apostle Paul had a Mission Action Plan (Romans 15:19-33) – although he needed to be flexible with his plans too (Acts 16:6-10).

With the right humility and prayer it can be very helpful to go through the process of thinking about what we aspire to do in Christ over the medium term, and the steps required to get there. Putting specific flesh onto the bones of the general priorities for every church may:

- Encourage us to pray prayers that are both bold and specific;
- Inspire and stretch the commitment of the whole congregation through a specific vision; and
- Inform strategic priorities and planning, for example concerning new initiatives, staffing, etc.

The ambitions set out below should be seen as a best attempt at this time to set out a godly direction of travel. They should not be rigidly adhered to regardless of the Lord opening and closing doors, and they should not be a source of pride if accomplished or of discouragement if not accomplished.

#### 5. What do we believe?

We believe the Bible as the word of God, and we seek to put it into practice so that as a church we might grow to display the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10). In particular:

- We believe in the sovereign God of the Bible, who is the creator and judge of the whole world;
- We believe in the historical miracle birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (e.g. 1 Corinthians 15:3ff.);

- We believe that his death provided an atoning sacrifice for all who believe, which is our only hope for salvation (1 John 5:11-12);
- We believe and strive to live out the roles of men and women as given in scripture, in particular marriage as between one man and one woman, and complementary roles of men and women in marriage and in the church (Matthew 19:3-12; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Timothy 2:8-15);
- We believe that it is by the word of God and the power of God that lives are transformed by repentance and faith, and that he grows his church (e.g. 1 Thessalonians 1).

## 6. What's our context?

Our context will help to inform our specific ambitions as a church.

Context	Possible implication
1. Very mixed local area	<i>Our church ought to be mixed</i>
2. Landmark, huge, formal building	<i>We should consider the expectations of visitors when planning service structure, welcome and programme</i>  <i>Danger of distortion of priorities due to upkeep &amp; redevelopment</i>
3. Surrounded by evangelical and charismatic churches	<i>Develop a distinctive vision ('a genuinely mixed local church with a passion for straightforward Bible teaching')</i>
4. Few active, able people who have much time (e.g. wives at home, empty-nesters, early-retirees)	<i>We will need to keep growing the number of labourers in the harvest</i>  <i>We may need to invest in paid staff to do jobs that might elsewhere be done by volunteers</i>
5. High turnover in local population	<i>Need for quickly welcoming, integrating and investing in newcomers</i>
6. The Church of England is moving away from its historic Biblical foundations	<i>Need to stay informed, be discerning, and take appropriate action to secure future gospel ministry</i>
7. Aftermath of Covid-19 pandemic	<i>Be alert to changes in our local area (working patterns, economic &amp; housing impact) and respond appropriately</i>  <i>Develop resilient patterns of ministry in personal relationships, use of technology, etc.</i>  <i>Maintain healthy financial reserves in case of future events</i>