

## Preston St Stephen's Mission Action Plan

### 2019 – 2021

We are part of the Diocese of Blackburn and exist to be a 'healthy church, transforming our community.'

This is how we see ourselves as a church now:

*'At St Stephen's Church we worship God together and grow in faith as a loving, supportive family of all ages. Together we want to make the good news of Jesus accessible for everyone.'*

By 2021 we see ourselves as being a ***Spirit-filled community of disciples, confidently sharing the good news about Jesus through word and action in the community and beyond.***

Our strapline sums all of this up as: **'Learning to love as Jesus does'**

We will work together to do this by:

### Making disciples

Creating opportunities for everyone to be part of a Growth Group with a focus on the following new groups:

- *Older people*
- *Internationals (Sanctuary seekers)*
- *People in their 20 and 30s*
- *People with additional needs*
- *Those new to faith/exploring faith*

Ensuring that our 'outreach' is matched by our 'up reach' in prayer by:

- *Running a teaching programme about the different types of prayer*
- *Establishing a prayer room to promote expectancy and intimacy in prayer*
- *Conducting a prayer audit for different areas of ministry in the church*
- *Celebrating answers to prayer in services and groups*

Growing deeper in our commitment to giving and serving by:

- *Devising sermon series and Growth Group studies to help members discover their spiritual gifts, personal style and passion and area of calling to serve*
- *Running an Away Day for ministry leaders on multi-generational church*
- *Growth Groups completing the Diocesan 'Generosity, Gift and Grace' Course*

## **Being witnesses**

Encouraging everyone to share their faith confidently and appropriately by:

- *Running a Friendship First Course*
- *Identifying and using resources to equip effective witness among our Hindu community*
- *Creating forums and group events to learn from other faiths and to share our faith*

Working in partnership with community leaders for the common good of the parish by

- *Sharing with the church the results from the 'Connected Community Survey'*
- *Contributing to a joint community initiative working with other faith and non-faith groups*
- *Engaging church members in the project to bless our community and deepen relationships with those from other faith groups*

Supporting our church school by:

- *Partnering with St Stephen's School in running a parent and child group*
- *Supporting the school with the development of the environmental area*
- *Running a 'Food Market' in school each week*
- *Leading collective worship for school each week and having a monthly prayer time with staff*

Supporting people to be effective witnesses on their front lines by

- *Providing teaching/ training in sharing our faith in the workplace*
- *Encouraging people to share stories of how they have experienced God at work*
- *Facilitating prayer for each other through 'This time tomorrow'*

## **Growing leaders**

Growing the next generation of leaders by:

Undertaking a consultation on the specific needs of people in their 20 and 30s

- *Ascertaining people's views of church within this age range, explore how we can help them flourish in their faith and encourage them to take on leadership responsibilities*

Identifying the priorities from our consultation on youth and children ministries:

- *Encourage children/young people to attend Christian camps*
- *Bi-monthly Jacob Joins (getting to know parents)*
- *Dividing the children into two age related groups in Junior Church*

Identifying and utilising the gifting of all individuals (see Making disciples)

To support existing leaders by

- *Having three-monthly Ministry Leaders' meetings to listen to each other, learn from others and pray for one another's ministries*
- *Holding ministry specific meetings every six months to plan, develop and support each area of ministry*

## Joining in God's mission

Develop a worshipping/witnessing presence in the Hartington Road/Christ Church Street area by

- *Holding weekly prayer in the chapel (County Hall)*
- *Building relationships with people living in this area*
- *Devising and conducting a survey to ascertain local people's views on church*
- *Identifying 'people of peace' to enable us to access local networks*
- *Exploring and identifying a location where we can meet*
- *Running an enquirers group (Alpha/START)*
- *Exploring if other partnerships can be formed*
- *Commencing a regular worshipping/witnessing group which meets regularly*

Developing a 'World Focus Group' to encourage whole church engagement in international mission

- Planning World Focus weekends once every three months
- Identifying our existing partners and learn more about their needs and opportunities
- Making recommendations about funding our partners
- Engaging with Diocese link partners
- Praying for workers to be sent out

Review: February 2020