

St. Martin's Liskeard – The next 6 years (2020 – 2026)

St Martin's Liskeard has a vision for growth and renewal. We have recently been blessed with significant funding through 'Transforming Mission' with the aim of becoming a resourcing church for South East Cornwall.

This vision springs from our desire to follow God's will and to be led where he wants us to go: it comes from much prayer and consultation: We have found answers through prayer, prophecy and words of knowledge. We have cast our net wide and gathered input from many individuals, from the PCC and from the AMD process. This has been combined with the results of a church vision day and from the thinking behind the parish profile a few years ago to produce this vision document.

We begin with a broad vision of where we see our church in six years' time. This is followed by some areas of priority and an assessment of where we are now. An action plan follows. This is not a business plan, rather a Spirit led vision behind which we can unite; a journey we can travel together towards the vision of our Mission Statement: ***Through the power of the Spirit to bring the love of Jesus to our community, to make disciples and to worship God.***

Our Vision – What do we see?

As we pray and seek God's will together, we see a vision of where our church will be in the future. We see a church of 600 people that is spiritually deep and culturally wide. It is a church that has a growing influence in Liskeard and resources others in South East Cornwall. It is a church focused on Jesus that is prepared to take risks in His name. It is a church where everyone can dream dreams and be heard; a place where creativity is encouraged in the name of Jesus. We see a church where the Holy Spirit is welcomed, where prayer, prophecy, healing and miracles are the norm. It is a place where people can find a home; a place of encouragement, hope, forgiveness and healing.

We see a church that reaches out into the community and becomes all things to all people yet is uncompromising in its beliefs. We see a place where people are introduced to Jesus and souls are saved; a place where people are passionate about the word of God and want to tell others. People will be taught, nurtured and encouraged on their journey of discipleship. St Martin's will be where people can come and take their rest and belong to a loving family that will support them in times of need.

We see a church that worships God with passion and commitment and where prayer is continuous.

Above all we see a church that is full of grace: overwhelming grace that welcomes the stranger and the outcast. A place of mercy, peace and freedom. A place where the Kingdom of God breaks through and where lives are touched and mended. We see a church of amazing grace where people can meet Jesus.

At St Martin's we see the impossible become true. We see a big church that has a big impact within the area, yet we also see a small church where people can belong and find fellowship. God makes all things possible; we trust in Him.

Our aims

- To introduce as many people as possible to Jesus.
- To love and care for our wider community following Jesus' example
- By 2026 to be a church of 600 members, each actively following Jesus on a journey of discipleship.
- To be a church where people *belong*; which looks after its members both spiritually and practically.
- To be a place where members are taught, discipled and challenged in their faith.
- To be a church with prayer at its heart.
- For every member to tithe 10% or more of their income.
- For every member to be part of a home group and a team
- To encourage the priesthood of all believers and to grow new leaders.
- To be a centre of excellence in worship – in a variety of styles.
- To provide good quality children's and youth work; to connect with and nurture young adults
- To be a resourcing church to South East Cornwall; offering to help other churches grow
- To support mission in other countries

Vision priorities - Where we are now and where we are heading.

St Martin's church is growing and is reaching out to people from a wide cross section of society. Growth however comes with its challenges. Our church is changing in character as we welcome more people into the fellowship. The following is our list of priorities. We pray that through the power of the Spirit we can work towards this in a spirit of unity and hope.

Worship

Worship is central to our walk with God. St Martin's seeks to be a place of excellence in Christian worship; both for the sake of its members and to resource those in other churches. We currently have a good standard of worship in St Martin's, although we recognise that it is always possible to improve. We have recently employed a professional worship leader to work with our existing worship bands so that together they can become even better at what they do. Some of our worship leaders are currently on a course to help them to do this.

Spreading the word

To fulfil our vision as a resourcing church, St Martin's first needs to grow. Our target is to grow to be a church of 600 within 6 years. We currently have a large number of bridges into the community such as ABC (Adults, Babies and children), Film Club, Knit and Natter, Good Book and Grub Club, schools work etc. We are praying about other areas where we can connect with people outside the church. It is important that mission is at the heart of **any** outreach initiative: we need to serve **and** we need to encourage people to cross the bridge and find faith in Jesus. Relationships need to be built and church members encouraged to talk to about their faith in Jesus with new people and friends, inviting them to become part of the church family. Vicars are not the best at mission! Our members need to have both the confidence to talk about their faith and an expectation that they will do so. Our mission is not limited to growing our own church, nor to this country. We believe in growing the kingdom rather than one church and will seek to support other churches and mission organisations.

Prayer

We believe that the Holy Spirit is active in our world and that He heals and teaches us. We are exploring ways of being more open to the Spirit and of encouraging the healing gifts. We have begun some evening worship sessions which are designed to be led by His presence.

Belonging and teams

Members of a church need to feel a sense of belonging and ownership. A church should be a social place where people can meet each other and form friendships. This can be difficult in larger congregations. To encourage a sense of belonging we have introduced a more formal 'Team' structure. This structure will not only help the church to function more efficiently, but (alongside our homegroups) will allow people to find fellowship within a smaller group. Each team will sort its own rota out, will meet regularly for social events and will be a source of support for members.

Welcome Team. (*Leader: Vanessa Greenaway*) It is easy to miss new people. The welcome team notice new people and encourage them to connect with the church – initially by filling in a Connect Form. The vicar hosts regular lunches to welcome new people. Information from the forms is used to encourage people to join a team and a home group. This system is working well.

Pastoral care Team. (*Leaders: Tiff Bennetts and Annie Purdon*) A church needs to offer pastoral support, care and prayer to its members, especially those in need. Homegroups and teams will be the primary source of such support. In addition to this we have recently started a pastoral team to support those in need; both within and without the church.

Alpha Team. (*Leader: Tiff Bennetts*) Alpha is a major part of our outreach

Worship Team (*Leader: Niall Dunne*) We now employ a professional worship leader to lead us in this area.

Choir (*leader: Chris Howarth*) We recognise that not everyone likes modern worship music and that for some choral/organ music helps them to connect with God in a profound way. St Martin's is fortunate to have an excellent choir, organ and choirmaster. We will build on this tradition and will introduce a series of St Martin's concerts. We will provide top quality classical music so that our church becomes known as a place of excellence.

Prayer (*Leaders: Linda Dean and Mike Sturgess*) Our online prayer group is very active. We currently provide prayer at all our services. This will become more of a priority and higher up the agenda in the very near future.

Discipleship and faith

God wants his people to grow in their faith and discipleship. Our church will teach, challenge and encourage people on their journey of discipleship through Sunday morning talks, homegroups, courses and other special events. The Bible is at the heart of our faith and we believe that it is the inspired word of God. Our teaching will be Bible based and lead by the Spirit. We believe that that no one will ever be rejected by God if they accept Jesus as their saviour – no matter what they might have done. Following the example of Jesus, we believe that the best way to be inclusive is to hold firm to Biblical truths with hearts overflowing with love. Jesus was surrounded by those he challenged – they found him an irresistible figure.

Living a Christian life is challenging in our secular world. Our church will offer support, encouragement and accountability to its members. We will teach the importance of personal devotion, of tithing, of compassion and belonging. We will encourage every member to be regular in Sunday worship, to join a homegroup and a team, to read their bible and to commit to giving to the work of the church.

It is important that as a church we share core values and beliefs whilst recognising that people's views on some matters will differ. Our preaching, teaching and homegroup courses will reflect the values contained in the Evangelical Alliance and New Wine statements of faith. These have been agreed by the PCC.

Family work

Children and families are a mission priority and much of what has been said above is designed to support this. We are currently interviewing for a Pioneer Leader to lead this along with a Family Worker.

Young people

We want to invest in young people. We currently have 2 small youth groups and seek to expand these and reach out to others. These are run by a dedicated team of volunteers who are working at capacity. We have recently interviewed for a Pioneer Leader and a Youth Worker to help us to take this work forwards. Our vision is to provide good quality Christian youth work based at our premises in Liskeard. As with family and community work, this will not just be for its own sake, but also as a way to introduce the Gospel to young people and to their parents.

Family/Youth Mission – a resourcing church perspective

Many families do not find it easy to make small rural churches their home, especially if they have young children or teenagers. Families living in rural areas often drive past their local church and seek out larger, more modern churches with lively worship and children's work. Our intention is not to increase St Martin's congregation by drawing in people from other churches, but to provide high quality worship so that people can come on an occasional basis. They can be fed and then encouraged to play a part in their local church. Once we have an established youth provision at St Martin's, we will offer our services to other churches in the area who may need some assistance in starting youth work. St Martin's will also be a centre for larger regional youth events.

Beacon Events

We have hosted a number of large events recently (Thy Kingdom Come, Creation Fest tour etc) and have a number of others in the pipeline (Lou Felligham day, Cathedral Choir visit etc). Our building and resources allow us to provide events that people from the wider area can attend. This is part of our vision as a resource church to the area.

Leadership

We want to encourage people to take on leadership roles within the church. We believe that leaders come in all shapes and sizes and are not limited by age, gender or class. Peter was a fisherman, Moses was 80 when he led Israel out of Egypt, Timothy reminds young people that they too can be leaders and Esther's bravery saved her people from a terrible fate. We are currently running a leadership course and will look for other opportunities to encourage people to step forward, offering training when they do. Leadership involves risk – both for the new leader and for the church leadership itself. We will encourage a culture of *'it is ok to get it wrong – we all do!'*

Social care and outreach

Jesus went out of His way to help those in need. We will seek ways in which we can help those in the wider community in distress or in need. We currently host the Liskeard churches CAP centre, contribute to the Foodbank, offer free meals over the summer holiday period to families and distribute hardship and food grants. The schools have asked us to be more involved in their families work as there is significant need here. We believe that the best thing we can do for people is to serve them and introduce them to Jesus. In short, we want to meet people where they are and invite them to become a part of a caring, loving family that has fun together.

Buildings

We are extremely blessed with our buildings which are more than adequate for our needs, although the church centre needs updating. The installation of glass doors in the south porch is now complete and with the north door following soon. St Martin's is a large and complex building and we have recently invested more resource in outside professional expertise.

The environment

As stewards of creation we are committed to protecting the planet God has given us. This is also a major point of connection with our wider community as care for the environment is a passion many people share. St Martin's currently has solar panels on its roof and is exploring ways (such as draught excluding) to make our buildings more efficient. We provide Café Abundance once a month which not only provides food to those who find it hard to pay, but uses food otherwise destined to be thrown away. We are working towards a Bronze Environment Award.

Where do we go from here? Actions for the next year.

- **Culture.** **This is a priority area.** We are seeking to develop a church which knows what it believes, is happy to inhabit that and can move forward together. The 0915 service is probably further on than the 1100 in terms of how together everyone is, the 1100 is probably more mission and Holy Spirit focused. **Action points.** Have this in mind in all we do. Sermon series on worship. Involve Nikki/Niall/Beki/John.
- **Worship and 1100 service.** **This is a priority area.** This service is growing but if it is to continue to do so, it will need some more structured leadership. God is leading us to offer prayer ministry, to teach giving/tithing and to be freer in our worship. We want to be a worshipping community that has excellent worship. Not for our sake but so that God is glorified and people find it conducive to seek Him. **Action Points:** Niall to facilitate a team to help lead this forward.
- **Communication.** **This is a priority area.** **Action points:** The introduction of Church Suite soon will allow us to communicate both more widely and more effectively. The Worship Leader is now responsible for our social media and online presence. This has improved significantly. Church suite live date
- **Teams.** The teams are now up and running, although some need more members and the concept needs embedding within the church. **Action point:** Steve/Nikki to develop this further.
- **Pastoral care** of the congregation needs to be given a higher priority than it currently has and to be more systematic. **Action point:** Tiff/ Annie/Nikki to develop the team and its work..
- **Discipleship and teaching.** At our Vision Day we affirmed our belief in the need for Bible based teaching to equip us for the challenge of living a Christian life in a secular culture. As a whole church we have recently undertaken a number of courses designed to give a basis of faith and to encourage people to speak openly about Jesus. Good preaching is the backbone of a vibrant and Jesus loving church. We will train and encourage our own preachers and invite outside speakers to lead and teach us. **Action points:** Steve/Nikki to plan a yearly programme of sermon series, teaching, courses etc. Steve/Helen Hazlewood (Homegroup coordinator) to work together to increase both the number and quality of our groups. Homegroups will be encouraged to train new leaders and to grow and split.
- **Mission.** If we are to continue growing, we will need to equip our members to speak openly about Jesus. **Action Points:** This will become more of a focus for our talks on Sunday as well as in extra courses and homegroups. Advance 2020 and other courses may help with training.
- **Overseas Mission .** We continue to support a number of people, including the Leswell family who have recently been sent out by the church to Bosnia. **Action Points:** Maintain contact with these people and potentially arrange visits in 2021 to Bosnia. Steve to liaise with David Hazlewood.
- **Prayer** is central to everything we do and is the bedrock of our church. **Action Points:** Encourage prayer both during and after each service and give opportunities for individual prayer/ministry. We recognise that this will take time to become embedded. Phil to lead a 24 hr prayer session. Prayer walking the streets will be explored.
- **Gifts of the Spirit.** As a church we want to move more in this area and to welcome the Holy Spirit into our lives and our worship more. We firmly believe this is where God is leading us. We want a culture that sees **this** as normal behaviour. **Action points:** We will be more open to the Spirit's gifts within our services, we will run prayer and healing evening services. Increasingly our services will be followed by an invitation to prayer from the ministry team. Continue with evening prayer services and encourage this culture to grow.

- **Youth and young adults. Action Points:** We will employ a Pioneer Leader and Youth Worker to lead us in this area.
- **Family work.** This is currently progressing well, but we are at capacity. **Action Points:** We will employ a Pioneer Leader and Family Worker to lead us in this area and to develop the mission aspect.
- **Alpha** is central to our mission work. **Action points:** Facilitate regular Alpha courses. Tiff coordinating.
- **Schools** - Schools are an amazing way of connecting with the wider community. **Actions points:** Continue involvement at schools through governance, visits, assemblies etc. Build on this to make relationships (e.g. Good Book and Grub Club) This area will be a priority for the Pioneer Leader to address.
- **Leadership.** We believe that leadership is vital to grow both the church and the Kingdom. Our team structure should help facilitate this the identification and subsequent training of new leaders. **Action points:** We will continue to run the leadership course and will actively look for ways to encourage people to step up to leadership positions.
- **Giving and finance.** Giving needs to be higher up the agenda and tithing seen as something to which every member should aspire. We understand that this is a personal decision before God and that circumstances are different. 10% is the standard suggestion although it is recognised that some people cannot reach that amount and others will give more. **Action points:** We will be more open about giving in church, taking the line that giving is another form of worship. We will teach more about giving and explain different ways in which members can give.
- **Buildings. Action points.** Pursue faculty re glass doors (Tony). Continue working with Graham Howarth to produce a schedule of works for the hall complex. Begin fundraising (Mike). Consider what extra professional input may be needed to help care for our buildings.
- **Environment.** Refurbishment of the hall complex will need to take environmental impact seriously. On a smaller scale we need to work to reduce our carbon footprint and wastage. **Action points:** Include environmental impact in hall complex proposal. Be more open about environmental impact in all we do – e.g. reduce use of disposable crockery, heating policy etc. Provide Café Abundance more often.