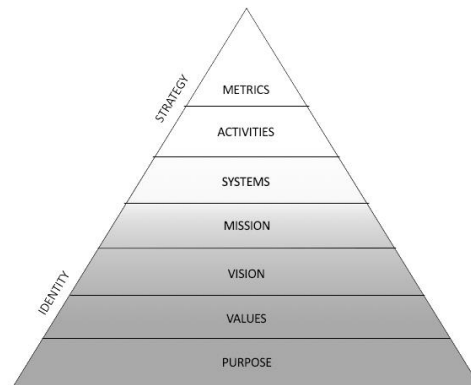


Our vision for Families Ministry at TBC is built upon **Isaiah 40** with particular focus on vs 3 – 14 and 28 – 31. We have felt God direct and speak to us through this passage and we have sought to discern His will and direction.

We see our ministry to families as a partnership with God, sustained by His Holy Spirit and dependant on His strength and vision.



The above model has been used to aid the development of our vision and strategy.

Our purpose:

To support the vision we have as Thornbury Baptist Church:

- **Love for God** – learning together what it means to grow in God’s love, to receive His grace and love and to walk in His presence every day.
- **Love for one another** – serving one another, praying for one another, caring for one another, encouraging one another and teaching one another.
- **Love for the world** – supporting one another in our attempts to share God’s love in word and deed in our everyday lives.

We want to support people and to share our faith in a season in life where many are more open to responding – ‘a ripe harvest’.

To be an example to our community of what family, church and a relationship with God can look like.

As a ministry to families we particularly want to **PROCLAIM** and to **PREPARE** for God to meet and minister to families in Thornbury both within the church members and the wider community.

The purpose of this document is to outline the Vision, Values and Strategy for Families Ministry in Thornbury Baptist Church.

- **Vision** is the outcome that we aim for.
- **Values** are how we want to be.
- **Strategy** is the plan that we have in place to achieve the outcome.

This document shows the big picture for Families Ministry within Thornbury Baptist Church and is intended for the following groups of people:

- All those who wish to be part of the Families Ministry. They will need to be part of the on-boarding process under the Safeguarding Policy that enables potential workers, and the church, to decide if and where they would work.
- All those already part of the Families Ministry, so that they can see and understand how they fit within the whole.
- Wider church leaders – the Elders, Ministry Team Leaders, hosts of services and so on, so that they can be aware of and take account of families within the big picture when taking decisions and leading in their function.

Our Values:

We believe God is good and loves each of us without any exceptions.

Jesus is the only way to eternal life and to experience life to the full.

We love those in our community because God first loved us, God is our motivation.

We want to level the ground as described in Isaiah 40:3 so that all families can be welcomed, accepted and respected as they are.

We want to provide holistic care for all families. We work collaboratively with other areas of the church and other local and national ministries to provide spiritual care and where needed, practical support such as food, debt advice, counselling.

God wants to minister to, as well as through, our staff and volunteer teams. All team members are able to hear from God and we are better able to fulfil and discern God's vision together than we are individually.

VISION

TO PREPARE and PROCLAIM

Isaiah 40:3-4 – our role is to prepare the way *by being real and authentic as Christians, creating opportunities/space to show and speak the love of God, aiming to foster a curiosity about Him.*

V6-8 - to proclaim in word and deed *what life is really about, offering hope by contrasting the temporary and fragile nature of human life with God's eternal word.*

V9 - Bring the Good news without fear – to speak out as well as act out. *We want to introduce Jesus to the families in the community because we believe there is power in the name and person of Jesus that can transform lives.*

V10 - to not limit God and what He can do.

V11 – to be under shepherds, acknowledging that it is the Lord that gently leads, as should we.

OUR MISSION

For community families:

In 2 years time we would like to achieve the following:

For all Two by Two families and coffee shop families to hear the Gospel and have been given the opportunity to engage with church, an Alpha or pre Alpha course.

That we may be able to offer all families specific help for their particular needs, including referral to specialist agencies where appropriate in a timely fashion.

To offer support to Dads and develop new ways for them to hear the Gospel.

To see our relationships with families continue beyond pre-school age possibly through some primary aged outreach.

To provide opportunities for friendship with and between Mothers.

For church families:

To provide opportunities for more families to participate fully in the life of the church.

To support parents as they spiritually nurture and disciple their children.

To have services that are relevant and welcoming to children and their families and which help them to meet with God.

To encourage more regular commitment to meeting together

To develop new ways for dads to engage and to be disciplined.

To support the vision for our youth and children's ministry which is 'Helping to grow a faith that lasts.'

SYSTEMS

The Families Ministry is overseen by the Elders and namely Paul Ferguson, who has particular responsibility as an elder for the Families Ministry.

Practical day to day details are managed by Heather Scolah (Pioneer Families Minister) and the largest part of this ministry is fulfilled by the volunteers from within the church family at TBC by the grace of God.

The Families Ministry comes under the existing wider structure of TBC for health and safety, safe recruitment and care of teams.

ACTIVITIES

Programmes will be determined through prayer and measured against whether they are consistent with our vision and values outlined in this document and with the support and agreement of the Elders.

At present our ministry includes Two by Two toddler groups, Mums events, Dad's mornings, Family Cafe, occasional Forest Church sessions, Joy Tots Baby group and Mums Bible Study alongside individual pastoral family support & a social media presence for the above groups.

An area discussed that is lacking is for primary aged families to meet for something akin to 'Messy Church' to bridge the gap between the pre-school Families Ministry and the Youth Work.

METRICS

Our goal is that all those that God brings to us have the opportunity to hear and feel the love of God through His church. We will use 'The disciple Makers journey' as a model to aid our prayers so that we support families in the community by asking 'What next Lord' for them.



This document is centred around what we as a church will be seeking to do for families and seeks to create space for God to be able to minister directly with families. Whilst we hope that all who hear the Gospel will want to respond and develop their own relationship with God we recognise that God has given us the free gift of salvation that all people choose for themselves whether or not to receive.

Our prayers is that of 13th Century Richard of Chichester that *may I/we know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly day by day.*