

Melbourne Methodist Church

Mission Action Plan - March 2023

Our vision

Melbourne Methodist Church exists to worship God in relevant and exciting ways. We believe we are called to share our knowledge and faith in Jesus with others so that our families, friends, neighbours, local community, and those we meet in our everyday lives may be encouraged and enabled to follow Jesus for themselves.

Our values

Melbourne Methodist Church:

- is focused on God the Holy Trinity – *worship lies at our heart*.
- is relational – welcoming and providing hospitality, listening and open to change.
- seeks to be relevant – responding to the needs of the local community.
- seeks to make disciples – calling people to faith, encouraging gifts, transforming individuals.
- seeks to be transformational – existing for the transformation of our church, the wider community, and the world.
- We recognise that all individuals are at different points on a faith journey.
- We encourage and enable young people to lead change.
- We encourage and enable older people to continue active church roles.
- We are inclusive and not exclusive in all we do.
- We are a Fair-Trade Church
- We aim to be an Eco Church
- We always try to see the world through God's eyes.

Preface

First and foremost, Melbourne Methodist Church is a group of Christian people. Our Church - which has been active in Melbourne for well over 200 years - is a lively, vibrant church that takes its social responsibility seriously. On Sundays we enjoy relatively modern worship styles with good bible-based preaching. We are blessed with a good junior and youth church who leave the main service to enjoy their own activities in Wesley Hall next door. The church has a broad range of age groups with an excellent mix of local families and families that have moved into the area more recently. We pride ourselves in being a truly supportive, Christian family church with an extensive pastoral support network into the community. We support many of the town's events taking an active part in the Melbourne Festival and Carnival Days.

This plan builds upon the Church Vision Document, first compiled in September 2021. The focus of the church at that time was to consider how to re-engage with the community following the pandemic. This led to the re-launch of the regular mission focused activities: Tiddlywinks, Tea Service, Splash, 9 months, and the formation of a new group, Crafteasy. Alongside of this there was a renewed desire to engage with those in the community who faced big challenges in their lives whether related to ill health, financial difficulty, or other factors.

At a general church meeting in September 2022, the church began to form a Mission Action Plan. Several questions were explored to enable creative thinking, dreaming and what the next steps might be.

The first set of questions were: Why is this church here? What is its purpose? Why do you feel called to be a part of it?

The second was simply how much do we know about the community in which we are placed?

And finally, two questions with a more creative focus:

- If the church burned down tomorrow, what would we do?
- If we received an anonymous two-million-pound bequest what would we do with it?

The conversation and feedback from this meeting provided the basis for a mission action plan, along the lines set out by the Mission Planning Toolkit produced by the Methodist Church, and the 'Leading your Church into Growth' resources.

This mission plan is a work in progress, but the church has completed some of the planning/action process as outlined above: deciding a process, carrying out a community audit, a church review and spent some time dreaming together. This update is the next step in identifying our next actions.

Current church activities:

However, whilst these conversations and explorations are ongoing, the church is not standing still. The list below, though not exhaustive, gives an indication of the church's current activity. The items in italics indicate new aspects (post pandemic) in the life of the church.

- Sunday worship to be the best it can be.
- 9 months: support for new parents. Tiddlywinks and Splash: worship, crafts, bible stories, puppets and play for pre-school children.
- *Start: a course for adults exploring faith to which the parents of the above activities were invited.*
- Monthly Afternoon Tea Service which includes a time of worship.
- Summer Holiday Club, Light Party and Easter Party to which Primary School age children are invited.
- *Crafteasy: a morning twice a month to which all are invited.*
- Advent and Lent study groups, house groups and bible study.
- Junior Church and Young People's group (currently engaging with Youth Alpha)
- Family picnics and camping weekend.
- Monthly Coffee Mornings
- Financial support for charities (10% of giving) including: Care for the Family, Street Pastors (currently 4 members are active in this role), the Phakamisa project and Compassion.
- *Working with Melbourne Junior and Infant schools to support families in financial need offering Sainsbury's vouchers and a 'warm space' with food and fun after school.*
- Involved with Melbourne Carnival as stewards for the parade.
- A venue for the Melbourne Arts Festival.
- Share and prayer: a twice monthly prayer meeting on a Sunday evening.
- Themed preaching.
- Engaging with Melbourne Churches Together at key times e.g., Remembrance, switching on of Christmas lights, Christian Aid Week, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Our Mission Action Plans –

The following actions are designed to help move us forwards as a church and to help us fulfil our vision. They are based on ‘Our calling’ – the foundations of the Methodist Church

WORSHIP

Action 1 – To make our worship the best it can be.

Action: Update the technical equipment used to facilitate worship – to include new screens, microphones, speakers, computers, and software.

Owner: Technical team (Matt Lee, Mark Dale, Andrew Wilde, Duncan Allan, Steve Draper, Alan Brady, AJ Booker, Rob Hawkins, Dennis Smith)

Date: June 2023

LEARNING & CARING

Action 2 – To run a short study course for the benefit of parents and carers at Splash and other newcomers e.g., Start, Alpha, Christianity Explored

Action: Publicise course – Identify resources and dates

Owner: Church Leadership Team and Co-opted volunteers

Date: September 2023

SERVING

Action 3 – To support and help those most keenly affected by the Cost-of-living Crisis.

Action: To run a ‘Warm Space’; provide Sainsburys Vouchers

Owner: Church Leadership Team and Co-opted volunteers

Date: Spring 2023

EVANGELISM & OUTREACH

Action 4 – To make church available to children, young people and families that are now engaged elsewhere on a Sunday Morning.

Action: Identify an alternative time of worship and learning and the required resources

Owner: Church Leadership Team and Co-opted volunteers e.g., Milly Roberts and Mark Dale

Date: August 2023

We are also committed to continuing to use the Methodist Church Mission Planning Workbook and Process

Action 5 – Complete a Community Audit using various methods.

Action: Identify methods and owners.

Owner: Church Leadership Team

Date: May 2023

Audit Results Required: August 2023

Action 6 – Complete a Church Strength and Weaknesses Review

Action: Hold an after-church review and capture results

Owner: Mark Dale *(If required)*

Date: May 2023

Action 7 – Complete a ‘Dream Together’ event to explore future church opportunities – to include output from the Community Audit

Action: Hold a facilitated, fun, ‘blue sky thinking’ social event where we will start to identify future church projects

Owner: Church Leadership Team and Co-opted volunteers e.g., Mark Dale

Date: September 2023

Action 4 – Plan the next Mission Planning process steps.

Action: Identify steps and potential owners.

Owner: Church Leadership Team

Date: October 2023

Review:

This plan will be reviewed at our regular Church Council Meetings.

Adopted by Melbourne Methodist Church Council on Monday 13th March 2023