

# Riverside Vision

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## Section 1: Towards a Riverside Vision

### Introduction

This report introduces some priorities for Riverside church. It is meant to help us to make decisions about the direction, resources and worship of our community. It is not a definite plan; it's an attempt to discover some shared values that can shape our church.

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some shared values that can  
shape our church*

This began with a vision day where the whole church was invited to think about what God might be saying to us. The congregation were able to leave comments and to share their ideas with the leadership team.

We have looked at these comments and found common ideas which are discussed in Section 2 of this report.

Section 3 of the report develops some extra ideas from the leadership team.

Section 4 draws these ideas together and suggests community values for Riverside.

## Vision

In one sense every church has the same vision.

In one sense every church has the same vision. The Bible gives clear teaching about what the church should do.

We make disciples.

We love God and love each other.

We follow Jesus and as his disciples, we tell his story, share the good news about him and try to live like him.

Go and make disciples  
of all nations...

But every church is different.

Every church has its own specific place and time. So we have to work out how to live as Jesus' disciples in our place and time.

The rest of this report is an attempt to think about how Riverside church can try to do this.

...we have to work out how to live as Jesus' disciples in our own place and time.

...we can do the good things  
he planned for us long ago.

## Section 2: Riverside Vision Day

3rd May 2015

By working through the ideas that were left on the 'comments wall' and in the 'red box' we have picked out four main values for the church.

### Relying on God

A challenge for a church is to ask, are we different from other communities or community groups? One of the main ways Riverside should be different from other community groups is that we aim to give God glory. Everything we do and everything we are should help people see that God is trustworthy and worth praising.

#### Our church should stand out by being

- **focussed on God**
- **dependent on God**
- **thankful to God**

### Discipleship

Relationships are really important in our church. God has commanded us to love him, each other and the wider world. As part of the Christian community we eat, laugh, cry, and have fun together. But in church our relationships have a special purpose. Together we are followers; disciples of Jesus of Nazareth.

Together we

- learn
- pray
- work, serve and worship
- care for each other
- share the good news

#### As disciples we need to

- **learn what God has said in the Bible**
- **identify the gifts and resources God has given us all**
- **support each other**
- **include our whole church community in growing faith**

## **Serving our Community**

Jesus often formed friendships with people by helping them; he healed them, fed them and challenged them to see the world in a new way.

One of the ways that people hear the good news about Jesus is when his followers help their communities.

We already aim to do this but the vision day resulted in some new ideas.

### **These included**

- **random acts of kindness**
- **food and visits for the elderly**
- **sporting activities**
- **listening or counselling services**
- **involving the community in some church events**

We also recognise that between us we have many different contacts, connections and relationships across our parish and beyond. These represent different communities we can serve as individuals. It might also be good for us to think about how our networks can connect more people to Riverside church.

## **Our Building**

We know that the church is the Christian family not the building. But our church building is both beautiful and useful. We need to think about how we appropriately use, develop and promote our building in the Muirton and North Muirton communities and beyond.

Again, because we are a Christian community there are special reasons for doing this.

### **Our building can be**

- **a place of blessing for the community**
- **a place where relationships are formed with the community**
- **used generously as part of our mission**

If the building is an important part of mission to the community then its maintenance and development are also important.

## Section 3: Extra ideas

These ideas don't come from the vision day. Instead they are suggestions from members of the leadership team.

### Mission & Evangelism

This report has not specifically mentioned mission. One reason is that most of the activities covered are actually part of mission. For example, the main ideas from the vision day; relying on God, making disciples, serving our community and using our building, are all at the centre of mission.

But it is important that we highlight evangelism. Evangelism is the activity of telling people the good news of and about Jesus. We can speak about Jesus in different ways but it's important that we do it because sometimes telling others gets lost amongst other mission work.

### Prayer

Prayer is one of the most important activities of the church. By praying we connect with God; speaking to him and listening to him. As we pray we are changed by his Spirit, we find guidance, healing and direction, energy, love and faith.

Everything we do as part of Riverside should be soaked through with prayer, not simply from prayer meetings but as a general attitude and behaviour of the church.

*...in every situation, by prayer and petition,  
with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

## Wider vision

It can be easy for the church to focus on our own local area; for example the place where we live or the parish that the church is in.

It is important that we remember that we are part of a global movement of Jesus' disciples. Through Jesus we are connected with other Christians across Perth, Scotland, the UK and the rest of the world.

We should keep on being involved with other churches and Christian organisations, learning about them, supporting them and praying for them.

Now you are the body of Christ,  
and each one of you is a part of it

## Local & Gathered

We are a parish church to Muirton, North Muirton and the North Inch. But our Christian community includes people from all over and around Perth.

We should celebrate this mix of people. We want to encourage and support our joint mission to the parish. And we want to encourage the mission of individuals across our city to their friends, neighbours, family and colleagues.

## The Arts

Riverside church has many creative people with different gifts and interests. Perhaps we could continue to develop these abilities to praise God and to connect with other people.

The church held an arts evening about a year ago, could we keep on developing this ministry in the future?

## Section 4: What is Riverside Church?

Like many churches Riverside church is not simple to define.

Riverside is the group of people that meet on a Sunday morning. Riverside is also the many other church activities that happen during the week.

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Riverside is not easy to  
define

Riverside is a Parish church serving and connecting with the people of the North Inch, Muirton and North Muirton. And Riverside is a gathering of Christians from all over Perth.

Instead of trying to define ourselves as a specific group it may be more useful to use the shared ideas/values from this report to shape our common identity.

Riverside is a diverse community of people who gather and worship in different ways.

But at our heart we aim to:

**Rely** upon God

**Grow** as Jesus' disciples

**Make** disciples

**Serve** each other, our neighbours, our parish, our city and beyond

**Offer our building** to bless others and glorify God

**Offer our abilities** and creativity to expand God's Kingdom

**Pray** as a way of life