



# ST. EDWARD'S

## St Edward's : Community. Welcome. Hope

Vision 2022

### THE VISION: 2027

#### **Community: *Our parish***

St Edward's is a thriving church at the heart of the community: metaphorically, physically, and spiritually. It buzzes daily with a diversity of people who pop in for a cuppa, come to find a home, support or help, and the love of Jesus.

As an 'Inclusive Church', we strive to be fully accessible to all (in relation to the diversity of humanity eg: physical disability, learning abilities, neuro diversity, gender, race, mental wellbeing etc)

The Mustard Seed Café is now open 5 days a week and with a paid manager, it continues to be a thriving hub and entry point to the church, signposting people to the love of Jesus and all that we do at St Ed's.

#### **Welcome: *Church Family***

The church family has grown both spiritually - in the depth of our faith; and numerically – as those in the community have been welcomed into the breadth of all that is offered here. Our electoral roll numbers over 200; with many more passing through the doors each week; we pay our full parish share, as well as being able to give regularly to our mission partners.

Church Family is nurtured through the many events going on each week from bible study, home groups, times of prayer, Alpha, social events, and more.

We have a paid children's worker who oversees our children's ministry on Sundays and through the week, and who has developed good relationships with the community and local schools.

#### **Hope: *Our Worship***

We proclaim the good news of Jesus unashamedly and seek the work of the Holy Spirit in all we do. This has brought in many people coming to explore faith as well as nurturing more seasoned believers. Our services are flourishing and cover a range of worship styles including a more formal mass, contemporary worship and all age gathering.

*The Garden Project* has been an exciting development of an outdoor worship space and community garden which enables outdoor weekly all age worship, drawing in many local families.

St Ed's truly is at the heart of the communit

## Vision Outline – August 2022

### Introduction

The *vision process* has included times of prayer and worship, together and individually; opportunities to respond and share thoughts; and the vision team meeting to pray and oversee all that was being shared. In all this the team focussed on three words:

**Community** – centres around the idea of our parish – the wider community in which we are situated. We've asked you and ourselves the question of what does it look like to be a church at the centre of the community.

**Welcome** – is something that comes up time and again that St Edward's is known for. But we must ask ourselves, what is it that we welcoming people in to?

**Hope** – Hope is symbolic of our hope in Jesus Christ, represents our worship and the Eucharist at the centre of what we do here.

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It would be difficult to share every tiny practical detail of the vision (and indeed some are not yet worked out!) but these are the headline points of the vision:

### The Garden Project

- ***to develop an area of the churchyard to create an outdoor worship space, and community garden.***

This will be built in the area behind the Sanctuary. Members of the wider community will be encouraged to be part of this project, helping us develop the plan and garden, with a sense of personal engagement/ownership. The garden could include growing veg for the café or for local families, engaging children and young people, helping developing skills, and enable mental health support. All of which are key locally.

- ***to develop an outdoor based service, aimed at all ages.***

The garden would include a space for outdoor worship in which we can develop a new service accessible for all ages. This service could include elements of different styles of worship including liturgical, contemporary, contemplative etc. We can draw on the experience of those running 'Forest church', or 'Wild church' etc.

The 'service' would be on a Sunday afternoon, followed by some sort of sharing of food and will start on Sun 2nd October – initially once a month to get us going.

Alongside this we will explore being an 'eco church' an initiative run by Charity *Arocha* to help churches be more environmentally aware and sustainable in they do.

## **Children, Families and School's worker**

- In all our preparation the theme of engaging with families and the younger generation has come up time and again and is going to be key to our growth - it will require a lot of work, time and skills that most of us don't have. So, the second strand of seeing our new vision is to seek to employ a part time 'children, families and schools worker' to start in Sept 2023. The role will be to oversee children's work, be part of the core team for the new garden service, and will help develop relationships with schools and families locally. We will seek grant funding to cover the salary. We believe this role is vital to our future.

## **Contemporary worship**

- Thirdly, many of you have been asking for times of more open worship, and space to seek the Lord in a contemporary way – which has been a part of St Edward's in the past and we want to bring this back. So we will be starting a new evening mid-week service, initially once a month but to grow to be more regular – it will include live music wherever possible, space for the Holy Spirit to move, be less liturgical, mostly non- Eucharistic.

- This will be on Wednesday evenings so it is accessible to those who can't do Sunday, will initially be once a month, and start on Wed 14th September

## **Other areas**

Those are our 3 big headlines but alongside this there will be other things going on to build for the future and that includes:

- Seeking to employ a **part time café manager** to oversee, grow and develop the café
- Work towards being an **inclusive church** – looking at our accessibility for a range of people
- Develop our **website**, online presence, and signage - helping us to be more visible in the parish.
- Retain and grow our **10am mass**

## **Finances**

We need to increase our overall income to do all this and increase our parish share significantly over the next 3-5 years. We are aiming to do this in various ways:

- 1 - increase our outside income – eg: bookings/ café profits
- 2 - grant funding - especially in relation to children's worker, accessibility, garden project
- 3 - aim to increase our regular giving
- 4 - hold a gift day (11<sup>th</sup> September)

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We hope you will be as excited about this new vision as we are and encourage you to pray about your place and role within it, as well as your giving towards it.

With every blessing,

Rev Jules & The Vision Team