



## WELCOME TO ST PAUL'S WEST HACKNEY

We are a community of folk who are single, married, partnered, divorced, widowed, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, cisgender, intersex, gender fluid, not quite sure, rich, poor and penniless.

Some of us are wailing babies and are others excited toddlers. Some of us are a bit north of 60 and haven't quite grown up and some of us are in our teens and often feel like we're growing up too fast. We are wheelchair users, runners, walkers and amblers. Sometimes we stumble and fall and when we do, we try and help each other up again.

Some of us sing like Mel Tormé whilst others of us are happy just to growl quietly to ourselves. Some of us have come to browse, some have just woken up and some have just been released from prison.

Some of us attend church more than the Archbishop of Canterbury and some of us haven't darkened the doors of a church since we were on the way home from that Christmas party ten years ago. Some of us are here because our mother is visiting for the weekend and it's more than our lives are worth not to go to church with her and look as though we're having something that bears a passing resemblance to a good time.

Some of us find the whole idea of God a bit odd, have been damaged by religion, were force-fed religion as children or have wound up here by mistake. Some of us could use a prayer right now, have screwed up monumentally and would like to light a candle but don't quite know why or to whom. A goodly number of us aren't what you might call 'exactly struck' on organised religion.

Some of us are inked, pierced or both. Some are in recovery and others are still addicted. Some of us work too hard, some don't work, can't work, can't spell and feel like we're not very good at stuff, when in fact we almost certainly are. Most of us know what it's like to have problems, to be down in the dumps and, on occasions, to feel angry with God.

Most of us have figured out that you can never really know what's right for another person and some of us long for some stillness in an often-noisy world, where we can discover the treasure that is within us.

We are a mixture of pilgrims, tourists, migrants, asylum seekers, neighbours, explorers, doubters and those who prefer to travel rather than to arrive. We call ourselves and each other to go about life in as compassionate, generous, collaborative, loving, creative, hospitable and grateful a way as possible.

We believe that the God who called us all into being - however he, she or they may be perceived - welcomes, embraces and loves us all. We at St Paul's try, in our own stumbling way, to take our lead from God as we go about welcoming, embracing and loving ourselves and one another.

## **Our vision and values**

St Paul's, West Hackney is a Christian community with a vision for a church and parish where all may have enriching and sustainable life in abundance. We pursue this vision by seeking to know, love and serve God and neighbour with our whole being and by following our six core values.



# St Paul's West Hackney

## Who we are

St Paul's is the Parish Church of West Hackney, within the Stepney Area of the Church of England Diocese of London.

## Our vision

- *St Paul's, West Hackney, is a Christian community with a vision for a church and parish where all may have enriching and sustainable life and have it in abundance.*
- *We pursue this vision by seeking to know, love and serve God and neighbour with our whole being and by following our six Core Values.*

## Our values

In pursuit of this vision, we call ourselves and each other to be

- *Loving*
- *Inclusive*
- *Generous*
- *Creative*
- *Collaborative*
- *Courageous*

These six values offer us a glimpse of what we believe lies at the heart of God.

They offer us focus and a firm foothold as we pursue our vision.

They guide and inform our behavior and our decision-making as a church community and we seek to live by them with integrity and in a thoughtful and intentional way.

They offer us an idea of what we can expect from each other and we are prepared to call one another to account on them.

They offer our partners and all with whom we come into contact an idea of what they can expect from us.

## Our values in practice

The following pen-pictures illustrate the values by which we seek to live and how they might be lived out in our everyday life and decision-making at St Paul's.

These illustrations should be considered neither exhaustive nor definitive.

<b>LOVING</b>	
<p><b>Behaviours which would reflect this value</b></p>	<p><b>We will be:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>kind and caring</i></li> <li>• <i>compassionate to those in need</i></li> <li>• <i>more attentive to those on the margins of our church and parish communities</i></li> <li>• <i>empathic and responsive</i></li> <li>• <i>non – judgmental</i></li> <li>• <i>aware of God, ourselves and others</i></li> <li>• <i>caring to others as we wish to be cared for ourselves</i></li> <li>• <i>celebratory in the growth of others.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>How this value could affect our decision making</b></p>	<p><b>We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>be patient and kind</i></li> <li>• <i>be prayerful and considered in our approach and in our thinking</i></li> <li>• <i>avoid arrogance and rudeness when making our point</i></li> <li>• <i>try not to insist on always getting our own way</i></li> <li>• <i>guard against undue irritation and resentment with the decisions of others</i></li> <li>• <i>aim to get the best for everyone out of any given situation</i></li> <li>• <i>accept the will of the majority.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>The impact that living by this value might have on us and on the life of our community.</b></p>	<p><b>We will see:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>people glimpsing something of the love of God in their interaction with St Paul's</i></li> <li>• <i>people knowing that they are important to others</i></li> <li>• <i>people thriving</i></li> <li>• <i>new relationships developing.</i></li> <li>• <i>greater pleasure and enjoyment from those within and who interact with the St Paul's community.</i></li> </ul>

# INCLUSIVE

**Behaviours which would reflect this value**

**We will be:**

- *intentional in working in partnership with our wider parish community as we pursue our vision*
- *valuing of people*
- *fair in our approach*
- *tolerant*
- *open and welcoming to new faces and organisations*
- *valuing of individuality*
- *accepting of diversity and the richness it brings.*

**How this value could affect our decision making**

**We will:**

- *be transparent in our approach, whilst respecting confidentiality*
- *listen out for and be encouraging of the quieter voices within our church and parish community which might otherwise go unheard*
- *listen to the voices of those in our wider parish community, especially those on its margins*
- *listen to the different stakeholders in our church community and the parish we serve*
- *attend to equality of opportunity*
- *prioritize opportunities that connect people to each other.*

**The impact that living by this value might have on us and on the life of our community.**

**We will see:**

- *a church where people will feel welcome*
- *an acknowledgement and celebration of diversity*
- *an embracing of and learning from diversity*
- *the acceptance of complexity*
- *a church that is intentional about serving our whole parish, especially those on its margins*
- *a transformation in ourselves, our church and our parish community*
- *a greater love on our part for our parish community*
- *a greater love of our parish community for us*
- *a richer, growing and more active parish community.*

## GENEROUS

### **Behaviours which would reflect this value**

#### **We will be:**

- *hospitable and welcoming*
- *helpful and seek to go the extra mile*
- *encouraging and empowering of others*
- *patient and understanding*
- *consistent in our response to others*
- *loyal to one another*
- *open, positive and willing in response to others*
- *forgiving and forbearing of ourselves and others*
- *pleased to share our riches and our successes with others*
- *charitable in our approach.*

### **How this value could affect our decision making**

#### **We will:**

- *remember that the assets and wealth of our church are to be used for the benefit of our wider parish community and in support and pursuit of our stated vision.*
- *look for the good in any requests for help and advice*
- *be humble*
- *listen to others, and give others the opportunity to be heard.*
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### **The impact that living by this value might have on us and on the life of our community.**

#### **We will see:**

- *a more generous and magnanimous church and parish community.*

## CREATIVE

<p><b>Behaviours which would reflect this value</b></p>	<p><b>We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>be innovative and think out of the box</i></li><li>• <i>be open to new ways of doing things</i></li><li>• <i>explore good practice elsewhere with a view to adopting, adapting and improving it at St Paul's</i></li><li>• <i>be more curious.</i></li></ul>
<p><b>How this value could affect our decision making</b></p>	<p><b>We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>be open to doing things we haven't done before</i></li><li>• <i>we will find new solutions to old problems</i></li><li>• <i>we will be creative in the use of our resources.</i></li></ul>
<p><b>The impact that living by this value might have on us and on the life of our community.</b></p>	<p><b>We will see:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>a thriving church, in spite of the challenges it faces</i></li><li>• <i>a church that is positive about what it undertakes and the future it faces</i></li><li>• <i>new life and new beginnings</i></li><li>• <i>a church community that has fun.</i></li></ul>

## **COLLABORATIVE**

<p><b>Behaviours which would reflect this value</b></p>	<p><b>We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>be welcoming of new opportunities to work with others, both within and beyond our immediate community</i></li><li>• <i>acknowledge other's gifts and expertise</i></li><li>• <i>seek to learn from others</i></li><li>• <i>be intentional about working in partnership with others.</i></li></ul>
<p><b>How this value could affect our decision making</b></p>	<p><b>We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>understand more clearly what we bring to our parish and look out for gaps that would be best met by others</i></li><li>• <i>seek out new partnerships</i></li><li>• <i>listen to other people's opinions</i></li><li>• <i>hear voices other than our own</i></li><li>• <i>be more aware that we don't have all the answers</i></li><li>• <i>realise that we will be more likely to succeed and make a difference if we work with others.</i></li></ul>
<p><b>The impact that living by this value might have on us and on the life of our community.</b></p>	<p><b>We will see</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>new and restored relationships</i></li><li>• <i>increased cohesion</i></li><li>• <i>an enriched community</i></li><li>• <i>fewer barriers and suspicions.</i></li></ul>

## COURAGEOUS

<p><b>Behaviours which would reflect this value</b></p>	<p><b>We will be:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>questioning and challenging of behaviours and practices which we believe run contrary to our core values</i></li><li>• <i>persistent in the face of adversity</i></li><li>• <i>proactive and seizing of opportunities</i></li><li>• <i>fearless and assertive in our approach</i></li><li>• <i>positive about the future.</i></li></ul>
<p><b>How this value could affect our decision making</b></p>	<p><b>We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>support aspirational plans</i></li><li>• <i>be confident in taking risks</i></li><li>• <i>be willing to swim against the tide.</i></li></ul>
<p><b>The impact that living by this value might have on us and on the life of our community.</b></p>	<p><b>We will see:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>greater independence of thought</i></li><li>• <i>greater confidence</i></li><li>• <i>greater clarity in our vision</i></li><li>• <i>our efforts making a more positive difference and impact on our community and the lives of others.</i></li></ul>