

UNITED CHURCH FERNDOWN

Our Vision, Values and Mission

What we believe

Our Vision

Where are we going as a church? Here's our 'Vision' statement:

**To see the Kingdom of God built,
in Ferndown and wherever we are,
through each member as we grow together
as disciples of Jesus.**

This is a shared goal – we work together to build God's kingdom. And that's also local – we are committed to the community in which God has placed us. But it is also an individual goal: we believe in preparing people to be effective representatives of God's Kingdom wherever they are, and in whatever they are doing.



Our Values

As we travel towards that vision, what matters to us? What determines how we will behave, and the choices we will make? Our values need to be Christ-like. So here are the key values we choose to live by:

Value 1 - Our God

Our God is Father, Son and Spirit loving one another, and we are His people who delight in Him. He is **our** Father, because we are united with His Son, Jesus, and empowered with His Holy Spirit. We trust Him to lead and guide us in everyday life, and to shape us daily into the image of Jesus, through His word and by the Spirit.

Value 2 - Worship

Our God is awesome. There is none like Him. He reached out to us when we deserved nothing and lavished upon us His very best. Our response is joyful worship and careful obedience to such a wonderful God. We gather together to worship Him in small and large groups with a variety of styles, also recognising that our whole lives are worship to our glorious God.

Value 3 - Prayer

We are a people who rejoice in fellowship with our God and love to talk to Him and listen to Him as an expression of our salvation. We will cultivate this in big and small gatherings and will endeavour to make it a normal part of our Christian friendships and when we are on our own.

Value 4 - Being Church

Our God has drawn us together into community by and for the love of Jesus. We are from a mix of backgrounds with diverse gifts, characters, past histories and families, yet we are one family, one body with Christ as our head, loving one another and resolving conflict quickly and carefully. We value the contributions of each person, regardless of age, status, gender or ethnicity, as part of this one family.

Value 5 - Engaging with our Community

We are convinced that God has set us in this place to bless, serve, challenge and witness to the community in which we live. We will strive to engage effectively with the wider community that surrounds us, including other local churches, so that the kingdoms of this world may become the Kingdom of our God.

Value 6 - Welcome

It matters to us that people of all ages, from all backgrounds and of all situations in life feel safe and welcome among us. We believe that as people are welcomed, the Holy Spirit will begin to do His work of transforming and healing. We seek to be a good place to ask questions, to rejoice or grieve, or just to explore what faith in Christ might mean.

Value 7 - Work in Progress

We are a people who acknowledge that we are not the finished article. We will remain humble, realising that in both success and defeat God is working through us for our good and always questioning how and why we are doing what we are doing. We will be gentle and understanding with those who struggle, acknowledging that none of us is accepted by God through our own merit. Faith is a lifelong journey, and while we travel together, we can each be at a different stage in that journey.

Value 8 - Discipleship

We are a people who seek to build one another up in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ. We know that trusting Jesus affects our obedience to Him in every area of life, and we consider ourselves accountable to each other so that we might be challenged to grow more like Christ. We value opportunities to meet together in small groups as we walk together in Christ.

Value 9 - Generosity.

As God has freely given us all things, we seek to respond to God's generosity with our own. We are committed to resourcing the work of the kingdom both locally and globally, giving generously of our time, our gifts and skills, and our money.

Value 10 - Creativity

Our God is creative, filling everything with beauty. We seek to reflect that creativity in our worship, our prayer and our lives. As children of such a God, our church structures will only ever serve our need but never govern us, for we refuse to let tradition dominate.

Value 11 - The World

We are a community who recognise the needs of the world beyond ourselves. We will listen to, pray for and engage with God's mission in the whole world, not just Ferndown or the UK. It matters to us that our support of others elsewhere in our world is both prayerful and practical.

Our Mission

So in the light of that, what are we seeking to do? How are we putting into practice God's Great Commission?

**To show Ferndown a different way of living;
to serve those in need around us;
and to *speak* the message of new life in Jesus.**

Mission Targets

For the next two years, we intend to focus our work in these three areas especially:

- **Local schools.** We aim to continue to develop our partnership with the local schools. We will work with other Churches and local Christian agencies to build effective relationships with local schools, to offer resources to address issues like poverty, money management, mental health and spirituality. We will seek to expand our presence in schools by leading assemblies and break-time clubs, and will encourage members to consider serving in schools as governors or helping in other ways.
- **Families with younger children.** We will seek to make available good support for young families, through practical help and social engagement. We'll examine our existing programme, and look for ways to make it more accessible to those with young children. And we'll build on the effectiveness of 'Tiddlers' and the recent developments in 'The Zone' to befriend and encourage more families.
- **Work with older people.** We recognise the risks of loneliness and isolation among older people, and the challenge that problems like dementia can bring, both to those who experience them directly, and to carers. We'll strive to support those facing such issues, and to provide opportunities to meet and find practical help.