

# Johnsonville Uniting Church (JUC)

*A friendly, inclusive church; a caring community; an enabler of worship, learning and spiritual growth; and a gateway to the wider community.*

## OUR MISSION PLAN: WHAT WE ARE FOCUSING ON FROM 2019

This booklet summarizes how we are dedicating our people and resources in our response to God's mission in Johnsonville and beyond.

In this document you'll find an outline of our values and objectives that reflect what we hope to achieve in five key areas of our church life; our worship services, our development as disciples of Jesus, our fellowship or investment in each other's lives, sharing the good news of God with our community, and our public witness and social justice activities.

It's our hope that in reading and praying through this booklet, you'll gain some insight into what God is doing with us and through us for this time and place.

*This is a flexible document – any operational matters will be worked through by the Parish Council and Minister in consultation and consensus with the Congregation*

## OUR PUBLIC WORSHIP

Every time we gather together as members of God's family in our services, we are invited to respond anew to God's call in Christ to follow him. In our public worship, God renews us, heals us, blesses us and then sends us out into God's world.



We value the diversity of music, singing and styles of worship services offered at JUC. We value children participating in shared worship with people from all generations and offering worship and sharing faith-stories that meets their needs. We are blessed to have people in our faith family who are able to share their gifts and talents in leadership and creative talents.

We celebrate being a theologically-diverse-community in our understanding and expression of Christianity. It's from this breadth that we celebrate both our diversity and unity in our shared love and worship of Jesus Christ.

Below are our key objectives against three values we aspire to:

### **We will explore a variety of structures and styles to enable intergenerational worship**

- ❖ Offering training for worship leaders on broadening liturgical worship-structures and styles
- ❖ Creating spaces in our services for children to participate in creative worship
- ❖ Creating a 'worship team' consisting of worship leaders and other JUC members with passion, talents and giftings for worship. With this team, exploring what it means to be intergenerational in worship gatherings by attending other

church's intergenerational services and exploring other available resources.

- ❖ Obtaining intergenerational resources and support under PCANZ Kids Friendly accreditation (see <https://www.presbyterian.org.nz/national-ministries/kids-friendly>)

## **We value the diversity and sharing of theological thought and experiences in our worship services**

- ❖ Offering opportunities for worship leaders to come together to reflect on theology separately and together with the worship team
- ❖ Creating spaces for people from all generations to share their faith journeys and experiences within services

A new resource that would support our public worship could be:

- ❖ With the support of grants and prayer, employing a (preferably full-time) Children & Family Community Enabler to reflect our investment in children and young families enjoying and worshipping God

## OUR DISCIPLESHIP DEVELOPMENT

Jesus calls his church to support and equip people in their journey and growth as Christians, especially those gifted as leaders and teachers. Discipleship development is about nurturing, living out and exploring our faith individually and together.



At JUC we value personal study, learning and growing in our faith development. The breadth of ministries at JUC, especially what we do individually and collectively in our church and communities, also nurtures our relationship with God.

Below are our key objectives against three values we aspire to:

### **We value creating safe spaces for people to express a diversity of faith journeys in small groups**

- ❖ Creating small groups focused around discipleship development that foster growth in our individual and collective faith
- ❖ Developing guidelines for people leading discussions or small groups to foster safe and effective sharing

### **We value meeting the faith-development-needs for children and youth**

- ❖ Providing resources for faith-education for children and families at worship services, small groups and at home.

## **We value identifying, encouraging and raising up leaders to lead long-term and short-term courses and small groups**

- ❖ Identifying spiritual gifts, passions and talents of our congregation through facilitating exploratory courses. This will help identify and encourage leaders of long-term or short-term groups
- ❖ Training group leaders on how to foster and maintain safe spaces for sharing in small groups
- ❖ Providing a support team for group leaders and ensuring they have ready access to resources, training and professional oversight when required

## OUR FELLOWSHIP AND HOSPITALITY

Our love for each other is part of our witness. Jesus said:

“If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.” (John 13:35)



This is God's call to us to be a new family. This means prioritising and making space to be with each other and sharing our lives together – especially over food.

At JUC we deeply value having intergenerational Family Groups<sup>1</sup> as a way of fostering and building our fellowship and support together. Around three quarters of the church belong to these groups who meet monthly to enjoy various activities such as dinners, poetry, picnics or film evenings together. We share food together at homes or cafes to enable deeper relationships, just as Jesus regularly shared meals together with people from all kinds of backgrounds.

We value our structured approach to pastoral care so that everyone in contact with JUC is cared for as best as we are able. The offering and the receiving of hospitality – whether it be a shared meal or a visit to someone who is in a rest home – is very important to our current and future life together.

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<sup>1</sup> If you'd like more information, please view our own page at <http://www.juc.org.nz/family-groups/> or <https://www.passionistfamily.org.nz/>

Below are our key objectives against two values we aspire to:

**We value personally inviting people to share hospitality together**

- ❖ Inspiring a culture of hospitality through the parish councilors, leaders and the Minister modelling and celebrating regular table fellowship
- ❖ Investing in fellowship groups and pastoral care structures that meet children's unique development and social needs
- ❖ Creating a structured approach to ensure visitors to services, gatherings or other doorways with JUC are offered fellowship with the sharing of food together

**We value encouraging and supporting individuals to share their interest with others to build fellowship**

- ❖ Through identifying gifts, talents and passions via exploratory courses, encouraging people to share their interests to ignite fellowship and deepen friendships

## OUR PUBLIC WITNESS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The mission of God goes right to the heart of humanity and takes up our cause in times of need or distress. We value our faith-based participation in community organisations and expressing our Christian values by loving and helping others. We support our local interchurch Op Shop, provide Christmas boxes for people who might be alone, or supported struggling communities such as Opunake. We deeply value investing in activities that provide connection, care and service to our communities as individuals and as a church.

We value our buildings – the Terrace Centre - being highly used by our community, such as the Wellington Girls Brigade, Fireside (a fellowship group that meets on Wednesday evenings). Our facilities also serve as the collection point for Meals on Wheels for the Northern Suburbs. In 2014, we were proud to open up our Labyrinth to be used for meditation and prayer for people.

Below are our key objectives against three value-based goals to strengthen and broaden our public witness and social justice as God's hands and heart to God's world:

### **We value people who can expand our theological horizons on pertinent issues of the day**

- ❖ Creating a team of people with a passion for public witness and social justice to encourage and enable JUC's response and voice
- ❖ Organising and/or promoting speakers to help expand our theological discussions on important issues

### **We value openness of discussions on social justice, care of creation and ethical issues**

- ❖ With the support of a Social Justice & Public Witness team, creating opportunities to theologically reflect on ethics, social justice and care of creation as a church and/or with other churches

- ❖ Providing resources on social justice, Christian ethics and care of creation for adult small groups, and for children

**We value finding opportunities for JUC to be a voice and advocate for God's care and justice in our communities**

- ❖ With the support of the Social Justice & Public Witness team, creating or promoting submissions and/or public discussions on social justice and care of creation in a safe and sharing environment
- ❖ Offering teaching on how to theologically reflect on Christian ethics, environmental-care and social justice issues
- ❖ Fostering new and deepening existing relationships with organisations and individuals in Johnsonville and beyond.





Evangelism involves witnessing to what God has done and what God is doing in God's world. Jesus began his public ministry with the words "*The right time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Change your hearts and lives and believe the Good News!*" (Mark 1:15). God calls the church to make this good news – God's love and reconciliation - known to *all* people through our lives, actions and our words.

We value opportunities to demonstrate and share the love of Jesus through our actions and generous service to Johnsonville and beyond.

Below are our key objectives against three values we aspire to:

**We value sharing our understanding of the good news, to strengthen our unity**

- ❖ Using our small groups (refer Discipleship Development) to practice sharing God's good news for today
- ❖ Inviting people who are effective at sharing the good news (evangelists) to share their experiences and expertise to encourage and enable JUC

## **We value the knowledge of God's word and the model Jesus Christ shows us**

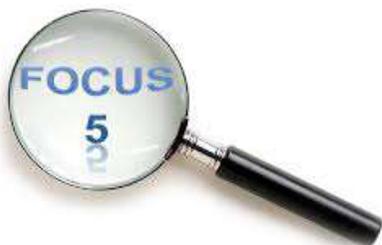
- ❖ Creating opportunities to explore together what Jesus said and modelled in sharing God's good news, for our cultural-context today

## **We value being in solidarity with the people whom we share the good news with**

New resources that would support our evangelism could be:

- ❖ With the support of grants and prayers, explore hiring a Community Enabler (at least half-time) to enable our individual and corporate evangelism by 'opening a front door' to individuals and organisations within Johnsonville and beyond
- ❖ With the support of the Children & Family Enabler and the Community Enabler, enabling deeper and sustainable relationships with individuals and organisations in our communities in being and sharing God's good news i.e., going **out** to listen and share the good news of Jesus with children to seniors, being as Christ just where they are

# FIVE AREAS OF OUR LIFE AND MISSION TOGETHER



To help us plan and evaluate where we are in our response to God's mission, we explored five key areas of our church life here at JUC.

This booklet contains a brief description of what we value and do, as well as new aspirational values and objectives in:

- our public witness
- discipleship development
- public worship
- fellowship and hospitality and
- sharing the good news of God (our evangelism).

We look forward to the appointment of a full-time ordained minister to provide leadership and oversight for our mission.

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