

# TOWARDS 2027



# Foreword

St James Church is growing. We are growing in terms of those worshipping with us on a Sunday. We have seen this especially since Easter, and I often hear it said that "There seem to be new people every week."

We have seen growth in terms of those engaging with small discipleship groups.

There are now over 120 people who gather in 12 small groups. 3 groups have fledged new groups and we are simply hampered by our lack of leaders, (but more of that later.)

We have grown in terms of site too, with the amazing, exciting, miraculous purchase of what will now be known as St James' yard. At the height of the pandemic over 250 devices accessed our Sunday worship online and we remain with around 100 hits over the week.

In all this, what we call our fringe, those in some way connected through ministries, but not connected yet to Sunday worship, has also grown. Our database tells us that over 380 adults and 220 children are in some way 'part' of our fellowship. While all this is encouraging, what really matters is the growing and deepening of faith in individuals. At St James, we illustrate this with three cogs: connecting, changing and transforming. That's our discipleship journey in one illustration. The wheel of connecting to God turns the wheel of changing with God so that the wheel of transforming for God brings more into the Kingdom of God.

So, we look towards the next five years from a place of health and growth. With this firmly in mind and continuing the ministries that we are involved in; I want to share 3 specific areas that I believe God wants us to develop over the next five years. Each of them based on our key vision which is connecting to God, changing with God and transforming for God.

# Connecting to God



## Expanding Worshipping Opportunities

We are too big on a Sunday morning! All the statistics suggest, and it is borne out in the last 19 years of my leadership of St James, that when a service gets to 60% capacity in terms of numbers it will not grow any further. If a church is full, people will come in and say, "there's not room for me here."

There is much that is good or excellent about our worship at 10.30.

- The quality of Bible Teaching
- The quality of sung worship
- The quality of our technology
- The presence of all ages from babies to 90-year olds. This really is a gift to us and extremely unusual amongst churches.
- The planning but also the space within services
- The welcome and gathering
- The children's and youth work

This is what we want to replicate by, in the first instance by...

**Birthing a new Sunday congregation in September 2023.**

There is much to do here in consultation and preparation. We are blessed to have a large, gifted, and anointed team of hosts, preachers, and worship leaders already and in the first instance I would expect them to take a role at this new service, whilst at the same time developing new leaders. But we will also need to replicate children and youth provision as well as other service teams. There is lots to think about, pray into and plan, and that is why we would not expect this first new service to come into being until next September, but our hope is that more will follow.

At present we have a thriving Wednesday worshipping community, and we would seek to continue to invest time, thought and resources to build and develop this. However, within five years we would expect to have at least one further worship service.

Our expectation is that:

**Within 5 years we will have 5 worship services at different times and different places at St James which will enable a growing number of people to connect to God, be changed by Him and to transform for Him.**

# Changing with God



## Equipping Leaders

If we are going to continue to grow, we need more leaders.

Therefore, our next goal is:

**To identify, mobilise, train and support new and existing leaders.**

This is not just about equipping St James, or about training for specific roles, but giving foundational leadership training for young and older to equip for wider and future leadership. This is key to developing our vision to nurture confident disciples who live out their faith seven days a week.

In September 2022 we will offer the CPAS Growing leaders programme in St James.

Alongside this we will also actively encourage leaders to access the Diocesan training on specific roles.

By September 2022 we will have ministry handbooks for all areas of ministry detailing the purpose and vision for that area of ministry, role descriptions, expectations and ongoing support offered in that area

By September 2023 we expect to have 10 people who are not already leading small groups ready to take on small group leadership.

By September 2024 we expect to have 25 small groups and another 20 small group leaders.

So, by 2024 we will hope to have a specific process and programme of training and supporting new and existing leaders.

# Transforming for God

Establishing plans for St James Yard



The final specific area of development concerns the recently purchased land next to the church now known as St James yard.

**By the end of 2022 we will have sought the funds to be able to clear the site.**

**By Easter 2022 we aim to have cleared the site.**

**By Summer 2023 we will have some ideas of what we may be able to do with the land.**

We have invited a group of final year architecture students as part of their studies to spend six weeks with us exploring development possibilities for this area and draw up several specific plans for each possibility.

This whole process will require good communication and needs to be undergirded by prayer. Therefore we will seek creative ways for the church to come together, to share and to pray.

**By the beginning of 2025 we may have drawn up plans for some building.**

I have sought to be quite specific with goals in this vision document, not because they are set in stone, but because they give us something to aim for. As always, the working out of this is something we do together. As well as continuing to discuss this in the Leadership Team and the PCC we will arrange some church meetings for anyone to attend so that as many voices can be heard and contribute to where I believe God is calling us. Undoubtedly over the coming 5 years things will change and that's OK. But whatever happens, may we, as the body of Christ in this place at this time, called to excellent worship, committed discipleship, sacrificial service, and engaging outreach play our part in being His hands, feet, and voice in this place.



A bright yellow, hand-drawn style oval graphic that encircles the text.

St James'  
Church  
CLITHEROE