

Statement of Calling

Calvary Baptist Church¹ was planted by Bethany Baptist Church, St. Mary's Street, Cardiff (now Bethany Rhiwbina) so as to establish an English language Nonconformist² place of worship in Canton. This was the calling when Calvary was established and it remains our calling today. This document explains how we believe God is calling us to live out that calling today.

Purpose

We are “a light revealing God's love in the community.”

Revealing God's love

So that we can fulfil our purpose of being “a light revealing God's love in the community” we engage in missional activities, with our ultimate goal being to share the gospel in the community so that people can make an informed choice about following Christ.

We recognise that traditionally churches have been the centre of community and that they have been able to rely on being attractional - loosely summarised as “if we put something nice enough on then people will come.” However, society has changed and whilst being attractional still has a role in a missional strategy it is no longer sufficient and the focus needs to be on going out to meet people where they are.

If we are to serve the community through our missional activities then we need to become better connected to the community, and to become better informed about local issues. We need to understand things like the Council's Local Development Plan, become connected with the issues affecting shopkeepers and residents, and play our part in the life of the community.

We recognise that we cannot meet all the needs of the community on our own, so we will work with other Christian churches and where appropriate other faith groups to serve the community - but we will never compromise on our distinctive Christian witness in doing so³ and we will not engage in multi-faith worship.⁴

We recognise that in an increasingly multi-ethnic and diverse community we are unlikely to be able to reflect within our fellowship that diversity. We will therefore partner with other churches, and seek to be integrated with other congregations that worship within our building, to help meet the Christian faith based needs of the community.

The communities in which we find ourselves are constantly changing and we will continue to seek God to follow his leading in how best to reveal him as we serve these communities. We will ensure that our activities to serve the community align with our purpose. We will be forward looking, willing to cease activities that have reached the end of their life, and willing to start new activities as God leads us.

Making Disciples

As Christ's people we are called both to be disciples and to disciple others, to love those within the fellowship, and to encourage and equip each other. Each of us willingly submits to being disciplined, and we each offer ourselves to disciple others. We expect that as God is revealed in

¹ More strictly Hope and Victoria were planted by Bethany, and the two merged later to form Calvary

² Nonconformist simply means “not the state church” - i.e. not Anglican (or Church in Wales as it is now)

³ However, our purpose is not to dictate how those outside the fellowship should live through the imposition of Christian values on them.

⁴ We do recognise that there are events such as Holocaust Memorial Day where we may have to engage in multi-faith worship, but these will be the exception and not the rule and will always require the prior approval of at minimum the Deaconate (and the church meeting if timing allows).

the community others will join us who wish to become disciples of Christ, and that the very process of making disciples will in itself reveal God.

Discipling happens best where there are strong trusting relationships between people, so we will commit ourselves to ensure that church behaves like a family - a fellowship where you are safe to be yourself, supported, belonging, able to take risks and learn from experience. Through this we will seek to help each other to mature in faith, and to prepare each other for the challenges they will face in the world.

We value gathering to worship God, to seek him in prayer, to study his word, and to share communion together. These are priorities in our lives and we will seek opportunity to gather others outside our fellowship and welcome them to join us in these times.

We will seek to provide programmes of activities and create opportunities to relate with each other that strengthen the bonds between us, and that grow us as disciples. We recognise that the way people learn and the ways that people interact with each other are changing and we will seek to meet the changing needs that we have.

We will continue to seek to improve the ways in which we disciple each other, and we will encourage prayer partners, accountability partners, mentoring and other disciplines as we feel led by God.

Community

Churches exist in community⁵. We recognise that there are three primary communities that Calvary is called to serve, and as a fellowship we will collectively plan and run missional activities to serve these primary communities:

1. The community that live around our building on Cowbridge Road East. This community is not precisely defined, but is locally known as Pontcanna, Riverside and Canton and is contained within the Riverside and Canton electoral wards.
2. The transient community that work and/or shop around our building, particularly on Cowbridge Road East between St. David's Hospital and the junction of Leckwith Road and Llandaff Road.
3. Those that use our buildings during the week, and those that visit with us on a Sunday.

We also recognise two secondary communities that Calvary is called to serve; these are described as secondary not in terms of importance but in terms of our corporate focus. As a fellowship we won't necessarily plan and run missional activities to serve our secondary communities, but we will equip, encourage and support members⁶ of the fellowship in their activities that serve those communities.

4. The communities in and around the homes of church members, including family members.
5. The communities in which those who are church members either work or spend leisure time.

⁵ We recognise the existence of virtual communities such as FaceBook and Twitter, however at this time we see them as extensions of our primary and secondary communities rather than as distinct communities in their own right

⁶ "Member" is used in this section not in the constitutional sense of somebody who has been accepted by the church meeting as a member of the church; rather it describes somebody who is a regular part of our worshipping community.

Notes

Some suggestions as to how we might fulfil aspects of the Statement of Calling and our Purpose were made in the May review meeting and these are recorded here for completeness until further documents are produced:

- We should review our Statement of Calling on a regular basis, the current suggestion is annually
- The office ought to take the local newspaper and communicate from it to the church things that are happening in the community that we need to be aware of
- We need to improve the way we communicate what we do
- We should use the front of our building to advertise what we are doing
- We all spend more time in our primary and secondary communities than we do in our buildings, we need to remember that what we do in those communities really matters.