

VISION FOR CORPORATE WORSHIP

Our vision statement commits us to being, among other things, a worshipping community.

We recognise that worshipping Jesus is a lifestyle decision that embraces every moment and every action of a true disciple.

We believe that worship is something that affects every part of our lives as Christians, however we also recognise the importance of corporate worship – coming together as a church, a community of believers, to praise and worship God through various media.

The church is the people of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit and where two or more are gathered, God is in the midst of them. We are that church.

In our vision we see...

- a community zealous to seek the presence and glory of God
- leaders inspired by the Holy Spirit who bring creativity and freshness to worship, seeking in whatever they do, to do it well
- worship that transforms individuals and shapes the mission of the church
- time and opportunity given to the movement of the Holy Spirit

We commend those with a passion for worship and those who come prepared to listen and to share. Regardless of how an individual enters our church, we want to give them the opportunity to meet with God.

Our corporate worship

- **is complementary** to our individual worship. That is why we commit ourselves to meeting regularly to worship with the members of the Lord's family at Woodside.

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:5

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

- **is Jesus centred**, not us-centred. All that we do directs our spirits and thoughts through Jesus to the Father. Our worship does not seek to elevate any person or groups of persons because it is not about us.

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9-11

- **is spiritual**. We value singing and music, praying and speaking out loud and other physical expressions of worship, but we recognise these are vehicles of worship and not necessarily worship itself. Worship is a submission of our spirit to God's Spirit, an acknowledgement of his worth.

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. John 4:23

- **is truthful**. Our worship will always be held up to Scripture and subject to discernment. Our worship will have integrity.

The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. Psalm 145:18

- **seeks God.** God particularly seeks those who seek him. Our worship is not empty routine but an active endeavour to seek God's manifest presence. We prepare ourselves beforehand and approach God together with an expectation that we will meet him.
Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Isaiah 55:6
O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Psalm 63:1-3
- **changes us.** We believe that walking with God in worship will change us, increase our love for him, make his purposes clearer to us, purify us by his Spirit and on some occasions bring spiritual and physical healing.
When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshipped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, "He is good; his love endures forever." 2 Chronicles 7:3
- **is sacrificial.** True worship requires us to prioritise and involves a cost beyond cash. For God to be first, other things – some of them good things – must take a lower priority.
"I won't sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that haven't cost me anything."
 2 Samuel 24:24 [King David]
- **requires the right heart attitude.** We recognise that routine in itself is no substitute for a worshipping heart.
You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Psalm 51:16-17
- **requires an investment of time.** Our object is not to accomplish certain tasks within a fixed period, but to spend time with God.
"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." Luke 10: 41-42
- **is inclusive.** It is our aim to involve every member of the congregation both by inviting participation and by removing obstacles that prevent inclusion.
Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27
- **gives opportunity for God to manifest himself through his people.** Scripture teaches that God gives spiritual gifts to his children for the benefit of the whole Christian family. We welcome and encourage the use of these gifts in corporate worship when they are used for the building up of the church, are exercised sensitively and are subject to the discernment of the leaders.
Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11
Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way. 1 Corinthians 14:39-40