

St Marys Ethos

Introduction

- This document provides the Trustees of St Mary's Community Centre (the Centre) with guidance from St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC), representing the worshipping congregation of St Mary's Church (the Church).
- This document will not describe strategy or specific projects, but may help Trustees decide how to make business decisions.
- There is a longer version of this document which explains more fully some of the thinking behind the process by which this ethos was devised, probably only of interest for the current or potential Centre Trustees or PCC members.
- The ethos of an organisation is its culture. The ethos of St Mary's is set of Christian beliefs which translate into a set of behaviours, which are expressions of what the Church believes.
- This document aims to describe how the beliefs of the Church relate to the activities of the Centre.
- This ethos at the level of the beliefs and behaviours described below should be part of the wallpaper of St Mary's, familiar to staff and volunteers, as well as congregation and PCC, and visible to other users. They may help to shape the spirit and thinking of the organisation.

Principles and Pressures

About us:

- St Mary's (Bramall Lane) is in a deprived but lively area of inner city Sheffield. The Community Centre was established within the Church building following a major refurbishment in the 1950's, with a second major refurbishment completed in 2001
- St Mary's Church and Centre share an overlapping Vision
- The Community Centre has two trading subsidiaries, St Mary's Conference & Catering and St Mary's Training & Consultancy
- Together these 4 separate legal entities (Church, Centre, Conference & Catering and Training & Consultancy) form the 'family organisation group' known simply as 'St Mary's (Bramall Lane)'.
- The work of the Centre is, in several important senses, the responsibility of St Mary's PCC.
- Even missional work carried out exclusively by the Church including regular Sunday

services and associated activities will frequently involve use of space and resources that are managed by the Centre. So the missional work of the Church will often overlap with the work of the Centre .

Transparency

- The Church must be honest about its beliefs and intentions.
- The Centre must be honest about its business.
- Openness across the breadth of the St Marys organisation-family is essential to our work.

St Marys Core Beliefs and Behaviours

ETHOS	CORE BELIEF	CORE BEHAVIOURS
Care for Creation	We believe in God who is maker of heaven and earth, who has placed humankind in the world both to enjoy and care for creation.	We will seek to recognise both the abundance and the fragility in the world. We will be mindful of the impact of all our decisions and actions on our fragile and finite environment. We will measure and reduce the environmental impact of our activities
Creating Community in which everyone is valued	We believe that the nature of God is relational as expressed in an understanding of the Trinity and that human beings are made in the image of God and share in God's nature. Relationships and creativity are central to our being and flourishing.	We will strive to build and rebuild community that is inclusive, celebrating diversity, accepting and respecting of each other equally, recognising responsibility and seeking to respond to and resolve conflict where it may occur. We will be creative and innovative in our business.
Life in all its fullness	Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full – abundantly" (John 10.10)	We will work together with others to realise the God given potential of each person. Working to increase human flourishing and realising the abundance of underutilised human and material resources in order to create a better world.
Hope that things can change for the better.	The bible gives us images of both the vision and the realisation of hope. In the message of the Kingdom of God, which is a vision of justice and joy, health and abundance. (Isaiah 65.17f) and in the Incarnation of God;	We will nurture and respect the dreams of each other and work together to achieve a better future for individuals and communities. We will live with the realistic hope that transformation is always possible and that even the

	in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.	darkest situations can be overcome.
Addressing injustice	God requires us to pursue justice with mercy. Jesus taught that our neighbours, whom we are to serve, are not the people most like us, but those who most need our help.	We will support campaigning, lobbying and speaking out against injustice, especially on behalf of the poor. We will actively and preferentially seek ways in which we can provide services for those who are disadvantages, excluded, lonely, sick, bereaved, imprisoned or otherwise suffering.
Good News	We believe that God in Christ shares our human nature and so is able to redeem it to reflect the image of God in which we were made. We believe that the message of Christ is central to community transformation. At the same time we recognise and value the essential contribution that other faiths and those of no creedal faith make to this transformation	We will respect and celebrate the faith of others, listening to their faith stories. We will also continue to explore and seek to live out the faith that undergirds our values and actions and endeavour to make space for those who wish to explore this faith with us.

St Mary's will not impose our beliefs on anyone but we do expect those who work and volunteer for us to adopt these behaviours.

Practicalities

a. Ethos, values and governance

- A majority of Trustees will be members of St Marys worshipping congregation and should be able to sign up to the beliefs and behaviours described above.
- A wider group of Trustees may be recruited from time to time with specific expertise, who may not share the beliefs, but support the behaviours.

b. Staffing/volunteers

Staff and volunteers in St Marys should be familiar with this ethos document and by taking up their posts, explicitly agree to abide by the behaviours described above.

Some posts within the organisation will require their holders to be able to sign up to the beliefs as well as the behaviours outlined above. This will apply when the majority of the responsibilities of the job are connected to upholding the ethos of the organisation.

c. Links between community project and church

The unusual situation of the Centre being a business based within a place of worship may give rise to particular sensitivities. Because of this, and because the behaviours of St Mary's are, as described here, directed by the beliefs of the Church, the Directors have a key responsibility to ensure that Church and Centre are communicating well, with each other, and with the world. This may include ensuring

- Regular updates to the Church from Centre staff
- Coherence and quality of all communications, inward and outward, including website and social media with special care for the image of the whole organisation.
- Involvement of Church members as volunteers, customers, staff, and advocates of the Centre's services.
- That Centre staff and volunteers understand St Marys' Ethos
- Reviews of the image of the building itself including consideration of worship spaces, artwork and signage.
- Bringing the strengths of both Church and Centre together, for instance to help with campaigns or political lobbying through Church channels, around issues arising through Centre services.

d. Funding

Government and LA funding are good opportunities. Some guidance:

- Have I been completely truthful in what I've said?
- Whose agenda are we serving? Whose empire am I building?
- Would another organisation be better placed to deliver this project?
- Are we staying true to our original vision?
- Do we really need this money?

e. Managing buildings

The church building is a huge asset for both Church and Centre. Expectations about management should be described in a separate 'handbook' document. This should also describe mechanisms for completing and recording maintenance. Changes in use of parts of the building or territory should be referred to the PCC, as they are the long-term responsibility of the Church.