

## A Typical Small Group Session

We try to mirror the practice of the first Christians who:

*"devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."*  
(Acts 2:42)

Each small group includes:

**Welcome:** gathering the group together and getting to know each other better.

**Worship:** maybe in song, meditation, prayer, etc.

**Word:** we learn together from the Bible and aim to apply it to our lives. We seek transformation, not just information.

**Witness:** a practical section that challenges us with the question, "what is God calling us to do?" We then pray for each other.

*We also enjoy lots of social events!*



## Small Group Values

Small Groups embrace values which underlie the whole foundation of our church.

**A**ccountability: The small groups and their leaders play a vital role in creating groups where we are loved and accountable to one another, under the direction of the Clergy.

**B**elonging. We all need a place to belong where we can share our lives and care for each other

**C**haracter. We are challenged to become more like Christ, and find security in who God made us to be.

**D**iscipleship: We aim to apply God's Word to our lives so that we grow in faith and commit to serve in the group, and in the wider church, especially the congregation we are linked to.

**E**vangelism: using the small group as a means to reach out with the Good News of Jesus.

We know we are far from perfect in living out these values, and yet we long to become more like the church Jesus wants us to be.

### How can I join a Small Group?

We would love you to find a group that is right for you.

If you would like to join a small group or find out more please contact Jo White on 01202 894004 or e-mail [josie.white@talktalk.net](mailto:josie.white@talktalk.net) and she will be very happy to help you.

# Church Membership & Small Groups



*"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it"*

*1 Corinthians 12: 27*

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# Welcome to St Mary's Church Family!

We are delighted that you are considering becoming a member of St Mary's Church.

As a Church of England church we have a church membership database called an "Electoral Roll".

## Why should I join the Electoral Roll?

We like to encourage all those who consider themselves committed members of St Mary's to join our Electoral Roll for a number of reasons.

- It is a positive step for you, as we hope that becoming a church member will help you feel more connected to St Mary's as your church family.
- It is really helpful for our church leadership team in getting to know you better.
- It means that you can vote at our Annual General Meeting.
- It enables us to give accurate information to Salisbury Diocese about our number of committed church members.

## What does it mean to be a church member?

We would like to take this opportunity to invite you to reflect on and pray about what it means to be a member of St Mary's Church, and also the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ. At St Mary's we are committed to the vision which we believe God gave us back in 2010 - "Transforming Ferndown with Jesus".

## What is St Mary's Church Vision?

"Transforming Ferndown with Jesus" by being:

### 1. Rooted in Jesus

by every church member engaged in Sunday worship and mid-week groups that focus on:

- Biblical preaching & teaching
- Fellowship (togetherness with other Christians)
- Worship / Holy Communion
- Prayer

### 2. Growing up to Maturity like Jesus

by every church member:

- being discipled through courses and mentoring
- belonging in a small group to develop accountability, teach-ability, pastoral care
- developing a generous heart to serve God with time, talents and money (at home, at work, in the community, and in church ministries)
- Raising up new Spirit-empowered leaders

### 3. Reaching Out like Jesus

with Welcome & Witness by every church member making St Mary's a special place of belonging and welcome to all in our community:

- through supporting the development of inspirational buildings that aid our mission and ministry in the parish
- through helping with fruitful outreach strategies in the parish that lead to conversion & baptism
- through involvement with wider Mission in Britain and the World.

## How do I join the Electoral Roll?

Simply complete the form enclosed and hand it into our Church Office. It would be very helpful to us if you can complete as much of the form as possible. Please rest assured that your details will be kept securely and will only be available to the church leadership team. We will never share your details with any third party without obtaining your prior permission.

## What are "Small Groups"?

Small groups were originally Jesus' idea! When Jesus called 12 disciples to follow him, and share their lives with him, he began something incredible that continues to this day. Gatherings of people who follow Jesus have been meeting together to learn about him, support each other, and grow in faith. In many places throughout the world, the church continues to grow rapidly through small groups.

Small Groups are integral to church life at St Mary's. As a large church it can be difficult getting to know people by just meeting together on Sundays. In order to establish true friendships and to grow in our faith together we strongly encourage church members to join a small group.

We have numerous small groups meeting during daytime and evenings throughout the parish and further afield. Some meet weekly, others fortnightly.

*For more details about small groups see overleaf...*