

Railway Street

# Strategic Mission Plan

2023 - 2025

**Our Purpose:**  
**'Following Christ – Serving the Community'**



'In obedience to Christ, we will work together to see people coming to faith in Christ and growing in love for God and others.'

Our Mission Statement commits us to Christ centred worship, discipleship, evangelism, fellowship and service.

On 10th June 2022 the Kirk Session took some time away to focus on where we were as a congregation and to identify those areas where we were encouraged as well as thinking about our weaknesses and the challenges and opportunities as we looked forward.

As we look back on our former Mission Plan which was launched in 2016 it is encouraging to recognise the many areas where God has been at work and where progress has been made.

## 1. Encouragements

- The vision to redevelopment the Link which was only at a very early stage in 2016 was completed and handed over by the contractor in October 2022 offering many exciting opportunities to develop worship, fellowship, discipleship, evangelism and service within RSPC
- We rejoice in the launch of our Girls Brigade Company as well as the ongoing life and vibrancy of our Boys Brigade.
- PW continued to meet through the pandemic providing support to members of all ages and continuing to develop links with global mission
- 422 adapted well to the twin challenges of COVID-19 and the disruptions of the building work continuing to provide valuable practical and pastoral care for older members of our congregation
- We give thanks for the development of our online ministry – much of this was necessitated and spurred on by the onset of COVID-19 restrictions. This includes:
  - The ongoing development of a RSPC Website
  - The launch of live streaming on Sunday mornings since July 2020

- The use of Zoom for many meetings and ministries
- The increased use of the RSPC Facebook Page
- We give thanks for the opportunities a number have had to serve on short term Mission Teams
  - Exodus Youth Teams to Romania in 2019 & 2022 and to Dungannon & Donaghadee in 2021
  - Two adult work teams sent to the Exodus Centre in Sutor, Romania in 2018 & 2019
  - PW Mission Trip to Italy
- We are encouraged by the development of relationships with local schools in conjunction with SU E3 programme
- The election of 6 new elders and we recognise and give thanks for the dedicated service of all those who retired
- Appointment of a Deaconess who has brought a very valuable new dimension to the pastoral work of our congregation
- Many new families and individuals have joined us since 2016
- We have seen encouraging growth among those in the twenties and thirties.

## 2. Weaknesses

- Despite seeing a net growth in the number of families connected with Railway Street over the last 3 years the potential risk of long term membership decline remains as a result of the overall age profile of the congregation
- While we are seeing gradual growth in Beginners Church we currently have a small number of primary school age in Kids Church on a Sunday

- While we are encouraged by the number of new families coming in through the front door we are conscious that some others have exited through the back especially during the time of COVID-19 restrictions
- We understand that we are not always good at helping people identify their gifts and then providing opportunities for them to use those gifts in RSPC
- We are conscious that we could be more effective in reaching out to our wider community
- While many no doubt pray individually the corporate prayer life of Railway Street continues to be weak.

### 3. Identifying Priorities & Opportunities from 2023-2025

We recognise the ongoing vital nature of the following areas of church life:

- All Age Discipleship
- Outward Intentional Evangelism
- Worship
- Service
- Fellowship.

The Kirk Session are of the opinion that the two areas of church life in Railway Street that we need to place particular strategic emphasis on in the next two years are all age discipleship and outward intentional evangelism.

In parallel with this strategic focus, we will continue to develop Worship, Service and Fellowship with the intention of seeing the following:

## Worship

- After the disruption of Covid-19 related restrictions and the new patterns that developed over that time, we want to challenge and encourage all Railway Street members and families to rededicate themselves to the central importance of meeting together for worship weekly
- We will continue to work to see that our corporate worship is first and foremost Christ-centred and God glorifying
- We will seek to develop worship that is inclusive of all ages.

## Service

- We want to continue to encourage all to use their gifts and to encourage new members to discover the avenue for service that they are gifted for
- We want to find ways to recognise and encourage all those who use their gifts to serve in RSPC.

## Fellowship

- We want to see relationships between those of all ages deepen and grow as we share together in the life of faith and service that God has called us to
- We believe the new Link facilities provide many opportunities for informal fellowship both on Sundays and throughout the week and we want to encourage all members to avail of these opportunities
- Through the promotion of discipleship groups we pray that we will see fellowship deepen - and we want to encourage new and existing members to be part of these groups.

## 4. Strategic Priority Areas for 2023-2025

We will place particular emphasis on these two strategic priority areas in the following ways.

### All Age Discipleship

- We will seek to develop and implement an intentional and structured curriculum for children from Beginners Church, through Kids Church and into Youth church that will give them a well-rounded understanding of the story of the Bible as a whole
- The provision of the new Link facilities opens up the opportunities to look at different forms of discipleship focused ministry on alternate Sunday evenings. Among the options to consider are:
  - Small groups looking at different issues or the use of courses such as Discipleship Explored
  - The provision of an intergenerational discipleship programme on a Sunday evening
  - A Faith academy – offering different streams on the same night for people to choose from
- The renewal and relaunch of discipleship groups during the week meeting in people's homes or within the Link
- We will seek to relaunch our Men's Ministry
- We want to see the integration of new members into discipleship opportunities.

### Outward Intentional Evangelism

- We want to put intentional outreach at the heart of our church's work and witness

- We will devote ourselves to praying for God to bring to saving faith those both inside and outside the congregation
- We will continue to ensure that the challenge to respond to the gospel is presented through the preaching of God's Word
- We will continue to develop our website and social media platforms to support our church's outreach
- The launch of an informal coffee morning in the first 3 months of 2023 in the Link which will be evaluated after 6 months to assess the opportunities that arise out of this for other discipleship, evangelism or fellowship opportunities
- The use of the Link as a dedicated parents' area on Tuesday & Thursday evenings during BB and GB to build up relationships with non RSPC families
- The recommencement of an Easter Bible Club in Brownlee Primary School
- The use of the Link for developing a Café Church as a means of outreach
- We will work towards the use of one of the Christianity Explored resources in 2023 within the Link or in a neutral venue such as Percival's coffee shop or Brownlee Primary School
- We will look again at opportunities for a Toddlers group
- We will look at how we build meaningful links with local businesses.

## 5. Mission Support

In terms of our support and involvement in the work of Mission Agencies, at home and overseas we recognise that it is not possible for our congregation to support everything. We also

recognise that individual members will have different missions and charities that they support. However, the Kirk Session believes that as a congregation we should focus our interest and support on a more limited and specified number of mission organisations locally and internationally.

These mission agencies are:

### Locally & Nationally

1. Lisburn Foodbank
2. Christians Against Poverty
3. Exodus
4. Scripture Union E3 Schools Project
5. Belfast City Mission Christmas Appeal
6. PCI Mission in Ireland – investigate and agree the option of partnering with a PCI Home Mission congregation (by June 2023)

### Internationally

1. Tearfund
2. Christian Aid
3. Open Doors
4. PCI Global Mission – develop partnership with Diane Cusick and the Kennedys
5. Samaritans Purse Shoebox Appeal
6. Jews for Jesus

We will seek to ensure that we receive regular updates from each of these organisations either through deputation speakers or through the church bulletin.

Through all this we humbly pray that Jesus will be pleased to build His church among us, and through us, to the glory of His great name. Amen.

This strategic mission plan will be reviewed annually  
as we seek to measure progress.