



Explore  
Share  
Celebrate



## ***“Building our Future”***

### **A Strategic Plan for St. James**

#### **The Vision**

At St. James, we are proud of the role we have played in the community over the years. Nevertheless, while celebrating the gifts of the past, it is also time to lay out a clear strategy for its future. Over the past year, parishioners have been working on a strategic plan to do just this. After months of surveys, meetings, discussions and prayer, the parishioners identified a vision statement that seems to capture the essence of where we are and where we are called to be:

*St. James’...  
Exploring, Sharing and Celebrating the love of God  
in the community by word and deed.*

The words **exploring, sharing and celebrating** seem to capture three major parts of our Faith and Ministry at St. James’, namely the importance of Education, Outreach, Worship, Arts and Culture.

#### **First the theme of Exploring (Our Education)**

The theme of *exploring* is meaningful today because St James is a progressive Christian faith community. We value good education and so we value exploring all the ways in which our Christian faith and our society can both support and challenge one another. We are committed to maintaining this environment of exploration and discovery for our children and one another.

#### **Second the theme of Sharing (Our Outreach)**

St. James is a leader in the Stratford community. We are committed to putting our faith into action by listening, identifying and responding to social concerns in our wider community and the world. We feel called to do this by building partnerships with other groups and therefore strengthening the network of people working to better the local and global community. Examples of this are Meals on Wheels, L’Arche, The Foodbank, Community Meals and the Simple Gifts program.

#### **Finally there is the theme of Celebrating (Our Worship, Arts and Culture)**

Here at St. James celebrating the love of God through our Worship is a cornerstone for our spiritual journeys. Through music, word and sacrament we are nurtured. But from its earliest days, St. James’ has also been a home for Arts and Culture in Stratford. It might be an organ concert, a Choral Evensong, a Bell Chimes concert, The CBC Reading of A Christmas Carol, A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, Stratford Summer Music, Loreena McKennett, The Split Peas, or any number of other concerts or events. These are just a sampling of the ways St. James has been an important place to celebrate through the Worship, Arts and Culture of our community. We are committed to ensuring that this strengthens and continues into the next generation of Stratford.



## The Strategic Plan

### What are the principles?

1. A focus on ministry that goes outside our walls to the wider community, both faith and secular.
2. A recognition that faith and spiritual journeys are not fixed; acknowledgement of doubts can be accepted, questions can be asked and answers explored openly.
3. Worship is a glorious expression of our joy in where we are as people of God, and we want to share that joy with others.
4. Following the teachings of St. James, we combine our spirituality with action. Faith works.
5. As Anglicans, the word of God as contained in scripture is important. The illumination of that word through the words of a homily or instruction is important. Both the words we speak, and how we speak them, to one another and to those in need will define us as a community that cares and nurtures.

### The Marks of Mission:

1. *to know that in every minute of every day, we are all truly supported by our Lord Jesus Christ.*
2. *to nurture seekers and ourselves to grow in faith*
3. *to respond to human need with service, care and love*
4. *to seek to right the wrongs of society*
5. *to safeguard the treasures of the earth for new life*
6. *to build St. James' to be a strong, dynamic and responsive church*

### Recommendations:

- that the Parish Council strike a Planning Implementation Committee as soon as possible
- that the first task of the Planning Implementation Committee be to set out the scope of its work
- that the Planning Implementation Committee use a time line such as a Gantt chart to plan out activities for the coming year and to use as a monitoring tool
- that the PIC be empowered to set performance measures for action steps in consultation with appropriate committee chairs/heads of groups
- that the Council be updated monthly on the implementation plan
- that the PIC and the Capital Campaign work together and establish a strong communication link
- that in 2011 the 3 implementation priorities of Council should be:
  - organizational review and restructuring**
  - membership services**
  - communication processes**