



LOOKING FORWARD 2028

DIAMOND VALLEY
BAPTIST CHURCH

The times they are a-changing!

There is a new wind beginning to blow! The world has changed dramatically from the one in which we grew up. The Spirit of God is revealing fresh ways to live and serve as the followers of Jesus.

In Acts 17:6-8 Luke describes an anxious and angry crowd dragging Paul and Silas to the authorities shouting: "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also ... they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus ...".

I love that! "These men have turned the world upside down!" The Greek word *anastatoo* means to unsettle, to stir up or cause an uproar — literally, to turn on its head! They turned their world upside down! When the whole world saw allegiance to the way of Caesar as the 'right-way-up', these bold believers proclaimed the 'upside-down' reign of Jesus!

Being salt and light in a post-Christian world means 'upside-down' thinking and freedom about how we do things. If we were starting all over again — with no expectations or history — what would we dare to do? What would we stop doing? As we gaze over the vast new estates to our north — what would turn things upside down for the way of Jesus?

We get to move out and 'do faith' in the neighbourhoods, just like our cross cultural missionary cousins do. For them, putting up a 'church-building' or starting a public 'worship-service' is not their first priority. Rather, they share hospitality around meals, listen, love, chat, do life, and serve at the point of actual need and opportunity. They discover that God is already active amongst these people and get on board.

As a trickle of people become curious about the way of Jesus, a little cluster of disciples begin to form within their people group. This is often very different to the traditional congregations we're used to.

What does that mean for us as 21st century Christians?

- ▶ We live amongst many diverse people groups, cultures and life-styles all around us!
- ▶ Our established churches and programmes are not accessible for many of these groups.
- ▶ Our past & proven programs will only connect with some, for others they may be barriers.
- ▶ We are invited, with Jesus, to move out of our building into our neighbourhoods to form friendships and participate in the life of our local communities.
- ▶ Our 'neighbourhoods' may be non-geographic. Interest groups and age-groups are more often the neighbourhoods in which people live — each with their own 'lingo,' interests, rhythms and stories. Sporting clubs, schools, hobby groups, cultural centres, art groups, retirement villages, shopping strips, music groups, motor vehicle groups and so on are the new neighbourhoods around town.
- ▶ Activities and programmes are not an end in themselves, but a catalyst around which a community forms. For example, in a child's sporting team, the parents, siblings, friends, former players, and coaches form the network. It's not just the 10-20 players, but maybe 40-70 people who connect around the activity. They do so, not just at the games, but at practises, after-game suppers in cafes, BBQs at family homes and so on.
- ▶ We are free to serve in the groups for which God has given us an affinity. It takes real time and may require being released from other church-based activities to make time. I will do this not just by attending the formal meetings they run, but the broader, more relaxed and personal times they and their families connect. This is where we discern what Jesus is already up to in people's lives. This is where life giving conversations and relationships can form.
- ▶ Being a 'witness' will become less about the formal event or presentation. Rather, as we honestly share our lives, our challenges and joys, and comparing notes about what's important, so significant conversations will emerge, including opportunities for prayer or testimony or practical service or advocacy. We do this with a humble curiosity to learn in turn how others get by.
- ▶ 'Church' in these settings may never evolve into a formal Sunday gathering with pews, pulpits, singing and preaching! The gathered faith community may be seen in a chat around a kitchen table where bread is broken, prayers murmured and the scriptures are read before the group heads off to join in the life of their neighbourhood.

OUR IDENTITY

We are a people who love God, love others and make disciples.

We are a community of hope and compassion.

OUR MISSION

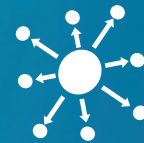
To be a movement that shares the love of Jesus, transforms lives and forms communities of hope and compassion.

VISION 2028

We see a variety of enterprises and communities which bring the hope and compassion of Jesus to many diverse social groups.

OBJECTIVE

To re-imagine ourselves as a regional mission centre which can cultivate, connect and support a diversity of Christ-centred enterprises and communities.



PRIORITIES



1. SPIRITUAL FORMATION:

To all grow in maturity as disciples of Jesus Christ.

- A church of small groups growing as communities of witness in their neighbourhoods.
- A discipleship process for new Christians.
- A shepherding process that supports those in leadership.
- Care for those unable to be in small groups.
- The measure of healthy participation is participation in group-life rather than gatherings.
- A process that invites integration for all guests in all programs

2. GENERATIONS:

An integrated and inter-age approach to community and the formation of children (0 -18 yo).

- To continue to support households, current children's and youth programs and their leaders.
- Households and small groups equipped to be the primary places of formation for children.
- A process to develop emerging leaders, 18-30yo.
- Church gatherings which integrate all ages.
- Activities that encourage connection across the generations

3. GATHERINGS:

Creative, joyful corporate celebration of God. As new projects and communities emerge, corporate gatherings become an important point of alignment.

- To build the team and research the optimal format and times
- To shape the gatherings so as to reflect intergenerational participation.
- To create worship resources for small groups and other new communities that may meet off-site or during the week.

4. TRAINING:

Excellent training that will grow our capacity to fulfil our mission.

- Training resources to develop faith, character & ministry-skills.
- Leadership training — including a vocational programme for potential pioneering leaders; who can start new more complex projects or plant new communities.
- To promote personal and spiritual development resources accessible to those we serve in the local community.

5. RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT:

Stewardship to make provision of the organisational resources needed to support our mission.

- To adopt the optimal organisational framework to facilitate the development of a variety of community programmes and social enterprises.
- To develop a property portfolio, anticipating where 'space' be needed in the next 5-10 years.
- To develop a strategy to generate and invest funds and grant monies for future projects.
- To develop a property plan to maximise the use of the Plenty property.

6. PEOPLE RELATIONS & ADMINISTRATION:

Excellent ministry support & stakeholder relationships.

- Communication, website and social media processes so as to maximise our reach.
- To develop the 'brand,' that best captures our faith and values, and that unites a growing number of off-site projects.
- Efficient administration, finance and I.T. processes to ensure compliance and strengthen the programs and groups.
- Processes to ensure compliance and 'safety' for all who relate to the activities of DVBC.

7. OUTREACH INNOVATION:

A process and resources by which to evaluate, organise, launch, support and review new outreach projects. These may be stand-alone events; small groups reaching their neighbourhoods; or enterprises requiring a full business plan. This includes:

- Appraisal of new outreach or place-making ideas.
- Planning, support and accountability pathways.
- Grant application and funding strategy.
- Launching and reviewing processes.
- Coordinate with other DVBC resources to ensure success.

8. CROSS CULTURAL MISSION:

To maintain the process whereby cross cultural mission projects are discerned, organised and supported.

- To maintain a process for the discernment and appraisal of new ideas and projects. This includes planning, support and accountability.
- To enable prospective workers to succeed at partnership development.

