

MHEC Discipleship Path

The term 'discipleship' describes a journey with others where we are formed in the image of Jesus. Here at Mill Hill East Church we want to create a clear, purposeful journey for both individuals and groups in our community. As such we are outlining here a *discipleship path* which offers a framework for the journey. This will help every member communicate and participate in the journey. It will provide a framework to review and resource our relationships, programs and facilities. It will also help us to create a healthy framework for growth offering transparent support and accountability.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. Hebrews 6:19

There are two strong visual elements highlighting what we uniquely need at Mill Hill East Church for our journey: the sail and the anchor. The sail speaks of the dynamism and movement of our journey. We exist to help people grow into the image of Jesus, and this is a process of transformation. The anchor speaks of the rooted and secure nature of our presence and community. We exist to help people grow into the image of Jesus, and this process happens within loving relationships.

This *discipleship path* is effectively the structure of the boat, allowing people to join in the journey by climbing on board. The image also speaks of the dependence of the wind, which is the living breath of God blowing through our community as we open ourselves to the spirit and the scriptures. He is the one who ultimately brings change, He is the source of hope and salvation. The boat sails on the sea and we also recognise the changing waves in our community, and the need to travel through storms and circumstance.

Mission – offering a place to call home and a reason to hope to everyone.

Purpose creating open relationships, programs and resources where everyone in our community can meet with the love of Jesus.

Anchor Our mission can be described as building community, welcoming everyone, celebrating diversity, creating deep friendships, and FUN! This is incarnational mission.

Sail Our mission also involves being witnesses to the gospel, creativity, being courageous, and members being sacrificial in how they use what they have to serve Jesus. This is invitational mission.

Being in Church/Worship Gatherings

Purpose growing congregation(s) of worshipping disciples, where people are empowered to live as disciples as Jesus

Anchor At our church everyone should be known, loved, and cared for.

Sail At our church everyone should be called, changed, and empowered to live as disciples in the whole of their lives.

Small Groups. First and Third. Kingdom First, led by the Third Person – the Spirit.

Purpose To cultivate groups of 6-12 close friends growing as disciples of Jesus together.

Anchor Our small groups should be spaces where real love is shared in authentic relationships.

Sail Our small groups should involve challenging each other to grow into Christlikeness by putting God's Kingdom first in our lives.

Our current small groups are:

- *Make Time*
- *Connect Group*
- *Young Adults*
- *Mums Group*
- *The Mill*
- *Café Church*
- *Youth Church*
- *The Humphreys*

Pastoral care team

Purpose To help people experience the love of Christ throughout life's challenges

Anchor Our pastoral care should be defined by consistency, walking alongside others, and practical support.

Sail Our pastoral care should always offer opportunity and challenges to change as well as recognising when we should signpost to other professional services.

What is the threshold for pastoral care?

1. **Financial or material need.** Any requests for money, food, housing or basic needs.
2. **Health need.** Pastoral care alongside professional care for physical or mental health needs.
3. **Exceptional circumstances.** Bereavement, changes to job, relationships or housing.
4. **Spiritual Need.** To support members as they share faith and disciple others.

Signposting

The love of a church community and pastoral care can play a vital role in someone's journey of healing and integration into community. However we also have to recognise the limits of our abilities and resources, and where it's more appropriate for other professionals to offer targeted help. The following list includes some of the areas which might be better served by other agencies.

Dealing with past trauma or hurt Association of Christian Counsellors, www.acc-uk.org Or access via GP.

Financial trouble Christians Against Poverty (www.capuk.org based at Trinity North West) or Citizens Advice Barnet www.barnetcab.org.uk/

Insecure housing Homeless Action Barnet www.habcentre.org, or Barnet Homes <http://thebarnetgroup.org/bh/>

Safeguarding Barnet Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 020 8359 4066, London Baptist Association (Pete James 020 7692 5592)

Domestic violence 999 or national domestic violence helpline 0808 2000 247

Mental health care 999 or Barnet Crisis Team 020 8702 4040

Physical health 999 or 111

Spiritual affliction Vulnerable people who have experienced spiritual abuse, or who are expressing need in dealing with evil spirits, voices or manifestations should be referred to those with appropriate experience and training. This is for the safety of both the vulnerable person and the care giver. In urgent need, contact the regional team or our regional minister Lee Johnson via the LBA offices, 020 7692 5592.

If in doubt the first point of contact is Josh or an appropriate member of staff, or in times of crisis always escalate upwards – refer to the emergency services or to the London Baptist Association¹.

Leadership team

Purpose To develop our strategic focus on vision and the healthy management of resources.

- To ensure all outreach, discipleship and care respects the privacy, safety and welfare of all involved.
- To ensure those offering care and leadership have appropriate training, support and resources.
- To ensure we develop a culture of both loving care and healthy boundaries, particularly by offering care to care givers and recognising the limits of our responsibilities and resources.
- To oversee the development of resources – financial, buildings, amenities, and staff.
- To support a vibrant and inclusive spirituality centred on Jesus within our church.

¹ Although we are a Baptist & URC LEP, our safeguarding policy, training and support come from the London Baptist Association and Baptist House. It is essential to have a single, clear communication and support chain for both the church and those we are reaching and caring for. It is the role of the minister and the LBA to communicate with the URC if or as needed – particularly involving issues of a historic nature, or issues which may affect the wider church and its reputation.