

# St Andrews



## Mentoring Policy and Agreement: Responsible to the Vicar and PCC

### OVERVIEW

The use of mentoring within St Andrew's Church will have many different forms. In fact, people will probably think of quite different things when they hear words like mentoring, mentor or mentee. The purpose of this document is to outline our current understanding and practise for a mentoring relationship.

### **Our definition**

*Christian mentoring is a dynamic, intentional relationship of trust in which one person enables another to maximise the grace of God in their life through the Holy Spirit, in service of God's kingdom purposes, by sharing their life, experience and resources.*

Therefore mentoring is more than two people just spending time together. It is a mutual relationship (it flows in both directions), with an intentional agenda (there is an end in mind), filled with meaningful content (combining theory and reality, thinking and practice), from one individual to another (understanding that one has resources and experience the other is eager to learn from).

This may happen in a variety of ways in a variety of contexts. The foundation and each building block of a mentoring relationship are friendship and trust. As a result, the mentoring relationship may include doing activities together, drinking coffee and chatting, attending Church or special events together, connecting on the phone and whatever constitutes building friendship for the mentee. The principle for the mentor is to think in terms of: "how can I build friendship and trust with this person" rather than, "how can I impart all my wisdom and knowledge to them"! The mentor must be willing to serve their mentee by meeting them 'where they are' but also be willing to bring challenge and accountability to their life. Jesus said: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another". John 13.35

### PRINCIPLES

All mentors must have a commitment to:

- Treating individuals with respect, ensuring their welfare and safety;
- Recognise and respect their abilities and potential for development;
- Promote their rights to make their own decisions and choices, unless it is unsafe;
- The promotion of social justice, social responsibility and respect for others; and
- Confidentiality, never passing on personal information, except to the person to whom you are responsible, unless there are safeguarding issues of concern (e.g. allegations of abuse).

Safeguarding issues of concern must **always** be reported to the Police or Social Care services and Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

We will provide a supportive, inclusive and positive environment that ensures you enjoy your mentoring role and that you are treated with respect and courtesy and provided with training.



## **ST ANDREWS VISION FOR MENTORING:**

*“To initiate life-giving relationships that encourage, challenge and call out the best in the person being mentored”*

**This is ultimately our goal in all relationships: it is to show people that they are loved. However, the unique thing about a mentoring relationship is that we are also asking God to use us to influence and empower the person being mentored.**

### **ROLE OF MENTORS**

As a mentor you will come alongside the person being mentored (mentee) to create a relationship of accountability in which the mentor promotes reflection and self-awareness. You will help the mentee develop lifelong skills in self-awareness and development, leaving him or her with a set of disciplines that will help them throughout their life and that they can pass on to others.

### **QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE MENTORS**

- M**akes the most of the potential in a person.
- E**ncourages and builds up others through gifts and abilities.
- N**urtures with patience, knowing that time and experience are needed for development.
- T**olerates mistakes, brashness, abrasiveness and the like in order to see potential develop.
- O**ffers perspective through vision and the ability to suggest the next steps that a mentee needs to take.
- R**esponds with flexibility to people and circumstances.
- S**eeks first the kingdom of God.

(Taken from Leighton Ford Ministries, Mentor Training Seminar)

Jesus moulded the lives of his disciples by sharing the whole of his life with them. He also related to different people with different levels of intimacy and frequency (for example John, James, Peter, the twelve, and the seventy-two he sent out), but throughout his public ministry he chose to invest an extraordinary amount of time in a few people.



## **MENTORING SKILLS**

Listed below are a number of core mentoring skills. Inevitably you won't be equally good at each of these skills, but will need to have a basic grasp of their importance within a mentoring relationship.

### **Asking questions**

Asking the right questions – and asking them well – is a key skill for mentors. Your role is to 'hear' the mentee without passing judgement on them or trying to take responsibility for them – and without trying to 'mould them to your likeness'. This experience will help your mentee to relax and grow in confidence and trust. It helps them to be honest about their deeper feelings and thoughts. It enables them to perceive their world in a new way and to move forward.

### **True listening**

When love motivates your listening, there is a commitment not only to grasp what is being communicated but also to discover the 'person behind the words'. True listening involves one's whole being striving to hear and understand the thoughts, feelings and meanings behind the words being spoken. It requires patience, humility, sensitivity, acceptance and alertness.

### **Affirmation and encouragement**

Most people lack sufficient affirmation (giving thanks for what has been) and encouragement (giving strength for what is to come). Leaders in particular can feel isolated and taken for granted. They may experience discouragement and opposition. Being an effective mentor offers the gift of affirmation not only for what is good, but also for the potential you see for the future.

### **Perspective**

From your 'outside' vantage point, your mentoring will help the mentee to see things in perspective. Factors influencing their viewpoint include distance, time, maturity, biblical knowledge, wisdom, experience and differences in personality and gifts.

### **Challenge**

Few people have relationships in which they are loved enough to accept genuine challenge. Yet without honest feedback and direct loving challenge, few will grow into the person God is calling them to be. Nor will they fulfil their role in the most effective way.

### **Praying**

Prayer is an essential part of good mentoring. We encourage you to pray for your mentee regularly, and to pray with them each time you meet.

After reading the above most of us would feel inadequate for the task. That's normal. Each of us will be better at some aspects of the list than at others. You are not expected to be omni-competent, but simply to be open to the Spirit and willing to engage in each of these areas in ways that will serve the mentee.



## **STRUCTURE & PRACTICE**

### **1. Agreement, Consent and Support**

1.1 If you become a mentor then this document and agreement should be read and signed.

1.2 You must be committed to Christian values, exercise pastoral concern and work to help people to develop their personal, social and spiritual needs.

1.3 Although primarily for the purpose of an arranged mentoring relationship, this document can also be used in any context where an adult is meeting on a 1 to 1 basis with a person. This might include:

- Home or hospital visits to ill people
- Baptism / confirmation preparation
- For ongoing prayer ministry (but see prayer ministry co-ordinator, Alan Roberts)
- Counselling (within St Andrew's Church)

1.4 The mentor themselves should also have appropriate support for their own growth in faith. This may be met by being involved in a mentoring support group but could be provided through their own mentoring relationship.

### **2. Activity, location, communication, timings**

2.1 As suggested above, the mentor and mentee may interact in many different contexts. The model for mentoring doesn't need to be limited to sitting in a café for a coffee. This may be highly inappropriate for some people! Some suggestions are made above about **what** the mentor and mentee might do. Below are ways to make that safe:

2.2 The following criteria are crucial but not exclusive and not prescriptive. Meetings should always be:

In a safe place which is:

- In some situations not entirely alone (in a house, car, or other building)
- If at **a person's** home, it may require someone else to be in the house with the meeting taking place in a room with the door left slightly open.
- In a public place where there are other people around (egg. Café, shop, park)

**3. Confidentiality** is of utmost importance in a mentoring context. You should treat all conversations as confidential and be aware of meeting in public places with others in earshot.

**4. Co-dependency** - You will need to watch out for signs that a mentee has or is developing such emotional or psychological reliance on you that is leading to them making unrealistic demands and/or contact with you. If you this happens then please talk with either the Mentoring Lead (Ed Thompson or Clergy Lead (Olly Mears)



## 5. Responsibilities, safeguarding, emergencies

5.1 In the event of a safeguarding concern (a disclosure of harm ie. when you think a person may be being harmed or could be harmed by themselves or someone else) you should:

- Listen but don't promise secrecy to the person
- Reassure the person but don't make promises.
- Report verbally as soon as possible to the designated mentoring co-ordinator or if not available, the safeguarding rep or Vicar. The information will be dealt with appropriately from there.
- Write down a full account of what occurred and/or what caused you to be concerned as soon as possible afterwards; sign and date.

5.2 It would be helpful if you have an understanding of the limits of your mentee's ability to remain in confidence.

5.3 If there are things that arise from your conversation that are not safeguarding issues but are cause for concern, you should speak to the Mentoring Lead (currently Ed Thompson) or the Clergy responsible for Mentoring (currently Rev Olly Mears) as much as possible without breaking confidence. It may be that the mentee could be referred for further counselling, prayer ministry or another service outside the Church.

### SIGNATURE

As a Mentor I understand my responsibilities and boundaries. I agree to operate within these to the best of my ability & show willingness to develop my skills & undertake training.

As part of the St Andrew's mentoring service I am willing to be transparent and open in order to help safeguard everyone.

#### Mentors Signature

Signed.....

Date.....

#### Signed on-behalf of St Andrews

Signed.....

Date.....