

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES



THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES

The Abbey's Mission

- To serve Almighty God as a 'school of the Lord's service' by offering divine worship daily and publicly;
- To serve the Sovereign by daily prayer and by a ready response to requests made by or on behalf of Her Majesty;
- To serve the nation by fostering the place of true religion within national life, maintaining a close relationship with members of the House of Commons and House of Lords and with others in representative positions;
- To serve pilgrims and all other visitors and to maintain a tradition of hospitality.

Our Values

As one we serve each other, our visitors and the wider world in all that do with:

- Truthfulness
- Integrity
- Empathy
- Excellence

These are values for everyone, of any faith and none. They are not exclusively Christian values. However they are distinctively Christian.

The following words and pictures illustrate our values and invite you to engage with the meaning of the values whilst you serve the Abbey and all those whom it welcomes.

THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES

As one we serve....

The call to service was central to the mission of Jesus Christ: 'The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve' (Mark 10:45). It is also axiomatic in Christian belief that everyone is created equally in the image of God, so all must be served equally.

There is no different value to be attached to anyone according to race, gender, or social status:

'in Christ there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28).

We are one team, together united in our mission.



THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES

**As one we serve each other,
our visitors and the wider world.**

We welcome people in the Abbey's Benedictine tradition of hospitality and service giving equal respect to all.



THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES

With Truthfulness

Christ is consistently portrayed in Christian faith as one who is himself the truth, and calls us to follow the truth; this is a reflection both of the very being of God as the ultimate source of all truth, and the character of God 'who never lies' (Titus 1:2).

- Be honest with yourself and others and with the resources you are responsible for.
- Admit when you don't know the answer, find a way to provide an answer either through asking a colleague or finding out for yourself.
- Be aware of your own feelings and concerns and how they will prejudice your view.
- Find a way to express concerns honestly but allow that there could be a different view.

As a Truthful person:

- You will understand yourself, and know your own strengths and weaknesses. You will not delude yourself about successes or failures.
- You will present yourself in a way that shows who you really are. Your reputation will be founded on what you are and, whether in public or private, your behaviour and standards will be the same.
- You will meet any commitments or promises that you make.
- You will be accurate in your descriptions of yourself or others. You will not mislead others.

The Importance of Truth

- Truth matters, both to us as individuals and to society as a whole.
- As individuals, being truthful means that you can grow and mature, learning from your mistakes.
- For society, truthfulness makes social bonds, and lying and hypocrisy break them.

If you doubt this, consider what happens when you find out that someone has lied to you. You feel less inclined to trust them next time, and also less inclined to trust other people generally.

THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES



THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES

With Integrity

Matching words and deeds, fulfilling promises and not letting people down, is one of the key characteristics of the God of the Bible: 'Has he promised, and will he not do it? Has he spoken, and will he not fulfil it?' (Numbers 23:19). Christ frequently taught this as a requirement for us all: we are to be 'faithful' servants (i.e. reliable), and we are to beware especially of the opposite of integrity (i.e. hypocrisy).

- Refuse to go along with something you feel is wrong.
- Take responsibility for a mistake – rather than pass/distribute the blame across the team.
- Deal with a difficult situation in a timely and professional manner.
- Refuse to join in gossip and hear-say – and stopping it should you come across it.
- Lead by example.
- Follow through on commitments and deliver on promises.
- Share information willingly and appropriately.

Why does Integrity matter?

Individuals who have integrity live by a set of standards and values that translate well in relationships with colleagues, customers, and managers. They show respect to others in their conversation and behaviour. They work when they are supposed to be working and leave the socializing and personal business aside for break times.

If you have high levels of Integrity you will:

- Show a sense of honesty, dependability, and consistency of character, and be accountable for what you say you are going to do.
- Adhere to our policies and procedures.
- Own up to your own mistakes.
- Demonstrate integrity by drawing others to you because you are trustworthy and dependable.
- Be principled and counted on to behave in honourable ways even when no one is watching.

THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES



THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES

With Empathy

In Christian belief the act of empathy is one of the most profound and distinctive of God's actions: it happened in Christ when God himself entered human experience, stepped fully into our shoes, and so enabled God to relate to us in a uniquely effective way: 'the Word became flesh and lived among us... and we all received grace' (John 1:14,16). Such empathy is something for us to follow in our relationships too.

- Listen to understand rather than listen to reply.
- See the situation from another person's perspective.
- Give graciously of your time and demonstrate patience with others.
- Suspend judgement until you see the whole picture.
- Seek first to understand rather than to be understood.
- Discern the feeling behind someone's words or expressions or letter.

Why should you practise Empathy?

- Empathy is a building block of morality. It helps if you can put yourself in someone else's shoes.
- Empathy is a key ingredient of successful relationships. It helps us understand the perspectives, needs, and intentions of others.

Here are some of the ways that research has testified to the importance of empathy.

- Empathy reduces prejudice and racism.
- Empathy reduces bullying.
- Empathy promotes heroic acts.
- Empathy fights inequality.
- Empathy is good for the workplace. Managers who demonstrate empathy have happier and more productive employees.

THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES



THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES

With Excellence

'Strive for the greater gifts', St. Paul tells us; 'the most excellent gift is love' (1 Cor 12:31; 13). He also tells us, 'whatever you do...do everything to the glory of God' (1 Cor 10:31). It is a reminder that the quest for excellence, whether in routine jobs, technical expertise, or human relations, is a response to the perfection and glory of God, not just a matter of human pride.

- Attend to work with a can-do attitude. Be the best you can be.
- Understand that your role is more than just a 'job' by being helpful and taking on responsibility outside the norm.
- Strive always to find a solution not a problem.
- Ask for help to enable you to develop and grow in your role.
- Be open to change and learn from others.
- Go the extra mile.
- Always search to achieve the best and to take your service to exceptional levels.

THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES



THE ABBEY'S MISSION & VALUES



We hope you will find this leaflet a helpful background guide as you go about your work each day for the Abbey. You can be sure that your work is a direct contribution to the Abbey's mission.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John R. Ham".

Dean of Westminster
April 2016

