

## **The Christian faith explains who we are and shapes our work**

The children's charity Spurgeons was born out of the Christian ministry of the great Baptist preacher and writer, Charles Haddon Spurgeon in 1867. He was one of many prominent Christians at that time who made a practical response to the Bible's teaching to tackle poverty, challenge injustice and to live and love as a follower of Jesus Christ. With a generous donation from an Anglican widow, he and others founded the Stockwell Orphanage in south London for "fatherless boys".

It was the result of prayer, Spurgeon's Bible teaching and writing, and a Christian motivation to serve and support vulnerable and disadvantaged children. While our work with children, young people and families may look very different today, our vision and mission for children continues to be inspired and guided by the Christian faith. It is a faith from which we draw our organisational values. It is a faith we expect all of our Trustees, Chief Executive, Directors and those whose role contains an Occupational Requirement to hold and profess.

## **What do we understand Christianity to mean**

As the Christian faith is at the heart of Spurgeons character, it is important to provide a clear description of what Trustees, the Chief Executive, Directors and those whose role contains an Occupational Requirement believe this to mean. The following sets this out.

### **We believe:**

- in God who lives eternally in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
- in the Gospel as the good news of God's intention for all of his Creation to be brought into a relationship with him, through his Son, Jesus, who is revealed in the divinely inspired Scriptures. (2 Timothy 3:16) We recognise that by Scripture, we mean the bible made up of Old and New Testaments.
- in God the Father, who
  - created and sustains all things (Colossians 1:17), and loves all people, who are created in God's image, unconditionally (Genesis 1:27)
  - is just, and therefore grieves when any person is stripped of, or denied, the dignity their image-bearing implies (Exodus 3:7)
  - desires us to be in relationship with him and one another (John 3:16)
  - makes promises that have been or will be kept, including the promise to judge sin (Matthew 25: 31-46) and to restore all things in a new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21:4-5)
- in the Lord Jesus Christ, who
  - being truly human as well as divine felt pain, alienation, and humiliation in the servanthood of making himself nothing to reconcile man to God (Philippians 2:5-11)

- lived a sinless life and taught what it meant to love God with all our heart, soul and mind, and to love our neighbours as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39)
  - showed through his mission on earth a particular concern for children, as those who can sometimes be exploited, marginalised or disadvantaged (Luke 18:15-17)
  - through his death on the cross and bodily resurrection has defeated the power of sin and offers to everyone reconciliation with God (Romans 3: 21-26).
- in the Holy Spirit, creator and life-giver, who
    - leads us to repentance and continually transforms us to be more like Jesus in our actions, motivations and aspirations (1 Peter 1:2)
    - empowers us to live out our faith and demonstrate the difference it makes in showing mercy and grace, love and compassion, in seeking justice and transformation (Galatians 5:22-23)
    - works through the church and the gifts it has been given, to worship, proclaim the gospel and bear witness through its actions (John 15:26).

This statement of faith is consistent with traditional and orthodox protestant beliefs down the centuries as expressed in the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds.

### **How Christianity impacts on all our work**

*“The shop, the barn, the scullery, and the smithy become temples when men and women do all to the glory of God. The 'divine service' is not a thing of a few hours and a few places, but all life becomes holiness unto the Lord, and every place and thing, as consecrated as the tabernacle and its golden candlestick.”*

**Charles Haddon Spurgeon**

The Christian faith motivates and shapes what we do, how we work and what we expect to achieve.

### **Our mission**

Inspired by the Christian faith our mission is to provide support for children, young people and families who are experiencing difficulties or challenges so that they can have a better present and hopeful future. The faith that inspires this mission is derived from Jesus' identity, teaching and mission. We follow His command to love our neighbour, look out for the vulnerable, and speak out for the marginalised. The Christian faith is not naive in understanding that we all fall short of the life Jesus modeled and taught. We all need support or help in meeting our physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

### **Our values**

We expect all who work and volunteer for Spurgeons to identify with and exhibit our values of compassion, inclusion and hope. Universally applied, each is rooted in God's word and demonstrated in Jesus's teaching and life. For example:

- We are **compassionate** because we strive to be like Jesus, reaching out to the vulnerable, marginalised and exploited; His death that brings reconciliation between us and God is an act of grace that motivates us to show compassion.
- We are **inclusive** because we know that every person is made in God's image, that God celebrated the diversity of creation and we live in response to the incarnation of Jesus Christ who came to serve and serve all
- We are **hopeful** because we look forward to God's promise to bring justice, healing and peace in a new creation; we have certainty in this promise because of Jesus' resurrection.

Christians believe that we can live out the aspiration of these values through the transformational power of the Holy Spirit.

### **Who we look to support through our work**

Since we were formed in 1867 to care for "fatherless boys" our work has expanded to cover others who Jesus expressed concern for, including those in prisons, families struggling to cope with their difficulties, children and young people with heavy responsibilities, and those harmed or exploited. We recognise and work in a way that respects the Bible's teaching about the importance of relationships, families and communities, and to respond to God's love and mercy through providing practical support and compassion for those who are vulnerable, marginalised or exploited.

### **Who we work with**

The Christian faith is clear that every person is part of God's creation and created in God's image. We see, treat and work with every person, group and organisation through this lens, celebrating diversity and respecting their value and free will to choose their belief and worldview. That is why Spurgeons can be clear about our motivating faith **and** actively seek to work and employ those from all faiths, beliefs and backgrounds.

### **How we work**

The Bible teaches that we should do all our work as though we are serving God. That means Spurgeons will always aim to be professional in providing the best quality children's services we can. It also means we work in a way that honours God's character by being personal, relational, and empowering. We work in a way that respects partnership because God calls people into partnership; both a partnership with God and with one another.

### **Spurgeons faith at the heart of the charity**

Spurgeons faith statement is not an optional extra that we occasionally call upon. It is at the heart of who Spurgeons is. The faith set out in this document has guided our development since 1867. It has informed and influenced our current organisational strategy. It is a faith, based on the person of Jesus, revealed in the Bible, and experienced in the personal relationship each Christian has with him. It is a history we aim to honour in our present and live up to in our future. It is the yardstick by which we will measure Spurgeons integrity, faithfulness and success.