**Guidelines for the practice of Prophecy at The Belfrey**

We understand prophecy to be a revelation about a person or situation, given by the Holy Spirit, spoken for the benefit of others. This is out of love, from the love that God has for us. We anticipate these words to be in the form of a message, statement, picture or vision, passage of scripture, impression or sensation. We value the prophetic and welcome it, and believe that every believer can prophecy. While we seek to encourage everyone, this must always be submitted to the leadership at The Belfrey. Therefore we require everyone to observe the following:

* We believe that the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus, so we look to glorify Jesus Christ and not ourselves through the use of this gift.
* We recognise that God allows his gifts to dwell in imperfect people and that prophetic giftedness is one of a number of precious gifts given by God. It is not and will not be treated as a sign of superior holiness or of a closer relationship with the Lord.
* All prophecy should be recorded.
* All prophecy is submitted and accountable to the church leadership.
	+ Once a prophetic word has been delivered the ownership and responsibility for action passes from the recipient to the leadership. The prophet is responsible only for accurately passing on what they believe to have received from God.
	+ Directional or corrective prophecy must be submitted to the leadership before sharing.
* Where possible, prophetic ministry should be done in pairs suitable to the gender of the person receiving. It should never involve individuals prophesying for individuals for the sake of accountability.
* Sharing prophecy
	+ All prophecy must be shared with humility. The recipient must be encouraged to weigh what is shared themselves. This may be done by prefacing comments with ‘I sense the Lord is saying...’ rather than ‘the Lord is saying...’ i.e. always allowing the recipient room to weigh themselves without having anything spoken over them.
	+ Prophecy should be shared accurately and briefly, faithful to the revelation. We recognise that explaining a prophecy may introduce the individual’s interpretation. The revelation, interpretation and application should each be weighed.
* Sharing prophecy at services / meetings
	+ Any prophecy should be shared with the leader of the meeting so that they can weigh it. The leader will decide to share it or ask the person receiving the prophecy to share it personally in their own words.
* Character of the Prophet:
	+ Character is as important as charisma, we recognise that eagerly desiring the gift of prophecy and fostering healthy spiritual disciplines of regular bible study, worship, prayer and fasting will encourage and grow this gift.
	+ Where a person is struggling with character issues (particularly sin issues) the church leadership may ask the person to suspend ministering in the prophetic until these issues are resolved.
	+ People should beware of prophesying about subjects in which they have a personal or emotional involvement.

All prophecy should be weighed. There are 3 elements to the weighing of prophecy; the revelation, interpretation and application. Each should be weighed individually. Both the person receiving a prophetic word and the person for whom it is intended need to weigh the content and will be encouraged to do so.

* Weighing Prophecy – questions to ask:
	+ Is it given in love?
	+ Is it strengthening, encouraging or comforting?
	+ Genuine prophecy is always consistent with scripture, does it line up with the Bible? (a word which contradicts the Bible will be rejected)
	+ Does it resonate? Is it similar to or confirming other prophecy that has already been shared?
	+ Is the timing for now? (Ask the Lord when it is for)
	+ Does this bring peace?
	+ Does this bring life and freedom?

(Guidelines adapted from content in The Prophecy Course; Cath Livesey and ‘Appendix 1: Guidelines for the exercise of prophet at St Andrew’s Church, Chorleywood’ as contained in ‘Prophetic Evangelism; Mark Stibbe)