

Riverdale Baptist Church Inspiring Proposition

What comes next is of primary importance

Before anything else, including:
 cultural differences
 denominational differences
 faith orientations
 non-conformities
 individualists

It's not the only thing, just the first thing. As such, though, it may change everything...

If we start with this, the rest may even take care of itself

Inclusive pronoun:
you are in this as much as *I* am, as much as anyone else who may read this

First, we will serve

Pause to think for a bit on the importance of the preceding word and how it modifies what is coming next

Open-ended...serve who or what?
 each other
 God
 our community
 the wider world
 dinner

Action-oriented: doing something, not just thinking, believing or being something

Both a statement about the kind of people we are and a call to action

It's an attainable ambition for everyone, on any level

Honours the desire for service both within our church family and without

It's a reflection of the most fundamental activity of Christian community: serving a meal. This is a powerful image first given us by Jesus Christ as an example of service, as a mandate to remember him in a communion meal, and in his ultimate "serving" of his own life for us

Purposeful, intentional, committed, declarative.
 Also used to express habitual behaviour

First, we will serve is a reflection of Riverdale Baptist Church's values:

To serve one another, to serve God, is a *traditional* Christian belief,

Service is at the root of our *social cohesion*

Service is our context for *cultural relevance* (it's one way of knowing that we strive to impact culture, rather than have it impact us).