

Planning for the future: one, holy, catholic and apostolic church

Diocesan Synod

Saturday, May 18th, 2019

MISSION STATISTICS HEADLINES 2018

Total numbers in Church in an average Sunday in October

Adults:	25,666
<16:	3200

- Adult numbers are down only 0.8% on 2017. This represents 200 people.
 - 10 deaneries grew in attendance or remained stable.
 - There has been spectacular growth in a few places. Other Churches have grown their adult attendance by 10% or more.
 - St. Peters and its partners in Brighton stabilised. In that deanery 40% of the adults and 58.7% of the <16's attend one of these three churches. Holy Trinity, Hastings grew slightly.
 - Child numbers are down 8.4% on 2017, the average child attendance decline of the last 5 years. There were 3200 children in church on an average Sunday in October. If anything, the rate of child attendance decline is increasing. This represents roughly a halving of the number of children in Church since 2000.
 - Rural areas are hit hardest by this. In several of our more remote rural deaneries there are only one or two benefices that have a regular weekly children's work, making it very difficult for them to attract and retain committed families.
 - Messy Church (the most common fresh expression) adds almost 50% to these child numbers (+1600). However, these represent very fringe people, rather than committed core families.
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DIOCESAN SURVEY 780

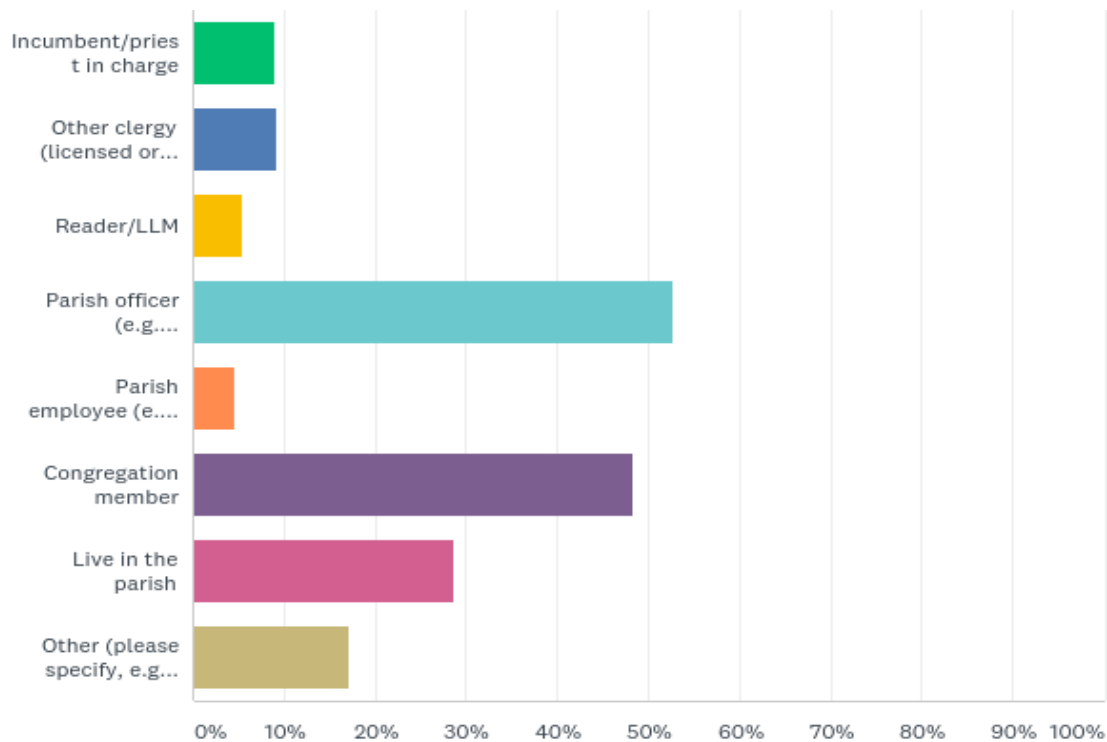
Total Responses

Date Created: Monday, February 04, 2019

Complete Responses: 651

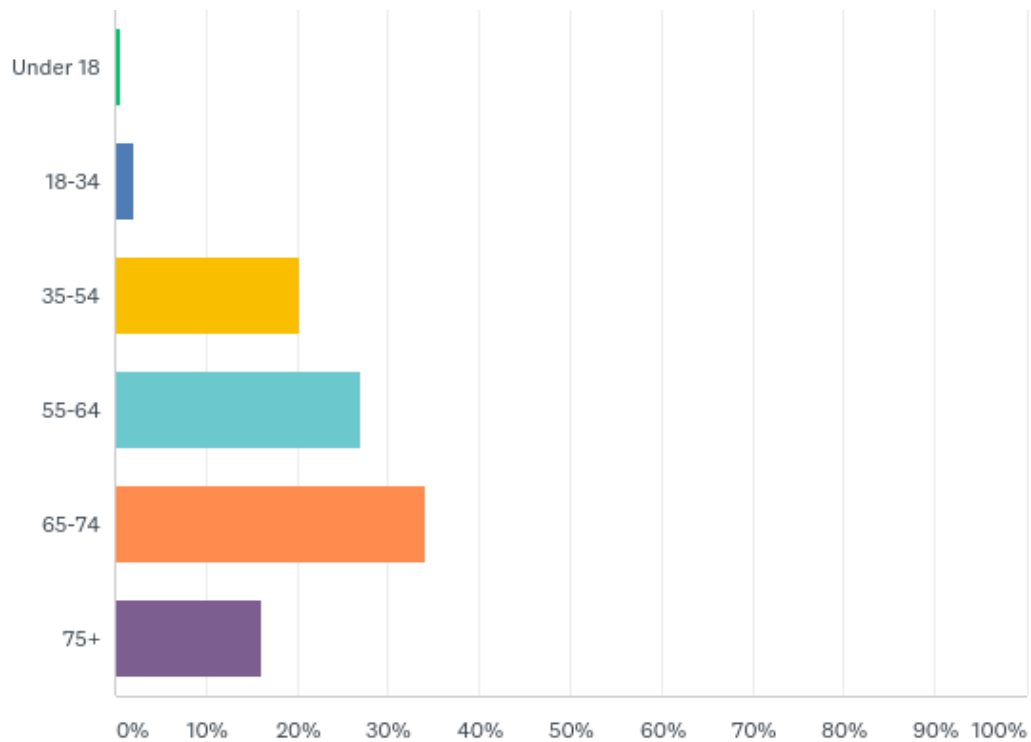
What is your role? Tick as many as apply

Answered: 634 Skipped: 146



What is your age?

Answered: 629 Skipped: 151



ONE

More open:

We have a vision for congregations with age profiles reflecting the communities they serve. We want to see the Church as a family of all ages, loving, serving, contributing and receiving together at a level appropriate for their age and maturity.

HOLY

More converted to Jesus Christ:

We have a vision for a church which communicates the Gospel effectively so women, men and children come to a living, personal faith, joining their local church family on a journey to know, love and follow Jesus. We want to see our life flow out of prayer and worship, rather than see these as one of the things we do. We want to be a church where people are valued and nurtured, not drifting away through the difficulties of life.

CATHOLIC

More generous:

We have a vision of a diocese where there are 'no needy among them' Acts 4: 35; where wealthier parishes contribute joyfully to sustain ministry in deprived areas and where poor parishes don't feel a liability to the rest. We envisage a diocese with a balanced budget and financially sustainable parishes by 2023.

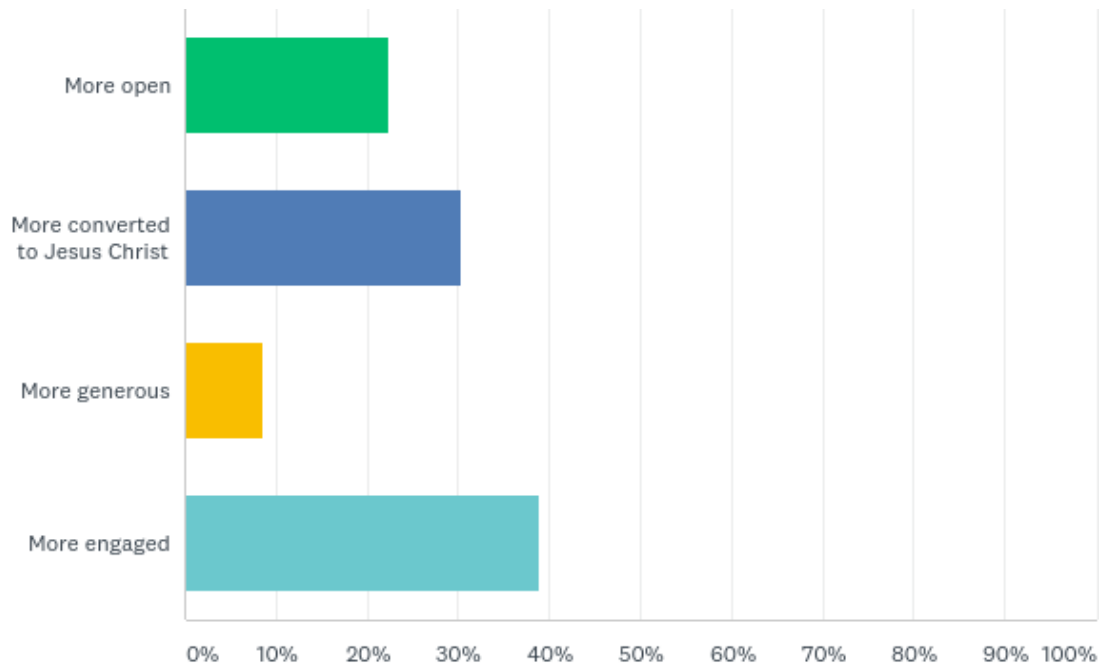
APOSTOLIC

More engaged:

We have a vision for a church where people have a sense of vocation to love, expressing itself in service in their workplaces, community, family and the wider world, and a church family that nurtures and encourages that vocation. We long to see a church whose reputation in the community is one of bringing blessing and transformation; a church which works in partnership with all those of good will to contribute to the common good.

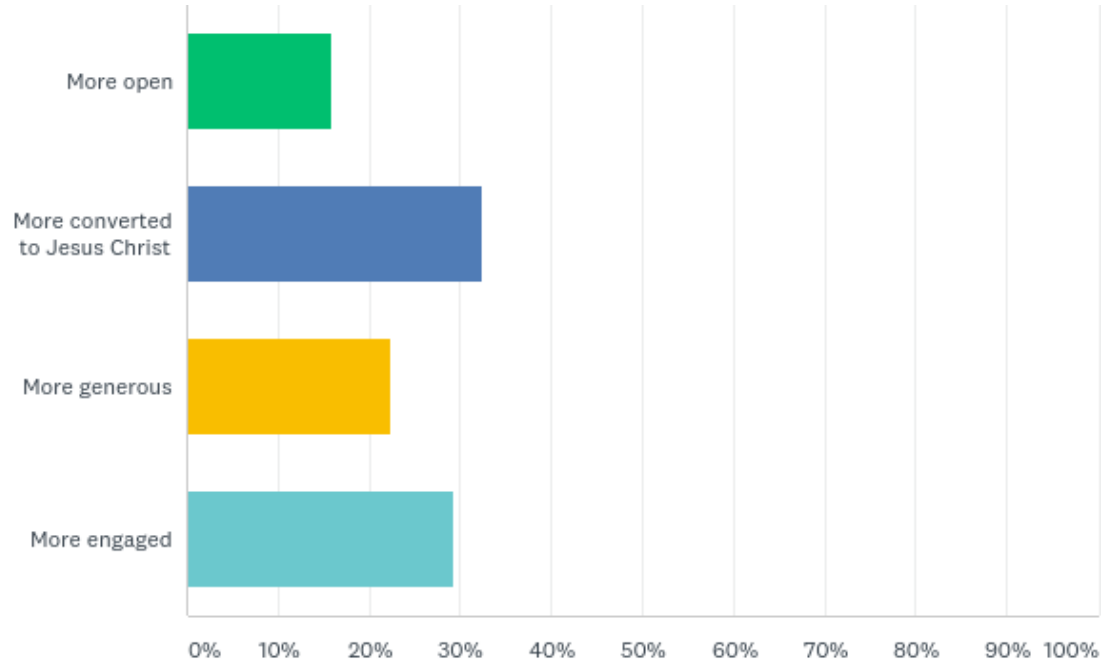
Which aspect of the strategy do you anticipate will be the most important in your church?

Answered: 631 Skipped: 149



Which aspect of the strategy do you anticipate will be the most challenging in your church?

Answered: 623 Skipped: 157



FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS SUMMARY

- General welcome of the areas of the vision, although a few questions about the audit trail back to the theological principles. Pleas for simple non-technical language.
 - Correct observations about the difference between vision and strategy.
 - Appreciation of the role played by clergy in delivering the vision and a desire for more – a more full time.
 - Small (particularly rural) churches are struggling to find the volunteers to keep the show on the road, never mind increasing engagement.
 - Desire for more support from the wider diocesan family (Church House and other churches)
 - Training on comms, sharing good practice with children
 - Help with administration – simplification and standardisation
 - Money!
 - Widespread misunderstandings about how the diocese is financed
 - Suspicion that there is a magic money tree: selling buildings, support from richer parishes, bonfires of bureaucracy, church commissioners.
 - Need for better school engagement
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