



# VISION FOR GROWTH

2020-2025



# INTRODUCTION

Over the last five years we as a diocese have been following a strategy which flowed out of the goals set nearly a decade ago by the Church of England. They were facilitating church growth, numerical and spiritual; re-imagining ministry; and contributing to the common good.

The next phase of the strategy builds on this work, and is informed by the recent Bishops' visitations, and by consultation with those who manage our financial and apostolic life. It sets out a vision and some targets for the next five years of our life together.

As with the last strategy, this vision and its targets must be owned and fleshed out in your parish. However, they will guide the deployment of our central resources and parish support. We aim to be in practice what we are by the grace of God: a church that is one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

+Martin Cicestr:

# FOUR MORES

**01 MORE OPEN:**  
A SIGN OF BEING ONE

**02 MORE CONVERTED  
TO JESUS CHRIST:**  
A SIGN OF BEING HOLY

**03 MORE GENEROUS:**  
A SIGN OF BEING  
CATHOLIC

**04 MORE ENGAGED:**  
A SIGN OF BEING  
APOSTOLIC

# MORE OPEN: A SIGN OF BEING ONE

We have a vision for congregations, with age and other profiles, reflecting the communities they serve.

We want to see the church as a family of all ages, loving and

servicing, contributing and receiving, being transformed and growing together in ways that appropriately reflect the importance of each context and place.



## OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE WILL ENCOURAGE:

- > Benefices to complete a community audit, using the results to reach out to under-represented groups in their benefice.
- > Benefices to review existing and new patterns of worship, to ensure they are authentic in the Christian tradition and can speak into this age and culture.
- > Benefices to offer regular youth-focussed provision, linked to others through the diocesan HUB networks.
- > Improved links with local church and community schools, with training and support for lay teams to engage with assemblies, Open the Book, RE lessons etc.

### 1 CORINTHIANS 12: 12-13

'Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptised by one spirit so as to form one body.'

# MORE CONVERTED TO JESUS CHRIST: A SIGN OF BEING HOLY

We have a vision for a church which communicates the Gospel effectively, so women, men and children come to a living, personal and transforming faith in Jesus Christ and join their local church family on the journey to know, love and follow Jesus. We want to be a church where people matter, life is given

value and we learn to live generously even amidst the difficulties of life. We envisage a wide open front door to a community where people feel at home and want to stay. We want to see our life flow out of prayer and worship, rather than see these things as one amongst other activities that we do.





## OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE WILL WORK AND PRAY FOR:

- > At least 60% of benefices running regular discipleship courses, engaging more people in Lent and home groups.
- > At least 500 more people completing the Living Faith Course and Authorised Lay Ministry modules.
- > Wide use of a rule of life that connects worship in church with daily prayer and Christian witness.
- > Improvement of the quality of our preparation for baptism and confirmation.

### ROMANS 12: 1

‘Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.’

# MORE GENEROUS: A SIGN OF BEING CATHOLIC

We have a vision of a diocese characterised by a radical, generous response to the self-giving of Jesus Christ, who fills the Church with his life (Ephesians 1: 23): that is its catholicity. In this household of faith there are 'no needy among them' (Acts 4: 34):

wealthier parishes contribute joyfully to sustain ministry in deprived areas and economically deprived parishes don't feel a liability to the rest. We envisage a diocese with a balanced budget and financially sustainable benefices by 2025.





## OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE WILL WORK WITH YOU TO ACHIEVE:

- > Every parish running at least two stewardship campaigns, with regular preaching on generosity in between.
- > At least 75% of parishes enrolled in the Parish Giving Scheme.
- > At least 50% of parishes having contactless giving technology.
- > Every PCC member knowing total diocesan income and expenditure, their own parish share pledge and their benefice's parish ministry costs, and wider understanding and confidence in diocesan finances among congregations.

## 2 CORINTHIANS 8: 9

'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.'

# MORE ENGAGED: A SIGN OF BEING APOSTOLIC

We have a vision for a church where people have a sense of vocation to love, expressing itself in service; and a church family that nurtures and encourages that vocation.

We long to see a renewed church which brings blessing and transformation to its parish; a church which works with all those of good will to contribute to the common good.



## **OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE WILL WORK WITH YOU TO ENABLE:**

- > More engagement with 'Setting God's People Free' to encourage whole life discipleship.
- > At least 80% of churches supporting one or more projects which contribute to the common good, developing partnerships with other faith and secular organisations where appropriate.
- > At least 20 more apostolic partnerships, particularly in areas of new housing and economic deprivation.
- > A holistic mission, incorporating both evangelism and social action.

### **JOHN 20: 21-22**

'As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.  
And with that he breathed on them and said,  
Receive the Holy Spirit.'



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TO KNOW • LOVE • FOLLOW JESUS