

June 2026

The Ven Matthew Trick writes...



Can you believe that we're already halfway through 2026? In many ways, the first half of the year has been characterised by movement. By the time you read this Bishop Malcolm will have retired, Archdeacon Emma will have started, other clergy and laity will both come and go, and the stories of our lives (in most spheres of life) will rarely be "static".

In the midst of constantly changing times, building our lives on the rock that is Jesus offers us stability—a rootedness—that many of us crave. Jesus ends the Sermon on the Mount with that picture: "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock" (Matthew 7:24).

Discipleship is not an optional extra for a few keen Christians; it is the steady work of becoming people whose lives are held firm by Christ, whatever shifts around us.

I entered 2026 with a prayerful sense that the Lord was saying to me, "Your power comes through prayer", and with a sense of being invited into deeper dependence on Jesus as life threw some significant challenges my way. It reminded me that we are not formed by good intentions alone, but by encounter—by repeatedly placing ourselves where Jesus has promised to meet us.

That is where "making new disciples" begins: not with techniques, but with being made new ourselves. St Athanasius famously wrote, "He became what we are that He might make us what He is." If that is true, our calling is to be shaped into the likeness of Jesus—so that, in our words, patience, courage, and compassion, others might catch a glimpse of him.

This matters because the Church is not sustained primarily by activity, but by holiness—by lives quietly remade. St Irenaeus wrote, "The glory of God is a human being fully alive." We become "fully alive" as Christ's life takes root in ours, and we begin to radiate out what we have received. Paul says it with breathtaking simplicity: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). People do not only need our programmes; they need our presence in communities across the diocese—Christ's presence shining through ordinary disciples.

How are we formed? By grace, yes—and also by habits that keep us close to the Lord. The Christian tradition has always known that we are shaped by what we repeatedly attend to, love, and practise. Not as a way of earning God's favour, but as a way of becoming available to God's transforming work.

Worship re-centres us in God's story and trains our hearts to love Christ. Week by week, we are gathered, forgiven, fed by word and sacrament, and sent back out into our communities. Over time, the liturgy sinks beneath the surface and becomes reflex: gratitude rather than grumbling; forgiveness rather than resentment. "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19) is not simply recollection; it is, and becomes a way of life. We remember Jesus until, slowly, our lives begin to resemble him.