

Diocesan Vision

+Libby writes:

'Strive first for the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.' (Matthew 6)

This is my desire for our diocese: knowing we are loved beyond measure in Christ, we are able to offer, with generous faith and courageous hope, life-giving love without restraint. This gift of love, transforming our lives and translated into love passed on, is how I understand the Kingdom of God.

Through 2020 we discerned our vision: 'the Kingdom of God: good news for all'. The outworking of that vision will shape the coming decade. We are called to proclaim afresh, in this generation, the good news of that Kingdom, seen in transformed lives, through growing church and building community. Who we are, as much as what we do, proclaims the Kingdom - so we will live out our values of generous, faith, courageous hope and life-giving love. To enable us to fulfil our calling we will invest, over the next 5 years, in equipping people, shaping structures and sustaining resources for mission. In 2027, our centenary year we will celebrate 100 years of the work of the Kingdom of God in the life of our Diocese. We will then reflect and review, in preparation for our continuing call for the following decade.

Of course, this is not new. It is a reiteration of ancient, unchanging truth. And, there is much in what we are exploring that has echoes of previous endeavour in the diocese, and deliberately so – we are not reinventing for the sake of it. As we strive to be faithful and fruitful, we must be attentive to those who remind us to be care-ful as well as bold, who counsel us to look back as well as forward and take our time, who ensure we treasure what we inherit as well anticipate all that God has in store for us.

And we also know that the coming of the Kingdom is God's business: the world, and every community in it, are God's creation; the Church is not what we make it – but the Body of Christ; lives are transformed by the work of the Spirit. The coming of the Kingdom is God's business and does not depend on any strategy and is not constrained by any schedule. But, wonderfully, God invites us to join in. That's an undeserved privilege which we are to treasure beyond price – so we do take seriously our plans and choices and decisions.

I have found the image of weaving helpful for thinking how our Vision might work out in practice:

We will **frame** everything in prayer: in our public worship and private devotion and discipline. This is the necessary reminder, always, that this is God's work.

Our outworking will be given structure by **warp** of the 5 marks of mission (see p.5 of these resources). These are the things that will give consistency to our weaving. I will give them priority in my own life and ministry, and I will insist they are given priority in the life of the diocese.

The **weft** of the tapestry are the threads of every aspect of all our lives - every aspect not just the 'religious' bits but also the threads of compassion, creativity and culture, of commerce, of connection, in every context of our diocese. That's extraordinary variety and richness, all shades and tones, all textures and fibres. Everyone can participate and contribute. Our tapestry is reduced and diminished when anyone or anywhere is excluded.

Our Vision is 'the Kingdom of God: good news for all'.

So, what does the Kingdom of God mean to you and for you – in your everyday life, and in the life of your worshipping community?

What will generous faith, courageous hope and life-giving love look like for you?

The Kingdom is good news not only for us, but for all - for all 1.1 million people in the diocese, including 250,000 children, the 38 million visitors a year, and the nation and world beyond.

So, how might you – in your everyday life, and in the life of your worshipping community – proclaim afresh, in this generation, the good news of the Kingdom of God to others?

What are the ways you might need to equip people, shape structures and sustain resources for this mission in your context?

Diocesan Vision

Short Resource Materials

How to use these materials

The attached short resource materials have been developed to help you explore what the outworking of the Diocesan Vision might mean in more detail, and in all our diverse and varied contexts. They do not give the answer but offer a worked example of how the **Vision summary** headings might be engaged with.

The worked examples for 'Transformed lives', 'Growing church', and 'Building community' are as from a local context. 'Diocesan interventions' and 'Aspiration for the future' offer a reflection on current (April 2021) diocesan engagement and action.

We offer these materials so that you can individually, or as a group, explore what our Vision might mean for you and your local context. You might use all or some of the pages at the same time or over a longer period. There are no deadlines for discovering and working through these documents – they are for you to use at your pace.

Along with reflecting on the questions posed in Bishop Libby's introduction, we suggest you simply ask: ***what do these headings mean for me/us, and how can we put that into practice?***

What it means for you is of most importance, so a blank document has been made available on the website for you to use.

Our hope is that through local and context based exploration, discussion, the study of scripture and prayer you discover afresh the Kingdom of God, and join in.

Other Materials

A series of other materials will be made available on the Diocesan website, including videos, presentations, and other printed documents to help you explore the Vision. We aim to add to this suite of materials, so please look for new updates.

Vision Summary

Vision statement

The Kingdom of God: good news for all

Mission statement

To proclaim *afresh* in this generation the good news of the Kingdom

Our values

Generous Faith
Courageous Hope
Life-Giving Love

Missional aims

Transformed Lives:
Growing Church
Building Community

Diocesan interventions

Equipping people for mission
Shaping structures for mission
Sustaining resources for mission

Aspirations for our 2027 Centenary

5,000 NEW disciples (and 10,000 by 2030) - 2,500 NEW transformation stories shared across the diocese - 1,000 NEW local (lay) leaders - 500 NEW community projects/ partnerships - 500 NEW worshipping communities - 50 NEW ordained vocations

Summary

Vision: The Kingdom of God: Good News for All
Mission: To proclaim *afresh* in this generation the good news of the Kingdom
Values: Generous Faith - Courageous Hope – Life-Giving Love
Aims: Transformed Lives: Growing Church, Building Community
Interventions: Equipping people - Shaping structures – Sustaining resources for Mission
Aspirations: 5,000 NEW disciples (and 10,000 by 2030) - 2,500 NEW transformation stories shared across the diocese - 1,000 NEW local (lay) leaders - 500 NEW community projects/ partnerships - 500 NEW worshipping communities - 50 NEW ordained vocations

Strive first for the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:33 (NRSV)

TRANSFORMED LIVES

A Diocese committed to equipping a church of missionary disciples, centred on Christ Jesus and shaped by Him, transforming the lives of others, and living out their baptismal calling in the '5 Marks of Mission'.

Centred on Christ Jesus and shaped by Him (from the Church of England Vision)

Bishop Libby talks of being "Loved beyond measure, so that we can love without restraint" – that is good news. For our lives to make an impact for God in the world we need to be transformed. In meeting with and receiving God's love we become engaged in God's Mission. Our shared values of generous faith, courageous hope and life-giving love inform our actions as we respond to God and share his hope.

The 5 Marks of Mission

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom: Tell

Before we can tell (and show) others the Good News of the kingdom, we need to receive it for ourselves. Thinking about what excites you about your faith may be a good way to start to think about how you might share it with others. If you want to work with others in your church on discovering and sharing your personal faith story, search 'Faith Pictures' from the Church Army online.

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers: Teach

Living life together in our Christian communities enables God to speak to us, and through us. Listening to and meeting with God in our worship together, having a wise word to share at the right time, and being willing to listen to someone who is struggling all reflect of our transformed lives in Jesus. Being generous in our faith to one another enables us to discover more of God's action in the world.

To respond to human need in loving service: Tend

Showing and receiving loving acts of kindness is an important way that we experience the love of God through the lives of others. The image of the body of Christ is key to the understanding of the church because of the interdependence of 'when one suffers, all suffer together ... When one is honoured, all rejoice together with it.' We need to listen to the needs of others and support them to find solutions.

To seek to transform unjust structures of society: Transform

To challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

Working alongside others we bring God's hope to the world in which we live. Seeking to transform unjust structures in society, we challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation. Listening to the voices of the unheard we need to courageously bring hope into their situations and hear their solutions recognising the kingdom of God at work in the midst of hurt and fear.

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation: Treasure

To sustain and renew the life of the earth

The Diocese of Derby is set in some of the most beautiful parts of the British countryside. It is managed and sustained by hard work and dedication. We thank God for meeting us in the beauty of all creation. However, we know that many of our lives contribute directly to the climate emergency and the damage of God's world. We need to play our part in working together and renewing the life of God's earth.

GROWING CHURCH

A Diocese committed to a mixed ecology of church that is more diverse, enabling people of every age and in every context to hear the good news of Jesus, where we grow and expand worshipping and witnessing communities (including Parish Church congregations, Schools, Chaplaincy, Plants and Fresh Expressions).

Being connected

Local churches support and care for one other as we journey together with God. **Our** church is unique and an important part of the wider body of Christ. Imagining the variety of Christian communities as a 'mixed ecology' highlights their connection to something bigger where we can learn, nurture, and support one another. A healthy church ecology refreshes, grows, and develops new shoots regularly.

Embracing difference

Churches are often welcoming, loving communities that uphold us in our most difficult times. However, we know we have also built barriers and cages for other people too. We have the chance to grow deeper with Jesus by listening to those who have been excluded and make steps to bring real change. Celebrating the lives of people with different experiences to ours broadens our understanding of God.

Facing challenges

Working as a diverse group of mutually supporting churches is the only way to respond to the Spirit of God working across the diocese. We must work hard to provide the resources in areas that may need extra investment, like estates ministry and developing work with children & young people, whilst continuing to serve anyone who wants to connect with God through the life of the church.

Cultivating new opportunities

When 'Jesus Shaped People' are open to working together, across deaneries, denominations and the diocese, God comes to us, transforms us, and calls us out to follow him. We need to respond and begin again where he leads, showing willingness to share resources of ideas, experience, and people. We can then be more agile in our service of him and more rooted in God's faithful love for the world.

Refreshing faithful worshipping communities

Many churches have stood the test of time and faithfully been good news to their neighbours over many years. However, we have never stood still as we are called to proclaim afresh God's love to every generation. We have listened to the direction of the Holy Spirit in our contexts and been shown anew how we should respond. We hear the call of God in all that we do and share that good news with them.

Developing new worshipping communities

Through the work of local pioneer ministers and exciting ideas developing out of the 'Derby Diocese Greenhouse project' we can be more agile in developing fresh expressions of church, especially amongst groups that the church currently struggles to reach. New, well supported ideas can provide local 'Jesus Shaped People' with the chance to bring 'good news' to others in new ways.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

A Diocese committed to being outward facing, rooted in and connected to its communities, working in partnership and networks for the common good, with particular care for poor, outcast, and vulnerable people. A church proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom in word and action making it tangible socially, economically, environmentally and in justice.

Outward facing

Being church helps us to recognise the kingdom of God into our lives, our communities, and our networks. When we are told that we should, 'love and serve the Lord', we trust that God is with us, bringing hope to those we meet and sharing the life-giving love of Jesus by being 'Good News' to them. We need to practice hearing the voice of God in worship, in one another and in the world around us.

Rooted and connected

Historically, the parish church was a local place, for local people. Today, this is only a part of our story. Many congregations form through networks and connections of people who travel to worship God or even meet online. This means that our neighbours may not live nearby, and we may be connected deeply to people around the globe. We need to think creatively about how we serve them differently.

In partnerships and networks

As we care, especially for 'poor, outcast & vulnerable people', we find ourselves standing alongside other organisations and individuals engaged in seeking justice. Working together we can have an impact on the lives of people we could not help on our own. We can resource and support these groups with humility and love and learn a lot about the kingdom of God in action through this work.

Being Good News... to individual people

As local churches we are used to sharing Jesus' love with people, in many ordinary ways like over coffee, visiting people, and caring for those in need. We also receive help from others and allow them to show God's care for us. In these relationships God brings hope for those in need, justice to those who are oppressed and life-giving love for people who do not know where next to turn.

Being Good News... to our networks and neighbours

As the church works together with others, we can listen to God's voice in the lives of those around us. When we hear of challenges that our networks and neighbourhoods are facing, we can offer support to them and help them respond. This may lead us to join local or national groups or to generously share our resources. This brings peace, hope, friendship and joy and an experience of the kingdom of God.

Being Good News... to our world

The Church of England is committed to being carbon neutral by 2030 to tackle climate change. Individuals and local churches give time, effort, and money to try to challenge this and other issues that have an impact on the poorest people in the world. We support groups that fight for justice for people in poverty, facing persecution and for children who are facing dangers, both in the UK and abroad.

Diocesan Interventions

Three steps to achieving our aims

- ✓ Equipping people for mission, developing characteristics and skills
- ✓ Shaping structures for mission, enabling, and facilitating desired change
- ✓ Sustaining resources for mission, ensuring we can deliver our vision across the Diocese

Equipping people for mission: *developing characteristics and skills*

The diocese is making resources available to help everyone grow in their discipleship and enable them to develop new skills as we are transformed and equipped to serve God in the future. This includes training ordained leaders in developing their skills of enabling the gifts and call of others and supporting lay people as they develop their gifts to find new ways of serving in their worshipping communities, and everyday lives. We will provide opportunities for people to serve in exciting new ways and as our lives are transformed, we will be given resources to help others respond as they experience God's love.

The diocese has recently appointed to two posts, an Ordained Ministries Development Officer, and a Lay Ministries Development Officer, who will be working with others to provide resources and training online and locally.

Shaping Structures for Mission: *enabling and facilitating desired change*

We will reshape our structures to be more responsive to the needs of various parts of the diocese. We are considering three archdeaconries, with archdeacons who will each lead mission for a specific context: rural and market towns, city and urban, and emerging industrial areas. Each of these demographics will be given investment and targeted support, and share and develop good practice within those contexts.

We will invest in making use of our Strategic Buildings review, to enable our buildings to be assets for mission, as holy spaces that welcome, resource and encourage local communities.

Ordained and lay leaders will work together in ways that uses their individual and collective gifts and encourages and supports people in their own discipleship. Leadership in the local church, including the deployment of paid clergy, will be reviewed and reorganised over the coming years to encourage local mission to flourish and providing support for churches in new ways. We will improve the lines of communication and support between deaneries, parishes and Derby Church House.

Sustaining Resources for Mission: *ensuring we deliver our vision across the Diocese*

The constraints of our finances is a challenge that we continue to face together. We will look at increasing our overall income by accessing external funding for mission over the short term, and becoming more entrepreneurial with our assets. We will also work with congregations to encourage financial resilience locally through giving and income generation, to support God's work in their communities, across the diocese and through the work of organisations we stand alongside.

We will look together at the financial and missional challenges to determine where and how we use our resources in ways that best show God's love to the whole of the diocese. We will look creatively at being Christian communities in ways that are more mutually sustainable in human, financial and physical resource.

Aspirations for the Future

What we hope to see by 2027

- ✓ 5,000 NEW disciples (and 10,000 by 2030)
- ✓ 2,500 NEW transformation stories shared across the diocese
- ✓ 1,000 NEW local (lay) leaders
- ✓ 500 NEW community projects/ partnerships
- ✓ 500 NEW worshipping communities
- ✓ 50 NEW ordained vocations



An illustration - Parts of a photograph

Photography uses different depths of view to focus our eyes.

- The foreground is clear and familiar – It is where we are
- The horizon is often unclear – It will only become the middle ground once we set off.
- The middle ground is reachable - It gives us a sense of direction to travel

As Jesus shaped people, living our lives together ...

- we have followed the Holy Spirit to this point in time,
- we trust that God has unseen plans for us way out beyond our imagination.
- and we respond to Jesus' call to travel with him as we, in obedience, "go: make disciples..."

5,000 NEW disciples (and 10,000 by 2030)

People transformed by God in turn sharing the Good News of Jesus with others.

This could be achieved if everyone, of any age, who is currently part of a worshipping community in the diocese of Derby introduces one new person to Christ over the next 5 years. This growth would then continue as new Christians share their faith with other people they know. New Christians are the fruit of God's work. Our prayer, alongside our listening and our actions, are as important as the words we speak.

2,500 NEW transformation stories shared across the diocese.

Telling other people our stories is an encouragement that helps them hear God's voice in their lives.

Your story is important to the lives of others. The more we share the more we can strengthen other people in their journeys of faith. Simple stories are important – people discovering new ways for them to pray and read their bibles, or people being encouraged in worship or meeting with God at work or at home. These stories will be central in giving a voice to our transformed lives and helping us to be encouraged as we journey together.

1,000 NEW local lay leaders.

Well connected, supported, and resourced missional leaders.

We will invest in nurturing and discerning new lay leaders, including Readers and Church Officers such as Wardens, PCC Treasurers and Secretaries, but also other leaders in discipleship mission and ministry for all ages and contexts (including our schools). Our lay leaders will embody our values of generous faith, courageous hope and life-giving love, and, bringing their local knowledge, will seek to join in leading the coming of the Kingdom. Lay leaders respond to God's call in the places and contexts where they are. They will help the church to deepen its understanding and experiences of God together in the places and amongst the people they already know, and in new communities and networks.

500 NEW community projects or partnerships

Challenging unjust structures in society to bring hope and restoration to the lives of communities and individuals across the diocese and the wider world.

There are already hundreds of life changing examples of such community projects and partnerships in our diocese that make known the Kingdom of God. We know that partnering with other groups is a great way of being more effective in this work. It enables us to share our resources and ideas on issues such as the climate emergency, to continue providing care and support for people in crisis and feeding the hungry. We are uniquely placed to be both well connected locally and informed and resourced by the wider church.

500 NEW worshipping communities

'When two or three meet in my name, I am there' Matthew 18:20

As we discover and respond to God at work in our communities and networks we will listen to our contexts and connect with others, finding new and appropriate ways to worship and live life together. This may be an additional congregation at a new time or for a particular group in an existing local church, or a small group meeting and praying in a local house, or as a new congregation meeting God through art, music or play. We will share together in prayer, worship and reflecting on the bible together and will listen to God's voice leading us onwards.

50 NEW ordained vocations

As ways of being and doing church changes, clergy will be crucial to mission in every context and the development and support of worshipping communities and their leadership.

Our ordained clergy will continue to lead our shared mission. Whilst the calling of ordination remains the same, the delivery of ordained ministry continues to change. All our clergy, licensed and PtO, self-supporting and stipended, in secular employment, sector ministry, chaplaincy, parochial ministry and Fresh Expression, newly ordained and long-serving are vital.

We will continue to give priority to nurturing and discerning new vocations to ordained ministry. All our clergy people will be supported by appropriate training and ministerial development, building on existing knowledge and experience.