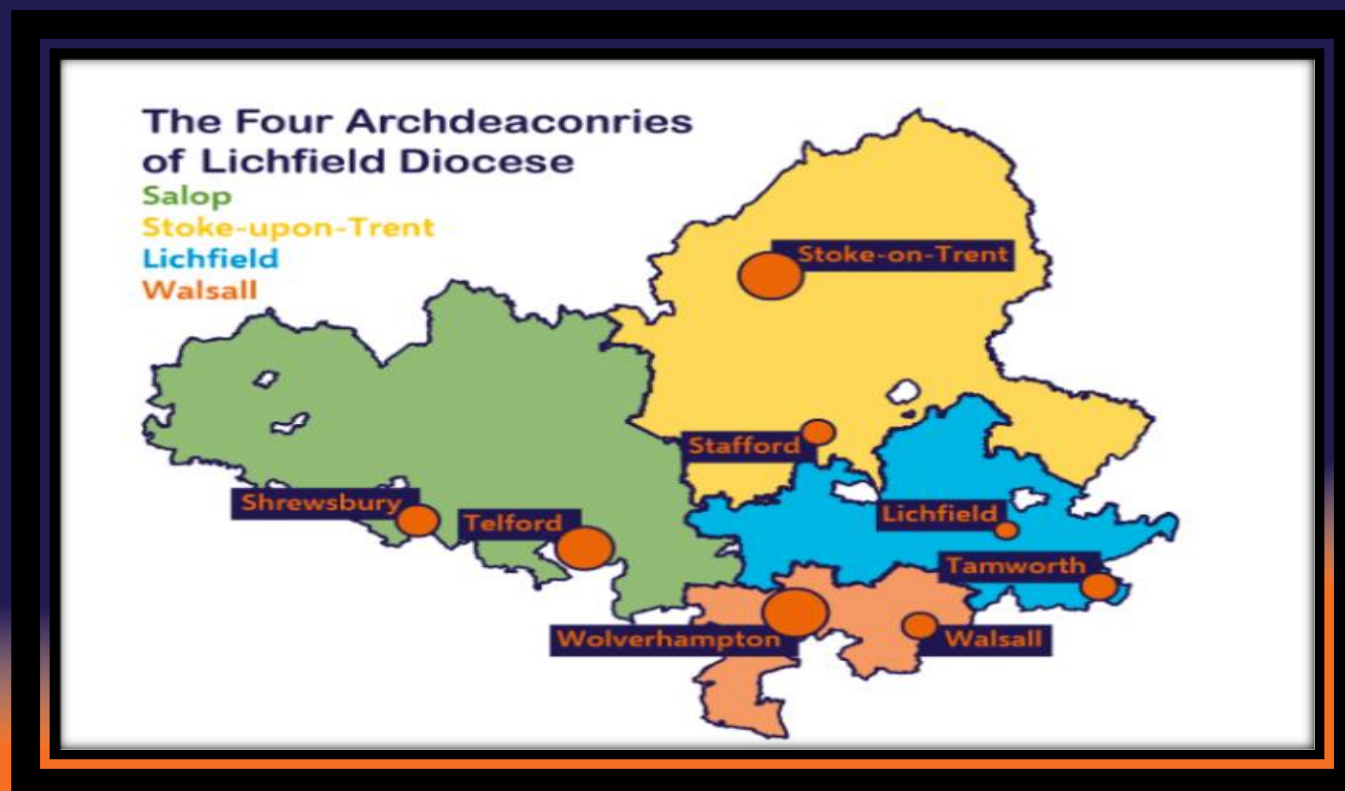


# Diocesan Synod

## Growing Faith across Lichfield Diocese



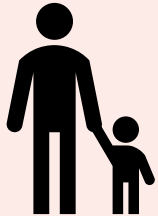
# Objectives



**To reflect on the Church of England's Vision  
Simpler, Humbler, Bolder.**






**To see anew the Growing Faith vision set by the House of Bishops**



**To explore how the Growing Faith Foundation can support our  
mission in the Lichfield Diocese**

# Format of the session

Icons used	
	Weblinks embedded within image or referenced document.
	Existing publications will be embedded in the presentation. Click and go. Any relevant book links will have a hyperlink provided.
	Time for reflection and sharing of wisdom and expertise will be interspersed throughout the session.



Objectives for the  
session





# Vision for the Church

## A church that is simpler, humbler, bolder.

### Three priorities

**To become a church of missionary disciples** where all God's people are free to live the Christian life, wherever we spend our time Sunday to Saturday.

**To be a church where mixed ecology is the norm\*** – where every person in England has access to an enriching and compelling community of faith by adding new churches and new forms of Church to our parishes, cathedrals, schools and chaplaincies.

**To be a church that is younger and more diverse.**

From the three strategic priorities we have identified six bold outcomes.

A church for everyone through:

**Doubling the number of children and young active disciples** in the Church of England by 2030.

A Church of England which **fully represents the communities we serve** in age and diversity.

*Empowered by:*

All local churches, supported by their diocese, **becoming communities and hubs for initial and ongoing formation.**



To reflect on the Church of England's Vision  
Simpler, Humbler, Bolder.

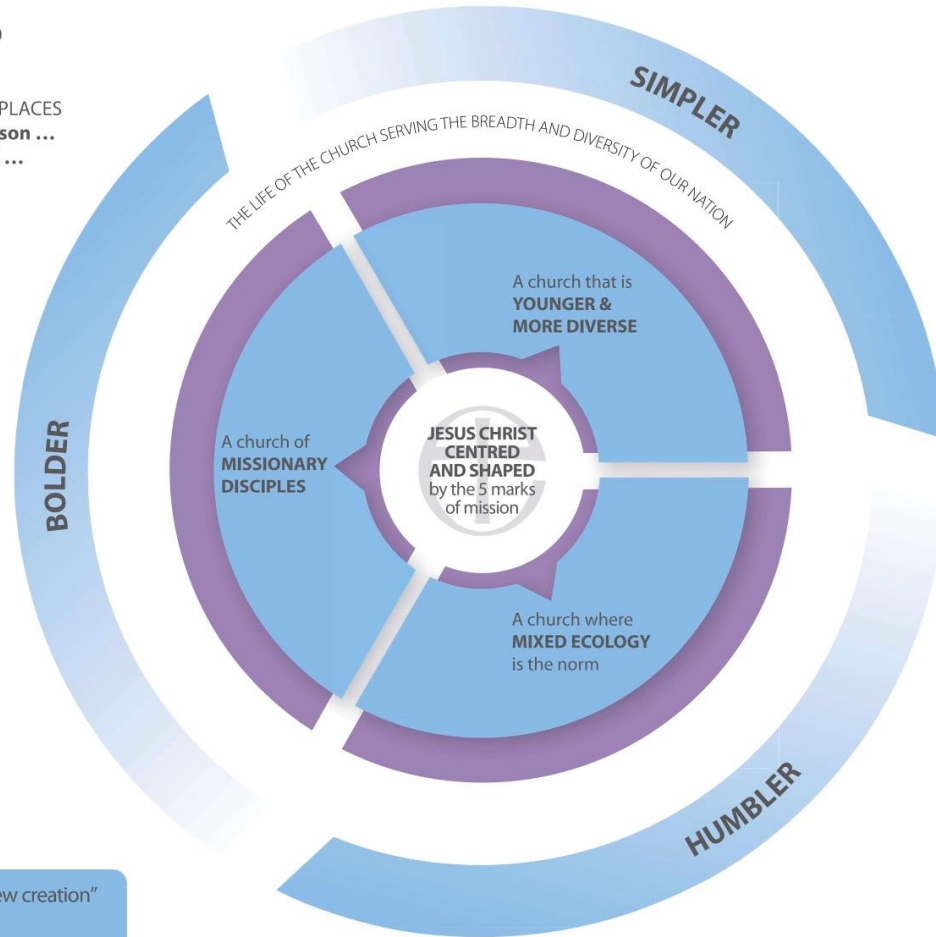


# Vision for the Church

## A church that is simpler, humbler, bolder

### A VISION FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THE 2020s

A CHURCH FOR ALL PEOPLE IN ALL PLACES  
... a Christian vision for every person ...  
... a Christian vision for the world ...



"If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation"  
(2 Corinthians 5:17)

## About the Vision and Strategy

The Church of England's vocation is and always has been to **proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation** to the people of England. The vision and strategy is an invitation to dioceses and parishes to examine and develop existing strategies and processes in the light of these ideas.



To reflect on the Church of England's Vision  
Simpler, Humbler, Bolder.





# Growing Faith Foundation

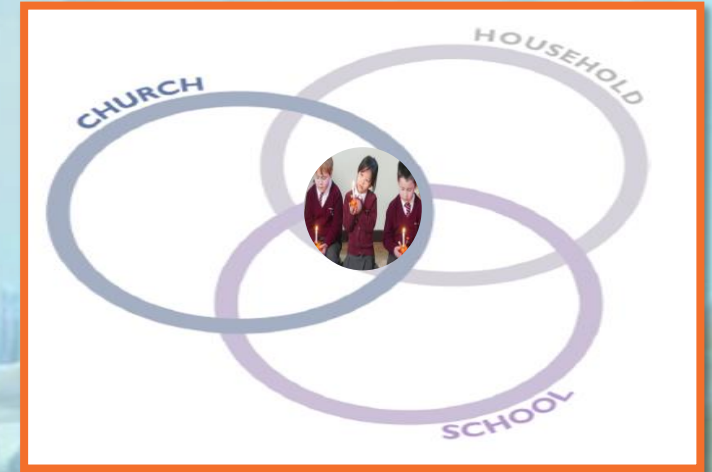
## Changing the culture of the Church of England

Growing Faith is the movement that exists to put children, young people and families instinctively at the heart of all the mission and ministry of the Church by changing the culture of the Church of England.

It comes from the vision set by the House of Bishops and endorsed by General Synod in 2019.

It involves **churches**, **schools** and **households** working together to help children, young people and families have life in all its fullness. The Growing Faith Foundation seeks to benefit children and young people, helping them create the world they want to live in, specifically through the lens of the Christian faith.

Every Diocese has appointed one or more Growing Faith Champions to take forward the Growing Faith mission locally.



To see anew the Growing Faith vision set by the House of Bishops



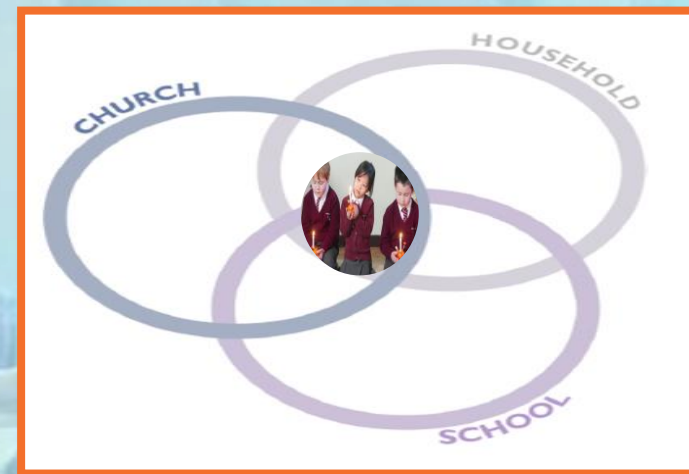


# Growing Faith Foundation

## What will the foundation do for you?

We will:

- ⊕ provide regular termly structured opportunities to bring Learning Hub leaders together to share learning and experience.
- ⊕ provide initial training and ongoing support for Learning Hubs as required.
- ⊕ support the Learning Hubs' local training activities with speakers and resources.
- ⊕ provide access to networks and programmes within the Growing Faith Foundation.
- ⊕ visit your Learning Hub.
- ⊕ be a sounding board for ideas and suggestions and connect Hubs to others around the country.
- ⊕ provide the opportunity to pair up with another Hub in a different context to learn from and with.
- ⊕ resource each Hub with an annual grant of £10,000,
- ⊕ commit to pray for your hub.



To see anew the Growing Faith vision set by the House of Bishops





# Growing Faith Foundation

## Changing the culture of the Church of England

The Growing Faith Foundation is developing work in four main areas: Networks, Learning Hubs, Programmes and Research.

### Networks

Current networks in place for parachurch, listening and responding to children, young adults

### Learning Hubs

12 Learning Hubs across the country will act as strong developmental communities of practice from which other school and church leaders can learn.

### Programmes

The Growing Faith Strategic Leaders' Programme will provide a space for a collaborative learning community which models the intersections of Growing Faith

### Research

13 Growing Faith research projects are underway to further our understanding of growing faith in the intersections between household, schools and churches.



**To explore how the Growing Faith Foundation can support our mission in the Lichfield Diocese**





# An Example of the Growing Faith Networks

## Listening to the voices of children and young people



### Listening and responding to the voices of children and young people

How do we engage in listening and ensure it effects change?

Sept-Dec 2022

growing  
**faith**  
NETWORKS






### LISTENING & RESPONDING TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Reporting back on Network Meeting 1 27th Sept 2022

#### WHY ARE WE MEETING?




We explored the purpose of the network: by December, we will have co-created an action plan for 2023. We will know the work we want to do next year to improve the way we listen and respond to children and young people in the church. We will know who we need in the room, and we will have organised what the next steps are and how and when we are going to take them.

At the moment we don't know exactly what that will look like, but we are here, committed to listening, to contributing, to acting on the prompting of young people, one another and the Holy Spirit.

#### WE ARE TRYING TO ENSURE THAT...


- At local, diocesan and national level, the church hears from a range of young people who are representative of the demographic as a whole.
- There is a church-wide culture where young people are valued as spiritual beings who hear from God, are active agents in the faith, and co-creators of faith traditions and the future of the church.
- Diocesan synods, bishops' councils and PCCs and other arenas are spaces in which young people are valued, respected and whose questions and comments are engaged with in love.
- The church responds prayerfully, humbly and robustly to the voices of young brothers and sisters in Christ, leading to meaningful outcomes.

#### TODAY'S BIG QUESTION




Why is it important that the church listens and responds to children and young people?



#### PRAYER



Elizabeth Olufemi prayed for children, young people, for the church and this network. She asked God for us to be people of great joy within this serious business of elevating young voices.

Elizabeth is the National Eds Racial Justice and she works in Office at the Church of England






### LISTENING & RESPONDING TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Reporting back on Network Meeting 2 18th Oct 2022

#### THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS (FEEDING BACK FROM OUR HOMEWORK)



"If we take Jesus at his word that the Kingdom of God belongs to the child and the child-like, then unconscious or consciously ignoring their prophetic insight, and failing to respond to the work of the Spirit in them is risky and foolish."

"God's Kingdom is for all and everyone in his Kingdom has a valuable voice and representation"

"The Church should listen to young people's opinions because Jesus came for everyone and we are one body through Jesus Christ".

"I asked my Sunday School about theology and they said: 'Jesus said Love God and love others and we are the others.'"

why do you think the church should listen to children and young people?

#### WE ARE TRYING TO ENSURE THAT...

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#### WHAT WILL THIS NETWORK LEAD TO?


As a network we have scheduled 4 initial meetings in order to think, pray, share and collaborate on how we can address the imbalance in the way children and young people are included in the life of the church.

By the end of this year, we will we each have done some significant thinking and taken action in our own contexts, and we also expect that sub-groups or streams will have emerged which have a specific focus and action plan for 2023.

One such group is already working hard.

- Bishop Paul of Durham is working with a group of members of the General Synod in collaboration with this network and others to facilitate the inclusion of children and young people's voices in the preparatory materials and debates at Synod.

#### TODAY'S BIG QUESTION




In our own contexts, how will we make the conditions right to hear from children and young people?

#### BIBLE REFLECTION...

The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by". Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind. After the earthquake, but the Lord was in the fire. And after the fire came a still small voice. When Elijah heard it, he pulled and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

1 Kings 19:11-13

Shared by Owen





To explore how the Growing Faith Foundation can support our mission in the Lichfield Diocese





# Growing Faith Connections

## Emerging best practice for growing faith



To explore how the Growing Faith Foundation can support our mission in the Lichfield Diocese



# Voices

Creating spaces for the stories, questions and leadership of children and young people



Growing Faith : Connections

**Connection and transformation happen when children and young people have the opportunity to develop long-term, diverse, and intergenerational relationships, and strong connections between church, school and home.**

We can support them by:

- **Building diverse communities** - Where do our young people currently engage deeply with different generations? What new opportunities can we find to bring different generations and demographics together?
- **Integrating church, school and home** - Where are the intersections of church, home and school already present in our context? How can we create multiple connections of people and resources between these three spheres?

For ideas, videos and the full report: [www.growingfaithconnections.org](http://www.growingfaithconnections.org)

**Connection and transformation happen when children and young people share their stories, ask their questions, and have ownership of the programme and vision.**

We can support them with:

- **Shared curiosity** - Where are the spaces in our programmes and practices for children to speak, to tell their story to others, and to surprise us? How can we open ourselves to ways of learning about faith from children and young people?
- **Co-creation** - How can we support children, young people and their carers to create faith communities, experiences, and learning meaningful to them? How do we nurture young leaders?

For ideas, videos and the full report: [www.growingfaithconnections.org](http://www.growingfaithconnections.org)

# Rhythms

Creatively integrating activities into regular and seasonal rhythms



Growing Faith : Connections



**To explore how the Growing Faith Foundation can support our mission in the Lichfield Diocese**



 **DIOCESE OF  
LICHFIELD**



# Relationships

Prioritising time for relationships and intentionally building connections between home, school and church

Growing Faith : Connections

**Connection and transformation happen when children and young people engage with rhythms of faith through time, season, tradition and memory.**

They do this through activities which are:

- **Practice-based** - What activities can we practise together regularly, which will draw children and young people deeper into their faith and the traditions of the church?
- **Seasonal** - How can we use our engagement with secular and church seasons to build connections between home, church and school? Can we find opportunities to work together, share resources and deepen practice?

For ideas, videos and the full report: [www.growingfaithconnections.org](http://www.growingfaithconnections.org)

**Connection and transformation happen when children and young people have opportunities to 'do' faith  
- to learn and experience faith in practical and action-based ways.**

This happens by:

- **contributing to a purpose** - What actions would make a positive difference to our wider local community and world in which we live? How can we start or join in this work for God's Kingdom?
- **moving outside the walls of home, church or school buildings** - Where else in our local context could we gather, act or reflect? How can we connect with our wider community?

For ideas, videos and the full report: [www.growingfaithconnections.org](http://www.growingfaithconnections.org)

## Purpose

Connecting activities with visible Kingdom purposes in the local community and wider world

DONATION

Growing Faith : Connections



**To explore how the Growing Faith Foundation can support our mission in the Lichfield Diocese**



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LICHFIELD**



# To explore the opportunities and influences across our diocese.

What are we doing here?



10

Ahead of our time together at synod, please spend 10 minutes identifying where you believe the **Church engagement** opportunities and strengths / influence are within your parish. Please ready to feedback your ideas.



To explore how the Growing Faith Foundation can support our mission in the Lichfield Diocese



# Reflect and Pray

## ***Bartimaeus Receives His Sight***

Then they came to Jericho. And as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a large crowd, a blind beggar *named* Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road. When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him *here*." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage, stand up! He is calling for you." Throwing aside his cloak, he jumped up and came to Jesus. And answering him, Jesus said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" And the blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, *I want* to regain my sight!" And Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and *began* following Him on the road.

Let us pray

Father, open my eyes to the people in my community who go unseen and unheard by all but You. Show me who You notice; I want to give them my attention today.

Jesus, teach the us all to pray with the passion and persistence of Bartimaeus. We can tire easily. Help us not to give up but to cry out again and again and again for Your intervention in our world.

Holy Spirit, help us fix 'our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith'. Interrupt our plans, our preaches and our programmes; we give You our full attention.

And now I root these big prayers in my community by naming someone I know who doesn't yet know Jesus. Father, draw them to Your Son.

Pause and pray