

Maturing in Christ

Diocesan Strategy 2019 – 2024

A summary document



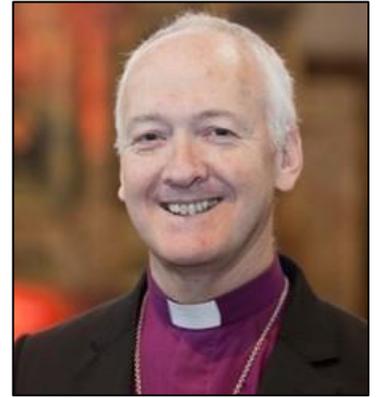
“Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.”

Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

Extracts from the Foreword – the Right Reverend Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds

“Without a vision the people perish.” So says Old Testament wisdom. But without a strategy the vision can quickly become a mere dream. Strategy isn’t magic; it is the ‘plumbing’ that gets us from here to where the vision says we need to reach.

This strategy needs everyone to work together to implement it in our parishes, deaneries and Episcopal Areas. That work starts now and I pray we do it with joy and courage.

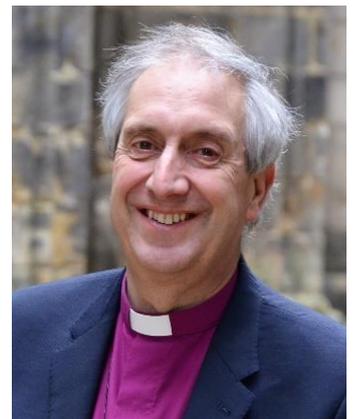


+ Nick Baines Leeds

Extracts from the Preface - the Right Reverend Paul Slater, Bishop of Kirkstall, Chair of the Bishop’s Strategy Group

The belief that the whole of life is under God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, is at the heart of this strategy. The aim of our work has been to answer the question, “What does a mature church of England, confident that all things belong to God in Christ, look like in these parts of Yorkshire, with our many different contexts?” We listened to a wide range of people from different perspectives and contexts and then carefully distilled some clear priorities for us as the young Anglican Diocese of Leeds.

Now is the time to take forward this strategy to realise our vision for the future, with clear direction and priorities within a sustainable budget - confident that God has given us all that we need to fulfil his purposes for his Church in this part of Yorkshire.



+ Paul Slater

The Three Foundation stones:

Clergy and Lay Together - making the most of the diverse gifts of clergy and lay people in collaboration across the diocese.

Purposeful Resourcing - targeted financing, from stewardship to specialist posts, funding daily needs and new projects, such as Resource Churches.

Dynamic Partnerships - joint ventures with funding bodies, local authorities, other churches, link dioceses and National Church Strategic Development Funding.

Strategic Goals 2019-2024

Goal 1: Thriving as a distinctive diocese whose culture is shaped by a shared vision and values

“Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ”. *Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)*

This goal is about how we all work together as a large, young diocese, from parishes, benefices and deaneries to episcopal areas and diocesan staff. Objectives cover our planning, culture and finances.

Goal 2: Reimagining ministry

“Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up”. *Ephesians 4:11-12 (NIV)*

This goal is about how we can meet the challenges of the 21st century in the way we run our churches and reach out to our communities.

Objectives cover church growth, how clergy and lay lead together, our impact on the environment and local communities, and how we relate to those only slightly connected to church.

Goal 3: Nurturing lay discipleship

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters”. *Colossians 3:23 (NIV)*

This goal is about helping people to grow in faith and live it out on a daily basis. Objectives cover running nurture courses, helping people to express their faith confidently, looking at undertaking deeper learning or training and linking Sunday worship with the rest of the week.

Goal 4: Building leadership pathways

“You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others”. *2 Timothy 2:2 (NLT)*

This goal is about having the right mechanisms in place to help both lay people and clergy develop as leaders. Objectives cover supporting the laity in their call to be leaders, increasing the number of ordinands, curates and interns and helping people to grow as leaders outside the church.

Goal 5: Growing young people as Christians

“Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and all the people”.

Luke 2:52 (NLT)

This goal is about reversing the decline in young people coming to faith. Objectives cover making sure all churches are welcoming places for, and actively draw in, children and young people; enabling young people to participate in community-based initiatives; and supporting faith development in our church schools.

Conclusion

The diocesan strategy creates a route map for the next five years and aids our progress towards the diocesan vision of Confident Christians, Growing Churches, Transforming Communities. The five goals within it are the means by which we can mature into the kind of church we are called to be across this diverse diocese and by which we will be equipped to reach out to the world around us.

No single parish, benefice, chaplaincy or missional community is expected to focus equally on all five goals; each is invited to identify where, in its own context, the emphasis needs to be placed as we progress towards 2024. Decision-making must be rigorous, driven by clear priorities and take account of the unavoidable constraint on resources, despite having faith that God will provide the means we need. A toolkit supports this strategy document and offers a structure for helping with planning and decision making at a local level.

Ultimately, any strategy has to align as closely as possible with our discernment of God’s plan and it needs to be continuously underpinned by prayer. Within the strategy framework, every benefice and other missional community should be able to create and continually review its own action plan, applicable to its specific context and level, while being aligned with the overall direction of the whole diocese.

In considering the diocesan strategy, you are invited to consider prayerfully your part in it and support its implementation.

To view the full strategy documents please visit:

<https://www.leeds.anglican.org/content/diocese-leeds-strategy-maturing-christ-2019-2024>