



REACH: A Direction of Travel for Ministry with Children, Young People and Families in Lichfield Diocese



It is always encouraging to hear stories of faithful work with children and young people. The Reaching New Generations strategy from 2012 has borne fruit and as bishops we're delighted to see a reinvigorated RNG Team taking stock. The society and culture we live in is changing rapidly - especially for younger generations - and it is appropriate to review what has worked, or not, and refresh our plans to support ministry to and by children and young people in our parishes, our schools, our fresh expressions and our chaplaincies.



Applying the diocesan direction of travel of inviting our children, young people and their families to 'Come follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad', the Reaching New Generations Team want to continue to support and encourage you as you build relationships with your community to reach out to the next generations meeting them where they are then walking alongside them as they are introduced to the unconditional love of God. We wholeheartedly commend this report to everyone in the diocese and look forward to hearing how children and young people are being encouraged in their faith.

The purpose of this document is three-fold:

- to celebrate the excellent work that continues across the diocese;
- to encourage church communities to see their church's ministry with children, families and young people as an on-going continuum and;
- to sign post readers to the excellent resources that are available.

+Michael, +Geoff, +Mark, +Clive

The RNG Team - what we do

Churches across the Diocese of Lichfield connect with over 5000 children, young people and their families each week.

This requires large number of volunteers, paid workers and clergy, all working to share the Gospel of Jesus in word and action. The Reaching New Generations (RNG) Team is available to equip, inspire and support you as you plan and lead Sunday Provision (Junior Church, Creche, Youth church); mid-week groups (Toddler Groups, After school clubs, Youth Groups); and as you explore new opportunities to reach 0-18s and their families in your community.

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Further ways in which the RNG Team can support your ministry as you REACH out in ministry with 0-18s and their families include;

- Training
- Developing Strategy
- Employing a worker
- Pastoral Care and Supervision (Key volunteers and employed workers)
- Fundraising

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More information and resources can be found online at lichfield.anglican.org/reach

If you would like to get in touch with any of the RNG Team then contact rng@lichfield.anglican.org

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Where have we come from?

In October 2012 Diocesan Synod gave unanimous approval for our initial Reaching New Generations Strategy (0-18's) which was subsequently rolled out at Diocesan, Deanery and Parish level. The following five years have been spent encouraging our churches to reach new generations and tell them the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord (Psalm 78:4).

Now, with a newly restructured Reaching New Generations Team, it seems timely to review the strategy and encourage our churches to respond to the current culture and context as we engage with our 0-18 year olds and their families in our communities. This document – REACH: A Direction of Travel for Ministry with Children, Young People and Families in the Lichfield Diocese – aims to provide parishes with a resource to enable them to respond to the challenges and opportunities within their context. REACH also aims to encourage people to think about ministry with 0-18s as an on-going continuum, providing opportunities to explore faith as the four-year-old becomes an eight-year old who then becomes a 15-year-old. As a diocese we need to begin to create a flow of ministry from 0 to 18s where there are no gaps through which they can fall and be lost. REACH represents an aspiration where together we are reaching new generations and telling them the great and marvellous things the Lord has done.

**“We will tell the next generations
about the glorious deeds of the Lord,
about His power and His mighty wonders”**

Psalm 78 v 4

What's been happening?

There are many examples of how churches are connecting with children, young people and families in their communities across Lichfield Diocese (such as Messy Church and other Fresh Expressions, Toddler Church, Baptism Matters, Youth congregations).

Over the past 5 years the climate in our schools has changed dramatically with the introduction of academies and increased opportunities offered with Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). Across the Diocese the role of chaplaincy (lay and ordained) is increasing as churches see this as an important role in their mission.

Churches are increasingly aware of the importance of supporting our young people, providing them with the space and opportunity to explore what faith means to them. There are some parishes who are blessed to have an employed children, youth or family worker who is enabling the church to access opportunities outside of their church. There are also churches in Lichfield Diocese who are examples of excellent practice illustrating what can be achieved with a group of faithful volunteers. God uses both situations to ensure that His mission can be carried out.

The Reaching New Generations team are very aware that some churches are blessed with many children, young people and families whilst others, due to their local community and lack of a local school, will always find reaching new generations a challenge. The team wants to celebrate each church and its individuality whether they are reaching 0 families or 101 families. Our prayer is that God reveals to them what His mission is for their parish.

In 2016, the Church of England Education Office released Rooted in the Church (RITC), a report based on interviews with young adults that made it through their teenage years and remained part of church. Participants highlighted again and again the importance of four interconnected themes: inclusion, equality, leadership and space. We believe these themes are important not just for 11-18s, but for children, young people and families. This piece of research has been influential to the new document that we have created. Further information and a video for Rooted in the Church can be found at lichfield.anglican.org/reach

Where are we going?

There are many exciting ventures starting and continuing across the Diocese - fruit from seeds planted long ago and new projects germinating.

Just one Diocesan example is the package of four exciting missional projects launched in May 2017 by Bishop Michael along with the Area Bishops. Two of the featured projects, in Salop and Stoke, are developing youth ministry and schools ministry and thousands of pounds are being invested to launch and pioneer different ways of exploring mission.

Developing intergenerational ministry is of huge importance across the diocese - recognising that we are all on a journey of faith together, learning, sharing and celebrating with each other, regardless of age, what it means to be a follower of Christ.

REACH aims - with the RNG team and the tools, tips and ideas available - to provide accessible resources which can equip us to respond to the current changes, challenges and opportunities that we may face in our communities as we reach new generations.

It is important to note at this point that two areas which undergird the whole of the Reaching New Generations 0-18s ministry are those of Additional Needs and Safeguarding. Ensuring that all children, young people and their families, regardless of age or ability should be provided with the opportunity to experience the love of God in a way that is accessible and meaningful to them. Further information on how your church can support children and young people with additional needs and their families is available on the REACH section of the Diocesan website. Our churches are considered places of welcome to all sections of the community where the love of God can be experienced by all. Safeguarding the children and young people in our care as well as safeguarding ourselves as leaders and members of the church is an essential part of mission. Our diocesan Safeguarding team offers training and support to churches across the diocese. For further information see lichfield.anglican.org/reach/.

Evangelism Vocation Discipleship

Toddler Groups

- Vision
- Christian hospitality & sharing faith
- Linking in

Under 5s and Families

Baptism

- First contact
- Preparation
- On the day
- Back to church

Pre-school / nurseries

- Approach
- Invite
- Going into nurseries
- Creating a team



Messy Church / Fresh Expressions

- What is a FX?
- Where are opportunities?
- Where can we help you?

5-11s and Schools

Holy Communion / Confirmation

- Preparation
- Liturgy
- Involving children and young people
- Confirmation

All-age worship

- Structure/ Liturgy
- Including and empowering children.
- Resources



Weeknight Youth Provision

- Starting from scratch
- Vision
- Developing faith
- Resources

Youth Fresh Expressions

- Young people & FX
- Vocations and FX
- Youth FX across Lichfield Diocese

18-35s

Schools / Colleges

- Making contact
- Developing links
- Creating teams

11-18s and Vocations

Sunday Provision

- Engaging with young people
- Churches with no young people
- Curriculum
- Creating teams

Vocations

- Young people & vocations
- Exploring and creating opportunities
- Vocations to ministry and workplace

Toddler Church

- Sunday provision
- Praise and play/liturgy
- Fresh expression

Faith in homes

- Role of churches
- Parenting in faith
- God in every day
- Being intentional

Schools

- No school in your parish?
- Creating teams
- Activities
- Chaplaincy
- Developing links

Holiday provision

- Your community
- Safeguarding & procedures
- Follow-up
- Resourcing

Junior Church / Sunday School

- Creating space
- Churches with no children
- Curriculum / resources
- Creating and leading a team

Camps / Residentials

- Things to consider
- Planning a trip
- Where to take young people

Developing Partnerships

- Why work in partnership?
- What we could partner on
- Who could we partner with?
- Empire thinking versus Kingdom thinking



Discipleship

Jesus invites us to follow him. The first people who received this invitation became known as Jesus' disciples and all those who have responded to that invitation ever since have done the same. Being a disciple is a choice to continually walk with Jesus and learn from him, taking his teaching seriously and following his example.

Vocation

Every person and each Christian community is called to share in the work of God's kingdom. Individually and together, we are given gifts and opportunities to serve God and grow the kingdom. Vocation is knowing who God calls us to be and living the life God invites us to.

Evangelism

The Good News of God's love which we have known in Jesus is for all people. Through our words, actions and lives we can share with others Christ's invitation to follow him and to be part of the growing kingdom of God.

Asking the questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does Christian faith mean to you? • What do you think it means to you that a person follows Jesus? • What, if anything, do you follow in your life? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who am I? • What are my God-given gifts and talents? What words describe who I am? • Who am I becoming? What are my hopes and dreams for the future? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who taught you about faith? • How do you talk about your faith with others? <p>Share you thoughts and ideas on these questions at lichfield.anglican.org/next_steps</p>
Taking the moments with our Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for families to meet together to journey together in faith. • Within the church community, provide opportunities for different generations to be together and learn from each other. • Parents who are being discipled are more likely to share faith with their family. • Provide practical ideas and resources to use in the home as they explore faith together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping 0-5s and their families to know that God Made them, and that they are wonderfully and beautifully made through age-appropriate activities, stories and sensory play. • Working in partnership with the local community to celebrate the diversity of roles and professions in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating intentional space for parents and carers to talk about and explore faith both within and outside of regular toddler sessions. • Making the most of opportunities through baptism (preparation, on the day, follow-up) with parents, Godparents, and visiting families. • Sharing our faith sensitively and relevantly with young families within our under-5s provision.
with our Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the opportunities in our schools through Communion and Confirmation and through the links with the schools staff • Allowing space for children and young people to explore and begin to understand their faith • Create intergenerational opportunities where school and congregation can meet and share experiences • Provide resources for families to use together at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring with 5-11s what it means to be uniquely created and special. • Helping 5-11s to notice what they are good at and enjoy. • Building on partnerships with local schools encouraging each child to begin to explore how God can use them to make a difference in the world around them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instilling in children that they are truly welcome in our church communities, that they have Good News to share with their friends and families. • Creating space for our children to feel comfortable to talk about their faith and ask questions. • Equipping children with skills to live out their faith in their every-day lives.
with our Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for 11-18s to see and hear older Christians bring their faith into their work and family life. • Make space for 11-18s to discuss age-appropriate and context-appropriate materials on discipleship (e.g. confirmation courses, bible notes, faith-based courses etc.) • Allow 11-18s to explore ways to contribute practically to the life of the church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping 11-18s to recognise that everyone is called, including them, in a unique and personal way that God invites them to explore. • Provide opportunities for 11-18s to hear stories of how God calls adults to particular roles, in and out of the church, and to see where God might be calling them. • Assisting 11-18s to develop and understand their own interests and skills and how these may be used to grow God's Kingdom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being equipped to talk their own faith journey, showing how God is at work in their lives. • Creating accessible opportunities for 11-18s to invite their peers to church events and services. • Giving young people the confidence to discuss and debate their faith amongst their church family and wider community.

