

CRUX

Church for a different world

25p

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INTRODUCING OUR VISION 2020-2030



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD

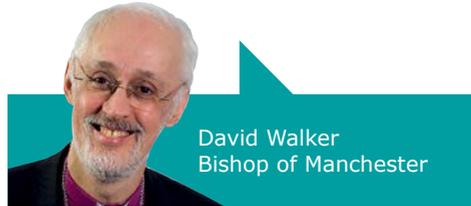
BE THOU OUR VISION?

Perfect eyesight is often referred to as 20:20 vision. Well, we've reached 2020, so is it heralding a new era of clear-sightedness? Between my writing this and your reading it, the General Election may have delivered a government with a majority for the next few years, but the campaign has given little by way of a clear vision of our nation's future; rather we have been offered short-term sweeteners that delay or distract from the hard choices we face.

Politicians struggle to look further than the next election date. Business directors can be even more shortsighted, obsessing about the next three months' figures. However on Climate Change, both governments and companies are being made to respond to the massive increase in public awareness and concern shared by many churches and demonstrated most visibly by the

Extinction Rebellion campaign. Not everywhere, and not uniformly, but a trend is developing. This at least is good news.

I hope it reminds us that we should not look to political or business leaders, unaided, to provide a clear vision ahead. Rather, we should seek to find that vision ourselves, and then share it with our neighbours. A vision rooted in our faith in Jesus. He is the one on whom we fix our gaze. He is the one whose vision is always 20:20.



David Walker
Bishop of Manchester

TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE

The Children Changing Places Project, which engages young people of all ages across Bolton, marked the end of its first year by celebrating the appointment of Chaplaincy Assistants Connor Harmsworth, Emma Bonfield and Libby Greenhalgh.

They were commissioned by Bishop Mark Davies at Bolton Parish Church, and work alongside chaplains at Bolton St Catherine's Academy, St James CE High School and Canon Slade School, respectively.

The service gave the opportunity to reflect on the importance of those who work with young people in our communities. Bishop Mark noted the growing number of Church of England schools in the diocese, and commented

that now, more than ever, we should be championing our headteachers and chaplains in their Christian leadership.

The Children Changing Places team is now fully assembled. As we begin the New Year, Bishop Mark's acronym 'Together Everyone Achieves More' will undoubtedly be at the forefront of everyone's minds as they impact the lives and faith of the children and young people they reach.



GANDHI STATUE UNVEILED

A 9 foot bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi has been installed outside Manchester Cathedral as a symbol of world peace and harmony.

Mahatma Gandhi is widely respected as a symbol of peace and non-violence. He taught the world by example to walk the path of peaceful protest instead of war and violence.

The statue marks the 150th anniversary of Gandhi's birth and celebrates Manchester's multi-cultural and multi-faith society. Designed by artist Ram V Sutar, it was unveiled in front of political and religious leaders. Crowds gathered in the rain

before the unveiling to hear poetry and enjoy performances of song and dance, including from the Parris Wood school choir.

During a visit to the UK in 1931, Gandhi visited textile mills in Lancashire to meet with workers and explain the Indian perspective on the boycott of British goods that was damaging their industry.

A TOOL TO HELP REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

The Church of England is looking for churches to trial its new Carbon Footprint Tool that can help you on your journey to becoming an Eco Church, as well as saving energy and money.

The Carbon Footprint Tool is available free of charge and is really easy to use. Once data about your building size and energy use is added, the programme will provide instant feedback about your CO2 emissions, and suggest simple steps you could try to help improve the energy efficiency of the building. Reducing your church's carbon footprint will help care for the environment and is a useful step on the journey to becoming an Eco Church.

The new tool is part of the CofE Online Parish Returns System and comes pre-populated with information about your church building and the number of people who regularly use it. Other data required should be readily accessible from energy bills.

The CofE is looking for churches in Manchester Diocese to take part in the pilot between January and April. Feedback on using the system will be used to help develop it further before it is launched nationally later in the year.

The Revd Nick Bundock, Rector of St James and Emmanuel Didsbury, said, "We have a really committed team of people at who care about the environment and have been auditing the churches for Eco Church. We have moved to green energy, which will make a big difference to our carbon footprint. We're looking forward to using the carbon calculator which will enable us to keep on this journey towards being a more sustainable community."

The Bishop of Bolton, Mark Ashcroft, supports the pilot. He said "I heartily recommend the new Carbon Footprint Tool that can help your church measure its carbon footprint and find ways to reduce it. I hope many of our churches will join the pilot to help demonstrate our concern for the environment and care of God's creation."

If you would like to take part in the pilot, please contact Alison Peacock at alisonpeacock@manchester.anglican.org / 0161 828 1447. For more on Eco Church, visit <https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk>



BRIEF ENCOUNTER: Connor Harmsworth



"If it hadn't been for God and the church, I wouldn't be here!"

Connor loves his job as chaplaincy assistant at St Catherine Academy in Bolton, where he spends much of his time providing pastoral support to teenagers. His own experience of hitting rock bottom and attempting suicide while at school enables him to identify with the issues facing many young people and offer a positive way forward.

Connor is one of three chaplaincy assistants who began working in Church of England secondary schools in Bolton last September as part of the diocesan Children Changing Places project.

"It's crazy and I love it!" he said. "It feels really right and I'm learning a lot about myself."

As part of a Chaplaincy Team, Connor supports the Ethos Group which gives assemblies to all the year groups. He also delivers training for volunteers of the Mentoring Project, where Christian values underpin measures to improve student wellbeing.

An important part of Connor's role is to provide a listening ear. He offers a safe space for a friendly chat when teachers refer students to him for pastoral support.

Drawing on his own experience, Connor is well placed to help. "When I was in Year 9 I got in with a 'bad crowd' who pulled me away from my church, where I'd been going since I was nine. I had some toxic friendships and relationships and my mental health suffered."

"There were some family troubles and I was in a bad place, and thought suicide was the only way out. As I was preparing to take my own life, I heard God saying 'There's more for you!' and I couldn't go through with it. I got back to church, where I was supported by new friends. I gave my life to Christ, was baptised, and later became involved in youth work and leadership."

After leaving school at 18, Connor auditioned for a London theatre company and aspired to be a film director. But he also felt God calling him to stay in Bolton.

"I spent a year working for the King's Church in Bolton, where a youth-based outreach project offers activities for young people including acting, music, media and crafts. At that time I felt I'd love to work in a school pastorally, but knew I'd struggle not to share my faith!"

Soon afterwards, Connor saw the advert for the chaplaincy assistant and the rest is history! He still dreams of being part of a theatre group that goes into schools with the Christian message.

Connor is still involved in youth work at King's Church, but also partners with Christ Church Harwood, which has set up two new youth groups on a Monday evening and is reshaping Sunday worship to involve young people more. "I was nervous about it at first, but I love getting to know Revd Wendy and the young people. Being a youth worker at Christ Church is one of my favourite parts of the week now!"

FOREST CHURCH AND THE GRUFFALO

Families enjoyed Forest Church and creating a scary Gruffalo out of sticks, seeds and leaves at the Church in School in Westhoughton.

St George's at The Hoskers is an example of Church in School, where the Christian community worships regularly in a school building. The school hall is notable for containing some stained glass, wooden remembrance panels and children's artwork of prayers on the walls.

"Church in School is a fantastic, creative opportunity to build links between the church and school," said Team Rector, Revd Carol Pharaoh. The Church in School is one of six worship centres in the Blackrod, Daisy Hill, Westhoughton and Wingates benefice.

St George's joined with Bolton Outdoor to run Forest Church in October, using the outdoor classroom space behind the school. The service was very popular with children and parents, who enjoyed being outside for all-age interactive worship and prayers. Unusually, the service was followed by a snail race, popcorn and pond dipping in the pond that is home to a colony of rare crested newts!

Curate Kirsty Screeton said "There was a real buzz about Forest Church, which we now hope to run once per term. We also used the service to launch three outdoor activity sessions supported by community funding and run by Bolton Council."

Equipped with wellies, warm hats, gloves and waterproofs, parents joined their school and nursery-age children for the exciting hands-on sessions. Activities included making dragon soup, searching for Stickman, and, inspired by reading the popular Gruffalo story, building houses for fox, snake, mouse and the Gruffalo himself!

"The sessions are brilliant way to mix church and non-church families and the children loved the activities. We hope they will take up the invite to join us at our next Forest Church." added Kirsty.



GRANTS TO TACKLE POVERTY

The Council for Social Aid is inviting applications for Large Grants of up to £30,000, either as a one-off grant or split over two or three years, to support parishes or projects with a strong parish link to engage in mission initiatives that tackle poverty in their neighbourhood.

The deadline for expressions of interest is 10 January 2020.

For more details, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/w542jea>

APPOINTMENT

The Revd Aysha St Giles, currently Priest-in-Charge of Kexby and Wilberfoss in the Diocese of York, has been appointed Incumbent of St John Failsworth.

RESIGNATION

The Revd Chris Casey, currently Incumbent of Rawtenstall and Constable Lee, has been appointed Vicar of St John the Divine Cliviger with St John the Evangelist Worsthorne in the Diocese of Blackburn.

VE DAY 75

VEDay75 in May 2020 is a three-day national and international event that is set to be one of the biggest commemorations of the end of World War 2 in Europe. Tens of thousands of people will be taking part from 8 to 10 May 2020 in a whole range of events.

Your church may be planning to organise a community event, a special service or join Ringing Out for Peace by ringing the church bells. There are ideas and resources online at www.veday75.org to help with planning and publicity. You can also submit events on the site to get them listed on this special national website.

ARCHDEACON ARRANGEMENTS

With Cherry Vann leaving us last month to become Bishop of Monmouth, Bishop David has announced changes to the archdeacon arrangements for the diocese.

The Ven David Sharples has become the new Archdeacon of Rochdale, while remaining a residentiary canon of the Cathedral. The Ven Jean Burgess has agreed to become Archdeacon of Salford in addition to being Archdeacon of Bolton. The Archdeaconry of Manchester will not be directly affected by these changes, although the Ven Karen Lund will consider, with her archdeacon colleagues, how their diocesan-wide responsibilities may best be redistributed between them.

OUR DIOCESAN VISION

To be a worshipping, growing and transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community.

Manchester is a vibrant diocese of opportunity and creativity. Its rich mixture of church traditions makes it a wonderful place to engage in Gospel ministry.

Our new, short film brings our vision to life. With examples of creative and varied ministry across the diocese, we hope it will excite, encourage and inspire you. One of the projects featured in the film, Monday Mass, is described in more detail on page 11.

Find the film at [youtube.com/manchesterdiocese](https://www.youtube.com/manchesterdiocese) and at www.manchester.anglican.org



CHALLENGES WE FACE

Much of what we are doing in the diocese is already contributing to a culture of hope and an expectation of growth. This includes many forms of traditional and fresh expressions of church.

We do, however, face significant challenges. The number of people attending our churches continues to fall – all-age average weekly attendance fell by 20% over the five years from 2012 when it was 32,200 to 25,800 in 2017 and by a further 6% last year. There is currently no sign of that decline reversing. 1.2% of the population attends church in the Manchester Diocese, which is in the lowest 25% of dioceses nationally.

We are completely focused on reversing this decline. We want to be a church that is open to all and for everyone, which reflects our diverse diocese and inspires new generations of Christians to become spiritually active and engaged, as well as being involved in their church communities. As part of this, it's important that we support and encourage new generations of ordained and lay leaders with their vocations for ministry and mission for the decades to come. Ensuring our churches grow will also help our financial sustainability.



OUR STRATEGY 2020-2030

We want to be a Church for a Different World. All our energy, effort and prayer is focused on transforming into the sort of church we believe God is calling us to be by 2030.

Our strategy outlines the key areas of work that we will focus on for the next 10 years. Our mission goals are growing, nurturing and serving. This is the sort of church God is calling us to be:

We are growing – a church for everyone

We want to be a growing Church, spiritually and numerically. We believe that loving God and loving neighbour, The Great Commandment, and making disciples, The Great Commission, are the basis of a healthy Church and that a healthy Church is a growing Church. We want to be a diocese that encourages creativity and risk-taking. Our growth strategy can be summed up as Fresh and Refresh. In other words, we will pioneer new faith communities (through church planting and new resourcing churches) and reinvigorate existing ones.

We will encourage a shift from 'maintenance' to 'mission' across all our churches, with an emphasis on welcome, worship and key life events. We will maintain a consistent outward focus and help churches create pathways for newcomers and fringe members to find faith.

We are nurturing – a church focused on discipleship and evangelism

Our nurture strategy will centre on joining God in the work that is already going on in resourcing, supporting and encouraging all people, lay and ordained, in three key areas:

- Our relationship with God (going UP) Supporting new and existing disciples to have a vibrant, loving and living relationship with God.
- Our relationship with each other (going IN) Encouraging church communities to be diverse, vibrant and collaborative places of worship, service and growth.
- Our relationship with others (going OUT) Resourcing everyone to feel more confident in expressing and sharing their faith with others.

We are serving – a church which leads the way in every local community

In a diocese where 45% of parishes fall within the most deprived 10% in England, our focus is on:

- Welcome and belonging, including children and families, people with mental health issues, and those who are socially isolated.
- Combatting poverty, and the challenges of food shortage, homelessness and debt.
- Sustainability and issues of trade justice and the environment.

We will, wherever possible, work in partnership locally and as a diocese.

The diocesan strategy document can be found at tinyurl.com/tuhgbsj It outlines the support that will be offered from the centre to support parishes in meeting our goals of growing, nurturing and serving.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO DEANERIES

To achieve our exciting vision for the future, the Bishop’s Leadership Team believes we need to change the way we organise ourselves as the diocese: proposing seven deaneries and a new full-time Area Dean role to provide leadership for change, as well as flexible parish cover.

New proposals have been developed by ‘task and finish’ groups set up by Bishop David, each with clergy and lay representatives selected because of their individual gifts, experience and insights. Early proposals were shared at four archdeaconry briefing sessions last September. The final proposals are outlined in the Fit for Mission Consultation Document available on the website at tinyurl.com/vb5zg8t

We believe that the proposed changes to the deanery arrangements are a necessary first step on the road to change and transformation. Making these changes will mean that we are better able to face the challenges all around us and make the positive and sometimes difficult changes we know have to be made to ensure we have vibrant and growing mission and ministry at parish level.

HAVE YOUR SAY

A formal consultation exercise is now running until the end of February 2020. Face-to-face meetings are being held in each deanery and an online questionnaire has been widely publicised in enews and the diocesan website.

If you would like to make your views known as part of the formal consultation, but do not have access to the electronic survey, please complete the questionnaire on page 14 and return it to us by 29 February 2020.



The main reason for these proposed changes is to create the leadership and capacity, among both clergy and laity, to ensure that we are a truly vibrant and healthy Church - the Church described so clearly in our vision for 2030.

MONDAY MASS

Admissions criteria of local schools have resulted in the churches in Shaw and Crompton attracting a significant number of children and families.

At Holy Trinity Shaw the PCC committed to viewing the schools admissions criteria as an opportunity, and set about finding ways to engage positively with children and families who attend worship. The resulting Monday Mass won a Church for a Different World award from Bishop David.

Vicar Revd Katy Cunliffe said, “Monday Mass began as quiet said Holy Communion service for a handful of adults. It doesn’t compromise on the liturgy or associated traditions of catholic worship. It has the same things as Sunday worship, but the different parts of the service are sung to nursery rhyme tunes so young children can join in.

“Children play a full part in the service and each week they sign up for jobs they want to do, such as carrying the candles, taking the offering, and doing the readings. There are instruments to play during the hymns and the talk is aimed appropriately.”

When the Monday Mass started in September 2018 about 30 people attended each week; it now attracts 85. Equally important is the increased engagement in worship and life of the church, and the signs of growing faith evident in both children and adults.

“For those children and families who attend on a Monday, most are no longer just going to church; they have become church.”

Carla, one of the young people who regularly attends Monday Mass, said “I like the different jobs: doing the collection, being server, carrying the candles, readings and being a welcomer. My favourite job is reading.”

Michelle, mum to Sereya (11) and Indiya (8), said “My children used to not be able to always follow the service sheet and became restless. However, since the family friendly service on a Monday, my children enjoy church more and WANT to learn about our faith ... watching all the children on a Monday get so involved in prayer makes me proud to be a part of Holy Trinity.”

Mel, another mum, said “As a family we have begun to explore our faith again... this resulted in my youngest taking communion and myself and my eldest being confirmed.”

Katy is also Children and Young Families Missioner in the deanery, where she has helped introduce a similar service at St Mary’s, High Crompton.



GIFTS AND GRACES FROM GOD

Mark Davies,
Bishop of Middleton



**Then, opening their treasure chests,
They offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.**

I've just read that a piece of research has been done about the number of presents that are never used after the day they were received. I could have told them that for nothing. All those Christmas and Summer Fairs that provide opportunities for recycling. My heart always sinks when my mother asks me if I've kept the receipt!

This month Christians will be thinking about the gifts offered to the Christ child by the Wise Men. In offering gold, they proclaim Christ's kingship; in offering incense they adore his Godhead and in offering myrrh they point to his mortality and sacrificial death. These gifts provide us with both encouragement and challenge as we commit ourselves afresh to living as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ, being his love in action.

We have all received gifts and graces from God – our life, faith, families, friends, interests, talents, things that energise us and say so much about who we are. The start of a new year is a good opportunity to stop and think, to pray and ponder about how we will use our gifts as individuals, as worshipping communities and as a diocese to further the Kingdom of God and to build up the Church. How will we use our time, our talents and our resources to make a real difference and to further the mission of Jesus Christ?

The Epiphany season is a gift in itself – time to really renew our commitment to having prayer, worship, scripture, sacrament and service at the heart of everything. It is this commitment that will equip us to better face our challenges and opportunities. It will remind us that we are part of something so much bigger than ourselves and call us to join in the ongoing conversations that will shape our lives and ministries going forward.

Some of this will feel scary and demand much of us, but Jesus has promised that he will build his Church and be with us to the end of time. Jesus Christ is the Truth and he speaks only the truth. So, what do we look to Jesus to do for us in this coming year? What are the longings of his heart for us? What will good look like for the Diocese of Manchester? What is Jesus asking us to do for him in this coming year? How will we seek to work with others to further his kingdom, to grow in depth and in numbers so that we are better able to serve the world he loves so much?

Might I suggest that you prayerfully read Matthew 2:1-12 and ask yourself what gifts you have been given, what gifts we as a diocese have been given and then pray that we might all be ready to use those gifts in order to keep on growing, nurturing and serving.

LEAPING INTO THE FUTURE OF GIVING

The future of Christian giving and fundraising

Attract extra financial support for your church from your local community.

At this special day conference, a range of national and regional speakers will outline new strategies to help you meet the challenges of digital giving and fundraising, and attract extra financial support from your community. Resources and different methods of giving will be available that can be successfully adapted for your church, whatever its size.

Saturday 29 February 2020: 9.30am–4.30pm

**King's House Conference Centre, Sidney Street,
Manchester M1 7HB**



**For further information and to register for this free event,
visit: <https://giving.eventbrite.co.uk> (REGISTRATION ESSENTIAL)**

We want to hear your thoughts

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED DEANERY CHANGES

To achieve our exciting vision for the future, we believe we need to change the way we organise ourselves as the diocese (see p10). To enable people without a computer to take part in the formal consultation, we have reproduced the electronic questionnaire here. The Fit for Mission Consultation Document is available on request from Church House (call 0161 828 1400).

- Q1** Do you recognise the need for change to the way we are organised, given our positive vision for the future along with the dramatic decline in attendance in our churches in recent years and our serious financial challenges? **Yes/No**
- Q2** To what extent do you agree with the proposal to move from 20 deaneries to seven deaneries?
Strongly agree / Slightly agree / Not sure / Slightly disagree / Strongly disagree
- Q3** To what extent do you agree with the proposed full-time Area Dean role?
Strongly agree / Slightly agree / Not sure / Slightly disagree / Strongly disagree
- Q4** Are there any comments or suggestions you would like to make?
(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Send to:

Church for a Different World, Diocese of Manchester,
Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2GH
by 29 February 2020.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH AT MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL?

BE A CHORISTER FOR A DAY

Saturday 18 January
(1pm – 4.30pm)

Explore the Cathedral, try on chorister robes and have a go at brass-rubbing!



For more information and to book a place visit
www.manchestercathedral.org/news-events/events/

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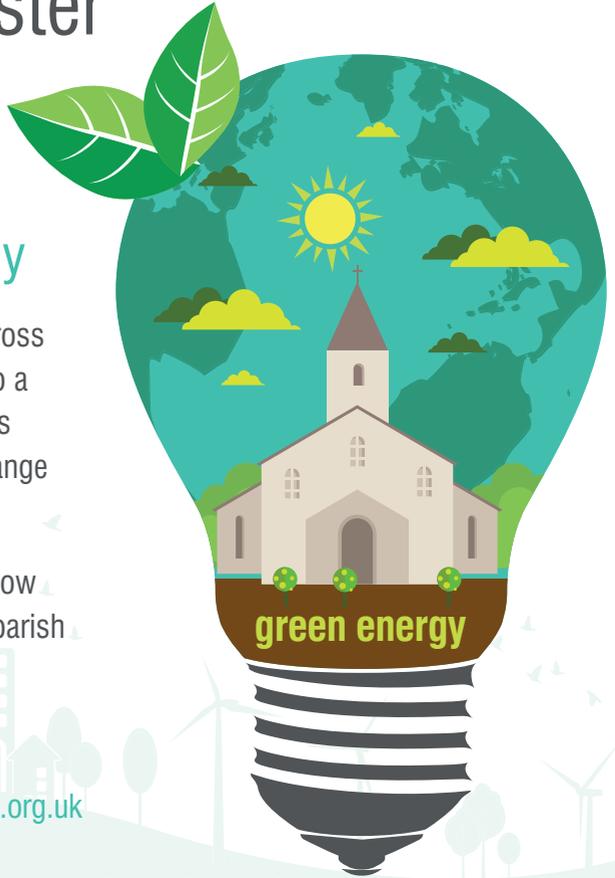
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