

 The Deanery of Stroud

*Life*e

 DIOCESE OF
GLOUCESTER

***Our Vision for the Future of
our Parishes.***

May 2017

Introduction

Thanks to all those Parishes who fed back on how we might begin to implement the Life Vision within our Deanery. It has given us a clear indication of the way we see our Deanery, the opportunities that the Life Vision offers to us and the essential resources we will need in order to grow as the Church in Stroud Deanery. People were also honest about the potential difficulties in realising dreams and opportunities. These have been used to inform our planning for the way ahead which is summarised in this leaflet...

Certain key phrases have appeared that have enabled us to build some headlines for the attitude and direction of Stroud Deanery.

They all can begin with the words We need to....

- ◆ **Move from being passive to active**
- ◆ **Become more intentional**
- ◆ **See the Deanery as a resource – sharing good ideas and practice**
- ◆ **Pray more in different ways in different places**

Under each of the headings, again certain phrases were repeated, giving us a direction and setting the agenda for the next few years.

Leadership

Committed to transformation

- ◆ **Empowering and enabling laity to share ministry in all its forms**
- ◆ **Encouraging co-operation across parish and denominational boundaries**
- ◆ **Providing training locally to help grow leaders**

imagination

Opening new paths to faith

- ◆ **Becoming creative in our relationships with schools (both church and community).**
- ◆ **Exploring new and creative ways of worshipping both within and outside church walls**

- ◆ Seeking to make new contacts in every Parish (youth clubs, uni-formed organisations, residential homes, sports clubs etc.)
- ◆ Using our buildings to create a real asset for the wider community

faith

Living as adventurous
followers of Jesus Christ

- ◆ Enabling those outside the church to see the Christian Faith as a message of hope, love, freedom and security by creative sharing of faith
- ◆ Turning visitors into pilgrims
- ◆ Building confidence in faith sharing and helping grow faith in existing and new members

engagement

Living out Christ's
love and hope

- ◆ Using music to bring church and community together (choirs, bands, other forms of music)
- ◆ Making mission and outreach a priority for each church rather than maintenance
- ◆ Connecting with the wider community in each parish by 'filling a gap'

The next steps....

As a result of this feedback, there are a number of things that we need to do in order to begin to move forward with this new Vision for our Deanery.

One of the key things is resourcing and training. Many of the areas under each heading mean that some of our parishes will need help in order to begin to change focus. We are proposing to put together a training programme within the Deanery to offer a number of different threads.

The key areas highlighted in the feedback and covered under the subsequent headings in our Vision statement suggest that there is a real need for training and resourcing so that we can more effectively....

1. Become more Missional and Intentional as churches
2. Grow Leaders and especially Young Leaders
3. Prepare for greater Pastoral outreach within our communities
4. Be Creative in our contact with our schools
5. Share our faith with confidence in different ways
6. Grow our own faith and help others on the road of discipleship
7. Share good practice between the churches of our Deanery

Proposals

We propose the following:-

1. That we begin with a course on giving our churches a Mission focus (We shall be offering Mission Shaped Introduction to all the churches from the end of September for six weeks and encouraging each church to send two representatives)
2. That we put together a group to plan resourcing and training sessions for the Deanery to cover (amongst other things!)

Growing Leaders - Pastoral Visitor Training - Creative ideas for schools and young people - Sharing our Faith - Discipleship

3. That we include time at each Deanery Synod to highlight 'good practice' and learn to share it more.
4. That we seek to build relationships beyond our own Parish and Benefice boundaries so that we can support one another and learn from one another
5. That we encourage one another (and our Parishes) to pray for each other regularly and seek to establish regular local prayer events that are open to all.

Our overall hope is that we begin to see the Deanery as a positive focus of support and encouragement as we seek build God's Kingdom in this place.