A vision and strategy for the Church of England in the 2020s.

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.

“The overriding aim for the future is that any worshipping member of the Church of England, when asked by their friend where they could go to explore their faith, would be able to recommend an expression of Church locally that would really suit them.”

Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York

Video: Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York, talks about the emerging vision for the Church.

One vision

A Church for the whole nation which is Jesus Christ centred, and shaped by, the five marks of mission. 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, schools and chaplaincies.

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

*the mixed ecology describes the flourishing of church and ministry in our parishes, and in other communities of faith through things like church planting, fresh expressions of church, and chaplaincy and online.

A church of missionary disciples

In this short film we hear people from different walks of life talk about how they live out their faith throughout the week. Visit the Church of England’s Everyday Faith portal for bitesize resources on topics relevant to you that will help you find and follow God in everyday life.
A church where mixed ecology is the norm

“Mixed ecology will look different in every place. What we see in Suffolk is happening in Rochester where I am leaving, in Leicester where I am going and all over the country, reflecting the diversity of their contexts.” Saju Muthalaly, Bishop of Loughborough

Watch a snapshot of the inspiring ways the Church in the Diocese are connecting communities with the good news of Jesus.

FAQs

What do we mean by simpler, humbler, bolder?

- A simpler Church, both in governance and structure and in the way we live and share the gospel
- A humbler Church, recognising our failings and working with others to serve the common good
- A bolder Church energised and enthused by the good news of what God has done in Jesus Christ and sharing that with everyone.

Are there specific goals for this work?

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

A church for everyone through:
1. Doubling the number of children and young active disciples in the Church of England by 2030.

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

3. A parish system revitalised for mission so there is a pathway for every person into an accessible and contextual expression of church.

4. Creating ten thousand new Christian communities across the four areas of home, work/education, social and digital.

   Empowered by:

5. All Christians in the Church of England envisioned, resourced and released to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in the whole of life, bringing transformation to the church and world.

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

What are the Five Marks of Mission?

The phrase a Jesus shaped life is borrowed from our sisters and brothers in the Anglican Communion and puts the Five Marks of Mission at the centre of our life in Christ. They describe a vocation to be the ones who:

- tell the story of Jesus Christ
- teach the faith of Jesus Christ
- tend to the cares of the world
- transform the unjust structure of society; and
- treasure and safeguard the integrity of God's creation


More resources

Blogs
Read a range of blogs exploring what it means to be centred on and shaped by Jesus Christ.

Find out more

Stories

Read a selection of inspiring stories from churches across the country.

Find out more

Webinars

Register for upcoming webinars about the vision and strategic priorities of the Church for the next decade, and watch recordings of our previous webinars.

Find out more

The picture below illustrates the shape of the vision and strategic priorities from the period of consultation with hundreds of people who reflect the breadth and diversity of the Church of England.

Read the commentary from the Archbishop of York that accompanies this illustration.
A vision for the Church of England in the 2020s.

To help us achieve these strategic priorities we are looking at bringing simplicity and coherence to our governance structures, and the practical ways the Church is organised and gets things done that enable the local church to flourish.

Read more about the Emerging Church of England programme
Watch Archbishop Stephen Cottrell and Bishop Emma Ineson in conversation, talking about the vision and strategic priorities.

Links

- Read: Update on progress – address to General Synod, February 2021, by Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York
- Read: A theological reflection on our emerging vision and priorities by Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford
- Read: ‘Simplicity, humility, and boldness’: Archbishop of York outlines ten-year plan for the C of E, Church Times, November 2020
- Read: Renewal and Reform – a summary of progress and impact, April 2021

Read stories from churches across the country on how they are serving communities.

Read More Stories

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