



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD



Delivering Our Vision 2026 - 2028





Our Diocese

So much of what we are already doing is contributing to a culture of hope and an expectation of growth. Our parishes, schools and chaplaincies are central to this, leading missional engagement and helping us live out the Gospel across our diverse communities.

We serve an area that has a rich history of culture and innovation, made up of vibrant communities and a longstanding commitment to social justice. It is a wonderful place to engage in Gospel Ministry. With a total population of 2.2 million, the diocese is organised into four archdeaconries, seven deaneries, 33 mission communities, and 300 places of worship and chaplaincies.

The Diocesan Board of Finance, based at St John's House in Bury, works with parishes to achieve our mission goals. The team is also responsible for clergy stipends and housing, finance, safeguarding and governance.

Every day, 193 Church of England primary and secondary schools educate over 58,000 pupils. The Diocesan Board of Education supports these schools with religious education and Christian ethos, governance, the recruitment of head teachers, admissions and building projects.

Our Vision

Our shared vision is "to be a worshipping, growing, transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community", living out our values of faith, hope and love.

Our work together grows out of Jesus's great Commandment which is to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...and love your neighbour as yourself' (Matthew 22: 36-40)...

...and out of His Great Commission, 'to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matthew 28: 19-20).

Our Strategy

Our strategy is based on positive, inspiring and relevant plans for the future, building on our learning from the significant changes and investments that are already underway. Many of us have experienced first-hand how things are changing for the better.

Our recent achievements include moving to our new deanery structures and creating our mission communities; increasing practical support for parishes; investing in our ordained and lay leaders; developing children's ministry; and setting up new Resource Churches and church plants.

Many of these changes have focused on new ways of working together which are becoming embedded in the life of our diocese. Building on these successes, we are shifting to the next level in setting our priorities. With the award of significant additional funding from the national church, we now have the opportunity to be even more creative and ambitious with our plans for the future.



Our Priorities



Learning from our recent experience with the new projects that are underway, our plans are based on the four distinct but interconnected themes of: *Parish Renewal*, *Growing Younger*, *Church Planting and Revitalisation*, and *Developing Missional Leaders*. More detail on each of these is set out on pages 6-9.

These priorities align with the Church of England's vision, which is to create a church of missionary disciples, where mixed ecology is the norm, and whose membership is becoming younger and more diverse.

We are working to ensure that we are financially sustainable over the medium to long term as we recover from the challenges of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. This includes talking with parishes about mutual support and the need to pay Parish Share so we can afford 175 stipendiary clergy. We are also managing the diocese's assets to ensure optimal investment returns and capital growth.



Our priorities are underpinned by our work to:

- Support people of Global Majority Heritage, promote **racial justice** and ensure that our clergy and lay leaders represent the diversity of our diocese.
- Achieve the Church of England's 2030 **Net Zero Carbon** goal by helping our churches and schools measure their energy use and take practical steps to reduce their carbon footprint.
- Provide a safer environment for all by ensuring effective **safeguarding**.
- Recognise the importance of **nurturing people from different traditions of church**, learning together and listening to God.



Parish Renewal



Parishes lie at the heart of our vision for the growth and transformation of our diocese.

We are working closely with them to understand their opportunities and challenges. Mission communities are key to this, enabling parishes to work together on mission and ministry. Over the next three years we will provide the following direct support to parishes:

- Three mission enablers will work with parishes to create bold missional strategies and help them grow their congregations.
- Clergy and lay leaders will be equipped for parish renewal, partnering with Leading Your Church into Growth (LYCIG). This will begin with the Archdeaconries of Rochdale and Manchester.
- Grants of up to £10k are available to help parishes to set up new worshipping communities.
- We will continue to provide help with stewardship, financial management and accessing funding to build parishes' financial sustainability.
- We will oversee clergy deployment, parochial reorganisation, faculties and, as a last resort for our most fragile parishes, the closure of church buildings.



Growing Younger



Our aim is to double the number of young active disciples and ensure there is a flourishing children and young people's ministry within reach of every young person.

In recent years we have been pioneering new approaches with the Places Project in Bolton, and Man Dio Growing Faith in our other deaneries. We will build on this experience as we develop a comprehensive approach to engaging with children and young people across our diocese through:

- **Encounter** – providing specialist teams to enable parishes to support children and young people at all stages in their discipleship journey. This will start with Bolton, Salford & Leigh, and Bury, and be rolled out across the diocese from 2029.
- **Equip** – a comprehensive development and training programme for lay and ordained leaders providing ministry to children, young people and families.
- **Shades** – our racial justice and faith project for parishes and schools throughout our diocese.
- **Vocations** – nurturing young people with their calling to leadership roles.
- **University Chaplaincy** – revitalising our ministry to students at universities in Manchester City Centre, Salford and Bolton.



Church Planting & Revitalisation



Having set up a number of Resource Churches in recent years, we are accelerating the rate of church planting across the diocese.

- We will set up four new Resource Churches representing a range of traditions, beginning with the revitalisation of William Temple Church in Wythenshawe, followed by Resource Churches in Bolton, Bury and Ashton.
- Our partnerships with our existing Resource Churches – Holy Trinity Platt in Rusholme, St Philip’s Chapel Street, St Werburgh’s Chorlton, Nelson Street Rochdale and Fabric Church in Manchester City Centre – will be strengthened, recognising their calling to develop leaders and to send teams.
- We will deliver five medium-size revitalisations with grants of up to £75k, partnering with Resource Churches and others who are called to revitalise and plant churches.
- We will continue to develop *Sing My Soul*, which aims to inspire church growth through mission and music working with priests from Catholic, sacramental and broad-church traditions.
- The Antioch Network will continue to be an essential part of our approach for church growth in estates and within diverse communities.



Developing Missional Leaders



Our focus is on bringing forward and developing talented ordained and lay people who are representative of the diversity of our diocese. We want them to be confident and equipped to lead our churches, with a passion for church growth and evangelisation.

- We will work with young adults, equipping 18-25s in mission and ministry, including through our Resource Churches, university chaplaincies and an intern programme.
- We will continue to develop ordained vocations and equip our curates so they have the skills, experience and resilience to flourish as priests.
- We will strengthen our support for first incumbents with bespoke training, mentoring and ongoing opportunities, and strengthen our wider clergy development offer.
- Lay development will be prioritised through accessible and inspiring lay ministry pathways, a wide range of local and diocese-wide training opportunities, and a focus on the under 35s.
- Building on the Transforming Prayer Community, we are developing a clearer suite of discipleship resources and gatherings to help us grow as Christians and walk with Jesus.



Outcomes

We are working to achieve the following outcomes:

	2026-2028	2029-2033
Adult Regular Weekly Attendance	17,050 10% increase compared with 2025	20,165 30% increase compared with 2025
New children and young active disciples	950	3,940
New 0-18s discipleship pathways	54	300
New congregations formed (Resource Churches, Antioch, medium-sized plants, local New Worshipping Communities)	30	61
New Lay Leaders	153	295
Increase in Parish Share compared to 2025	10%	30%



A Prayer for Our Diocese

Almighty and eternal God,
we thank you for the life and witness of your people
in Manchester Diocese over many years,
and we give thanks for the signs of your kingdom today.
As we look to the future,
may we grow deeper in faith,
proclaim the hope
that comes from knowing you,
and live the gracious love of Jesus.
We ask these things
through the power of the Holy Spirit
and in the name of Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Join our Transforming Prayer Community

Scan the QR code or visit:
manchester.anglican.org/prayer





Find out more about our vision

Including PCC and preaching resources, small group sessions, and inspiring stories.

manchester.anglican.org/our-vision

