

Festival Churches in the Diocese of Leicester

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What is a Festival Church?

Festival Church is model of 'doing' church:

A Festival Church is a church building which is not used for weekly worship, but is an open church, a local icon & a community asset.

It holds at least 6 planned services a year – not necessarily all Major Festivals or on Sundays.

It provides an opportunity to also use the church building for other purposes (e.g. community use).



Myths about Festival Churches

‘Festival Churches’ is a misleading name!

- It is not simply about the number of services held in a church building
- Nor about just focusing services at Major Festivals
- It’s not a permanent status
- It will not work for every church



Becoming a Festival Church is a positive and proactive decision by the PCC.

It is NOT a step on the road to closure!



A proactive decision to...

- keep the church open for worship – so also available for weddings, baptisms & funerals
- re-imagine worship to respond to local needs
- widen the range of people who use and care about the building
- continue to care for the building
- consider adapting governance models so others can play an active role in managing the building



Important considerations

- Governance matters - there needs to be a working PCC in place
- Ideally the building should be open outside services
- What opportunities are there for people to learn more about the Christian faith & how is this communicated?
- The PCC is still expected to pay Parish Contribution
- All PCC members will still be expected to comply with the basic requirements for safeguarding



The route to becoming a Festival Church matters

- Local community engagement and consultation is key
- The local church will only be sustainable with the support of the local community



The Pathway to becoming a Festival Church...

1. Stop & re-imagine your mission & worship
2. Think about less & doing it better/differently,
3. Engage positively with the local community
4. Form 'A New Covenant' with the community which sets out how church & community will work together

See the '**Pathway to becoming Festival Church**' document for more information.



Reality check - Is it the right way forwards?

Use the Pathway to explore the option of becoming a Festival Church. Then reflect:

Do the opportunities offered by becoming a Festival Church...

...meet the actual challenges that the PCC are facing?

...meet real local needs?

...enable participation of those who wish to support the church?

Only proceed if the answer is yes to all three questions!

