

About the project

Enabling Intercultural Mission & Ministry

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1. Description

From its inception in 1926, the Diocese of Leicester has witnessed a radical transformation to the context in which it is called to minister the gospel. Today it is serving a cosmopolitan population with people from diverse geographic, cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. Developing ministry capacity to attend to this diversity has become a key strategic priority of Leicester Diocese. Building upon our fresh expression of Church (fxC) projects and aligning aspects of this strategy to the Diocesan Resourcing Church (RC) strategy, we have embarked upon a long-term project that has the potential to fundamentally transform our ability for mission and ministry.

During autumn 2017 we carried out SDF funded research on the status of UKME mission and ministry within the Diocese of Leicester. This is highlighted the following key insights which have shaped our proposed new project:

- Active presence and participation of people of UKME heritage is limited within Anglican worshipping communities, and at all levels of leadership within the current governance structures of the diocese.
- Very few Anglican churches in the Diocese of Leicester consider UKME mission and ministry as a priority or have a clear understanding/experience of what specific resources and strategies are available/required.
- Cultural and ethnic homogeneity is the current strategy for church growth.
- Cultural assimilation, not integration is the leading assumption in UKME mission.
- Limited resources (people, time, finances) are allocated to UKME mission.
- Immigration and 'transfer' were the main sources of UKME growth in churches across denominations. There is low engagement with established UKME Communities.
- UKME leadership gifts do not seem to be effectively harnessed, developed, and released in the Church.
- No systematic and consistent measuring and monitoring of ethnicity.

From our findings we want to:

- Develop 2 different models of church that will be intentional in fostering cultural and ethnic integration. These models of church will be known as Intercultural Worshipping Communities (IWCs).
- Build on the opportunities for effective UKME mission and ministry within Leicester Diocese as a whole, focussing our energy in those contexts where we have discerned significant missional energy.
- Effectively set a process towards a long-term diocesan culture shift in respect to ethnic and cultural integration.

1.2. Key Pillars of the project

1.2.1. To create a network of **5 Intercultural Worshipping Communities (IWC)** in key areas across the diocese with high energy for UKME mission and ministry. This network, chosen for their missional energy will be made of:

1.2.2 **An inner core** comprising three inherited churches and one IWC plant. These churches will receive additional capacity and resources and would typically aim to plant/graft a new IWC by year 5 of the funding.

1.2.3. **An outer core** comprising two additional churches with missional energy for UKME ministry in which some capacity and resources will be invested.

1.2.4. To work with another **1 identified inherited Churches** and accompany them in a process of building trust to slowly transition **towards a more culturally and ethnically integrated expression of Church**. These churches have already demonstrated a degree of energy and vitality in UKME mission and ministry by engaging with our research and attending a discernment evening, We want to grow this potential and help shape a renewal of mission and ministry that leads towards culturally and ethnically integrated expressions of Church.

1.2.5. For those Anglican Church communities with **low/no energy for UKME mission and ministry**, as well as those **mono-linguistic and mono-cultural worshipping communities**, we will produce a set of resources and provide opportunities for mutual learning in order to encourage greater confidence and engagement in UKME mission and ministry.

This bid will allow each IWC to receive extra resources in order to develop and in time establish (in partnership with surrounding parishes as appropriate) several new IWCs within the diocese. The exact investment will be tailored according to the context and vision of each IWC, but in broad terms the whole provision over 5 years, will consist of:

- 5 new Pioneer Minister or Associate Minister posts to help grow discipleship capacity and vision
- 3 stipendiary Pioneering Curates
- A centrally deployed Intercultural Worship Enabler (already in place)
- A Project Lead (already in place)
- 6 Context based Ordinands
- A Project Manager who will add capacity and expertise in terms of planning, execution and delivery (already in place)
- An administration team (already in place)
- Additional support to allow IWCs to participate in the diocesan Mission Apprentice Scheme

In the wider context, the SDF funding will also help:

- Establish a Community of Practice for IWCs to facilitate shared learning across the churches at the core of the project. This will create a wider resource to inform the strategy and efforts to improve UKME mission and ministry within both Leicester Diocese, and the national context.
- Provide coaching and mentoring expertise to support the IWC's and Leadership Teams.
- Work with one or more external partners
- For research and measurement
- For storytelling to ensure that learning can be shared with the wider Diocese
- For leadership development and capacity building

1.3. Key Outcomes

Our research has driven some key outcomes which will be framed around the Leicester diocesan vision, Shaped by God framed around three key measures: Number of disciples, depth of discipleship, and loving service of the world. These outcomes are essentially informed by a commitment from Leicester Diocese to see its vision expressed in an inclusive and comprehensive manner. Our objectives, by the end of the funding would be:

1.3.1 Number of Disciples – Everyday Witness:

- A network of at least 5 intercultural and intergenerational worshipping communities whose mission and ministry will enable greater integration of those from the global diaspora.
- Up to 15 inherited churches participating in relevant areas and seeing growth in UKME presence, representation, and participation.
- Develop discipleship pathways offering a global perspective in engagement with faith and society. The aim will be to lead all members of our churches to visibly deepen their discipleship and encouraging others into discipleship, especially those of UKME heritage. As a result, we would expect to see an increase in baptisms and confirmations of people of UKME heritage.
- By the end of 2024, we would anticipate seeing near to 900 new people of UKME heritage worshipping in Anglican churches within the diocese (including at least one third aged 18-30). Of this number, we expect that near to 50% of new UKME Anglicans will come from the churches closely aligned with the objectives of the project.
- The remaining 50% is expected to be drawn from growth resulting in greater confidence in UKME mission and ministry engagement across the wider Diocese. Through a ripple effect, we anticipate to see all churches in Leicester diocese witness measurable growth of the UKME make up of their congregations.

1.3.2 Depth of discipleship – Everyday Prayer:

- Our aim is to see at least 50 new UKME lay leaders in licensed and authorised ministry, a leadership that truly reflects context. (Reader, Pastoral Assistant, Pioneer, Evangelist, Children/Youth Worker, etc.)
- 100 new people of UKME heritage involved in the governance structures at diocesan and parish levels (Synods, Diocesan Committees, PCC, Church Wardens, etc.).
- 20 people of UKME heritage exploring vocation to ordained ministry with the hope that at least 70-75% will be recommended for training (in line with diocesan forecasts).
- An increase in UKME clergy applying to roles in Leicester Diocese and UKME clergy being appointed to incumbent roles within Leicester diocese. While an ideal outcome would be diversity in clergy numbers that would reflect the local context (currently below 3%), our long-term aspiration (is for the proportion of UKME clergy in incumbent roles to be at least double the national average (currently just over 3%). Typically, this would mean at least an additional 7 UKME incumbents by 2024.

1.3.3 Loving Service of the world/community – Everyday Action:

- We anticipate seeing a deepening of diocesan partnership with our four Anglican link dioceses.
- We expect to see stronger links with majority UKME/UKME-led congregations meeting on Anglican premises and possibly other unattached ones. This increase in levels of partnership will be evidenced in the wider engagement with issues of social justice and social need in context (e.g. leadership development, money matters, translator services, etc...).
- Contributing to missiology that recognises and responds to changing demography (local and national).
- The publication of the results of our learning and its dissemination through seminars, workshops and champions.

About the diocese

The Diocese of Leicester

Founded in 1926, Leicester is one of the youngest dioceses in England. The present Diocesan Bishop, the Rt Revd Martyn Snow, was welcomed in May 2016. The boundary of the Diocese is almost coterminous with the county of Leicestershire which has a total population of just over one million people. There are

nine local authorities in the diocese and the county is diverse, including urban, ex-mining towns and deep rural. There are areas of significant poverty as well as some areas of considerable wealth.

The Diocese is divided into two archdeaconries, broadly covering the west and east of the county. 244 parishes are served by 110 stipendiary, 25 self-supporting clergy and 97 Readers. In addition, 40 licensed pioneers are developing fresh expressions of churches. There are also 97 Church of England schools and academies.

The city of Leicester lies at the centre of the diocese and has a population of just over 500,000 (including its outer suburbs). It was one of the first cities in the country to have a majority of residents who are black, Asian or minority ethnic. The 2011 census revealed that Leicester residents trace their heritage to over 50 different countries across the globe, making the city one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse places in the UK. 19% of the population are Muslim; 15% Hindu; 4% Sikh. Leicester is proud of this diversity although new international conflicts, terrorism and extremism pose new challenges. The city is also proud that it is now known around the world for football and for King Richard III.

Leicester city has a significantly younger population than many other parts of the UK. Approximately 27% of the population are aged 0-19 compared with a national average of 24%. Leicester also has high levels of income deprivation affecting children – 34% of families officially live in relative poverty (21% national), with 64% classified as 'low income'.

Beyond the city and its expanding suburban communities are numerous rural villages, many with medieval churches, together with market towns such as Loughborough, Market Harborough and Melton Mowbray as well as areas with an industrial and manufacturing heritage such as Coalville and Hinckley. On a simple count of churches, the diocese is predominantly rural with urban heartlands.

Leicester Cathedral is located in the Heritage quarter of the city and works closely with the Bishop and the Diocesan Boards of Finance and Education, notably through the neighbouring St Martins House. This award-winning centre was opened in 2011 in a refurbished former school building as a focus for mission and administration for the diocese. More recently in this heritage quarter the diocese has also opened a new Monastic Community (The Community of the Tree of Life) and St Martins Lodge with 28 bedrooms and bed-and-breakfast accommodation.

Shaped by God – Every Day

In 2006, the diocese developed a statement of purpose called 'Shaped by God' to guide our ministry and mission

to meet the challenges of the future.

Shaped by God in our lives and communities we seek the growth of His Kingdom in:

- The depth of discipleship,
- The number of disciples of Jesus,
- Loving service of the world.

This central focus on Christian discipleship is now being worked out in a number of key areas with some exciting new initiatives. Each church is being asked three key questions, the answers to which will help them develop an action plan:

- How are you growing, and enabling others to grow in the depth of their discipleship?
- How are you enabling growth in the numbers of disciples of Jesus?
- How are you serving your community, and enabling others to love and serve those around them?

Alongside these three 'Key Questions' we are currently engaged in creating a new diocesan framework for mission, working with 5 strategic priorities through which we want to reshape our work in the coming years, namely growing:

- New communities, [establishing as many fresh expressions of church (including church plants) as there are inherited churches].
- Intercultural Worshipping Communities (we have received a Church Commissioners grant for this work).
- Intergenerational communities.
- Eco-communities, in particular achieving Eco Diocese status.
- Reconciling communities, to 'live well together' in church and society across our many divides.

Shaped By God Together

Shaped By God Together (SBGT) is the process through which the diocese is currently reshaping to ensure our ministry and mission is equipped and supported in the best way possible within our vision of the Kingdom of God, and our diocesan finances are used in order to resource our strategic priorities.

As part of this SBGT process, the Diocesan Synod voted strongly in favour of the Minster Communities framework in October 2021. Between 2022 and 2026, every parish, fresh expression of Church, clergy person and lay minister, chaplain and school, will be expected to participate in conversation between local context and the diocesan leadership, in order to determine how they find their place within the framework as we form 20 Minster Communities across the diocese. Alongside the structural changes (which are likely to involve Joint Church Councils), we are encouraging all worshipping communities to develop how they enable discipleship and encourage vocations, grow in outwardly focused mission, engage with children, young people and schools, and work in partnership across differences. The development of a healthy culture of wellbeing is also vital.

There is a lot more detailed information on the [SBGT webpages](#), or contact your Area Dean or Archdeacon. Claire Bampton, Diocesan Programme Manager (claire.bampton@leicestercofe.org) or Stuart Burns, Director of Parish Transition and Ministry Development (stuart.burns@leicestercofe.org) would also be happy to have a conversation or answer questions.

And finally

More generally, as we continue to learn to what it means to be shaped by God together, we are beginning to explore as a diocese what it means to be creative, generous and attentive to all that is God is doing:

- We have set ourselves the goal of having as many fresh expressions of church as inherited churches by 2030
- As a diocese we are exploring what racial equity looks like within our diocese and how we might address some of the historical and current imbalance, recently adopting a racial equity strategy as a Diocese.
- We have established six 'Resourcing Churches' (2 within the city, one on the edge of the city and the other three in towns around the diocese) which are involved in an ambitious programme of church planting and fresh expressions of church over the coming years.
- Our current review of ministry provision in the diocese seeks to increase vocations to ordained ministry and a whole variety of 'Associate Minister' roles.