



THE DIOCESE OF LEICESTER

www.leicester.anglican.org

Moving forward together in Mission, being Shaped by God

The Diocese of Leicester is committed to the Mission of God.

In 2005 we placed renewal for Mission at the heart of diocesan life with the approval of the strategy *Shaped by God*.

<http://www.leicester.anglican.org/shaped/index.htm>

This strategy focuses diocesan activity on 9 marks of Mission to build a culture of Mission across the diocese.

- Transformed lives and communities
- Worship that renews and inspires
- Self-giving service to the community
- Being rooted in prayer
- Confident and sensitive evangelism
- Lifelong Christian nurture
- The welcome of newcomers
- Becoming child-friendly
- Celebration of people and places

Undergirding this is the creation of Mission Partnerships which will see “growing relationships of trust and love between parishes, congregations and Christian communities in order more effectively to witness to God’s summons to love”. These partnerships are starting to enable groups of churches to share their resources for the mission of God in their local communities. The majority of parishes have now identified their partners for mission, and many Mission Partnerships are now authorized. All future appointments to the diocese will be made on the understanding that *Shaped by God* is the overarching strategy for the diocese and clergy will be expected to further its implementation.



Prioritising Young People

In 2007 the Diocese of Leicester agreed a strategy, *Young People for Life*, which not only affirmed the place of young people at the heart of its life but also committed considerable resources to fostering ways of enabling young people to come into vibrant contact with Christian communities, participate in the life of such communities and have opportunities for Christian formation and nurture. To drive this strategy forward, Young People for Life saw the appointment of a Diocesan Director of Youth Ministry who is now appointing seven youth field workers, who will work with Mission Partnerships and their parishes in their work with young people. This strategy also commits the diocese to developing ways in which young people can participate and influence decision

making at all levels, premised on the understanding that there is much to treasure and learn from the energy, vision and creativity of young people among us.

The Diocese is also committed to:

- **Equipping the People of God**

All the clergy of the diocese have been invited to participate in the Clergy Leadership Programme, which develops their leadership within the ministry of the Church. The diocesan School of Ministry offers a discipleship course, the Certificate in Christian Discipleship, for any person wanting to grow in confidence in their Christian faith. The Diocese is fortunate to have Launde Abbey (www.launde.org.uk) as its retreat house which, besides offering space for reflection and spiritual nourishment to individuals and groups, is used extensively by the diocese for training and meetings.

- **Engaging with a Multi Faith world**

To respond to the cultural and faith diversity of the diocese, the St Philip's Centre for study and engagement in a multi faith society (<http://www.stphilipscentre.co.uk>) was created by the Diocese in 2006 to be a national ecumenical training centre for Christians, people of other faiths and civic society.

- **Educating for the future**

The Samworth Enterprise Academy (www.samworthenterpriseacademy.org), which has been co-sponsored by the Diocese and the Samworth Trust, opened in September 2007 at a cost of £25m. The Diocese took the decision to build a new church within the school building, the first time in recent history this has been done. The focus on Mission in the diocese has strengthened the partnership working between churches and schools, and in some parts of the Diocese, Church schools have been made members of Mission Partnerships.

- **Energised for witness**

The diocese places a high importance on witnessing to the Christian faith through our work with the wider society, including work with asylum seekers and refugees, those affected with HIV/AIDS, those involved with world development and environmental issues. The diocese is also one of the major sponsors of the annual Good Friday *Christ in the Centre* event (www.christinthecentre.co.uk/) which sees several thousand people attend a retelling of Christ's passion in the centre of Leicester.

- **Extending our hospitality and teaching**

The diocese has recently bought the St Nicholas building adjacent to Leicester Cathedral, which formerly was owned by Leicester Grammar School. The building will form, alongside a transformed Cathedral precincts and reordered Cathedral, a place of welcome, hospitality, teaching and mission for all the diocese.

The Bishop of Leicester

The Bishop of Leicester, the Rt Revd Tim Stevens, has made a priority of his ministry to:

- Renew the Diocese for mission through the encouragement of confident, engaged witness
- Advance the contribution of the Christian Church to building a transformed society
- Give strategic leadership to the Diocese along with his senior colleagues
- Affirming clergy and laity in their parochial and sector ministries in order to allow local sustainable ministry to flourish
- Ensure the clergy have pastoral oversight, including opportunities for regular ministerial review, and ensuring he is available to the clergy when needed



Bishop Tim has been Bishop of Leicester since 1999, and previously worked as Suffragan Bishop of Dunwich in St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocese, and previously to that in the Diocese of Chelmsford. He is a member of the House of Lords, and sits on the Archbishops Council and House of Bishops Standing Committee. He is the Chair of the Trustees of the Children's Society, and Chairs the Council of Westcott House.

The Bishop shares his Episcopal ministry with the Bishop's Staff Meeting, which consists of the Archdeacons, the Dean, the Diocesan Secretary, the Director of Mission and Ministry, and the Bishop's Chaplain and Policy Adviser, who have responsibility for the leadership and strategic management of the diocese.

Summary

The Diocese of Leicester is an exciting place to be!

We are at a key moment in our history when God is challenging us to engage with the life of the Diocese in new and creative ways. There is a sense of energy and expectation as we focus on Mission and look to move beyond our natural boundaries.

Clergy and laity throughout the diocese are being resourced for the many challenges that lay ahead, and many imaginative expressions of Church are emerging.

Whether you are interested in urban, suburban or rural ministry, the Diocese of Leicester is for you.

We have a strong commitment to the city and to sustaining rural life in all its variety. If you are interested in being part of a diocese facing great opportunities and exciting challenges and feel you have something to offer, then come and join us!

History, Geography and composition of the Diocese

The first bishopric of Leicester was originally formed in 680, and the diocese had its own Bishop until the invasion of the Danes around 870. The Diocesan seat was then moved to Oxford and later to Lincoln in 1072.

At the reformation, the diocese was split off from Lincoln into the new Diocese of Peterborough. In 1926 the Diocese of Leicester was carved out of the Diocese of Peterborough. The current Bishop Tim Stevens, enthroned in 1999 is the 6th Bishop of Leicester in recent times.

The diocese is located in the East Midlands, geographically at the heart of England, with good road and rail links. London is 80 minutes by train, and Birmingham 30 minutes. The M1 motorway runs through the diocese, and the A1 and A14 roads cross the edges of the diocese.



The diocese:

- has no suffragan Bishops.
- has 2 Archdeaconries - Leicester, covering the city of Leicester and the east of the Diocese, and Loughborough covering the west of the Diocese.
- is administered from Church House in the centre of Leicester.
- is a mixture of rolling countryside, with agriculture and village life still very prominent, and urban living particularly in Leicester.
- is 835 square miles, is almost entirely co-terminous with the County of Leicestershire (but does not include the county of Rutland),
- has a population of 915,000
- has 324 churches, with 237 parishes in 123 benefices, served by 201 clergy.
- In an average week has 17,700 attend church throughout the diocese, and this rises to 39,000 at Christmas.
- has 280,000 living in the city of Leicester (a separate unitary authority) making it the 10th largest city in England; with the other major population centres being Loughborough (57,000), Hinckley (38,000), Coalville (32,000), Melton Mowbray (26,000), Wigston (23,000), Oadby (21,000), Market Harborough (20,000).
- is a vibrant place, with 40% of Leicester's population describing their ethnicity in categories other than 'White'. Christianity is the predominant religion of the city, with the other major religions being Hindu (14%) and Muslim (11%) and Sikh (4%).

The Cathedral

The Cathedral is in the centre of Leicester. Formerly the civic church of the city, it was hallowed in 1927, has embarked on a major refurbishment programme and has pioneered Street Pastors and ministry with Asylum Seekers. Adjacent to Church House, and collaborating closely with its staff, it acts as a focus for diocesan worship, supporting the ministry of the Bishop, and, as the only city church open daily, also provides a place of quiet reflection (<http://www.cathedral.leicester.anglican.org/>)



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