



Unlocking our Potential Strategic Plan 2018-2023

The “Teulu Asaph” is a family of Christian disciples in north east and mid Wales, which is a millennium and a half old, following in the footsteps of Kentigern and Asaph who are among the first known disciples of Jesus Christ in this part of the world. Growing out of the interaction between Christian faith and the culture and history of this place, our faith is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ: God himself entering our world, who overcomes its sin, brokenness and dangers to bring healing and the promise of fullness of life.

Our vocation is to enter into the abundant life into which Jesus calls us, and to invite others to share this with us by serving the society in which we are placed and being drawn into a life enhanced by faith and worship. This is what we mean by “Unlocking our Potential” and we do this through five overarching priorities for the diocese:

- **Growth: Building the life of God’s people**
- **Service: Ministry in the Name of Christ**
- **Youth: sharing good news with young people**
- **Enablement: discerning the breadth of God’s work**
- **Mission Areas: focussing on God’s Kingdom**



Growth: Building the life of God's people

Our first priority is to grow in faith – spiritually, numerically and in service to others. This includes old and new, traditional and contemporary ways of doing things. We need bold initiatives to support new forms of Anglican communities and fresh engagement, which means identifying sustainable and transformational initiatives. We need to be risk-takers, brave in sensitive ways, in calling people to be disciples of Jesus, while recognising the differences between urban and rural contexts across the diocese. We need to pray intentionally for spiritual growth and to have nurture groups in every Mission Area across the diocese.

We will:

- (1) Work at Mission Area level to **increase our congregations**. If we believe that being a Christian disciple is truly life-giving, it is a message we should want to share with others. An attitude of waiting for new disciples to come to us must be replaced by active evangelism, seeking to reach out in service and love.
- (2) **Review our progress**. After an initial objective of 10% growth, we will set appropriate subsequent targets for growth on an annual basis.
- (3) Explore new styles of Christian worship, living and outreach, including developing Fresh Expressions and planting new churches. A symbolic and significant initiative is **Resource Church**, to open in September 2020, based in Wrexham, the largest centre of population in the diocese.
- (4) Develop a compelling **rural strategy** that will address the sustainability and regeneration of mission and ministry in a rural context. We will seek funding for a second initiative that focusses on growing the church in a rural context.
- (5) The **ministry of the Archdeacons** will be focused upon supporting the Mission Area Conferences to meet our objectives.
- (6) Support work across the diocese and in mission areas, in **renewing worship, deepening faith, encouraging prayer, enabling discipleship**. We would like to see faith nurture groups and prayer groups happening in each mission area, and the work of establishing these will be supported by the Diocesan Spirituality Group in 2018-2019.
- (7) Continue to make an ongoing investment in programmes such as "**Leading your Church into Growth**" and "**Hope and a Future**", which raise awareness and develop skills in contributing to mission and growth.

Service: Ministry in the Name of Christ

One of the key enablers of mission is the development of the Shared Ministry Teams. New ways of discernment, affirmation, formation and authorisation have been developed and recognised, which need further sustaining and development.

All clergy exist to enable the ministry and priesthood of all believers. They have a distinctive role of leadership and ministry of Word and Sacrament which needs to be oriented towards empowering



other emerging forms of ministry. Supporting this model of priesthood calls for investment in vocations, formation, continued personal and professional development and leadership. There are currently emerging structures to employ lay ministers for deployment in the Mission Areas: such ministries are urgently required to augment the work of the Church. The development, through discernment and relevant training, of licensed and commissioned lay ministries will add new dimensions by orienting the Church to reach those outside its walls with the good news of the Gospel. We value chaplaincy – ordained and lay – for specific groups and institutions as an essential part of the ministry in our Mission Areas.

We will:

- (1) Continue to develop the unified **Training Together** programme offering an increasing range of requested and bespoke training opportunities for clergy and laity alike.
- (2) Develop structures and opportunities for the **employment of lay ministers** and administrators across the diocese.
- (3) Work with the Mission Areas to produce **development plans** for ministry of different kinds and ensure a broad approach to shared ministry.
- (4) Work with the Mission Areas to **resource discernment** of local members of congregations for ministries within the Mission Area and offer support through Vocations Advisers and clear pathways to discernment, formation and training.
- (5) Develop a **clear plan** for the recruitment, formation and deployment of stipendiary, non-stipendiary and other forms of priestly ministry, including middle and long-term projections of numbers and distribution.

Youth: sharing good news with young people

The diocese is proud of the work done in our fifty-one Church schools and with all other schools across the diocese. We will grow stronger relationships between Mission Area Churches and schools and to develop opportunities which enable children and their parents to explore and encounter expressions of faith and deepen their own spirituality within our Mission Area schools.

Initiatives by our Nurturing Steering Group, Department of Lifelong Learning and Board of Statutory Education, aim to ensure that young people have a place and contribution to make as disciples of Jesus Christ and must receive funding commensurate to the potential. The need is to work with our existing young people as a core through which to reach out to young people in the community.

We will:

- (1) Support Mission Area Conferences to identify and appoint **Mission Area Schools' Advocates**.
- (2) Work with the Mission Area Conference and other stakeholders to **audit** relationships between Churches and schools within the Mission Area to help grow and develop these relationships and further enrich and deepen spirituality.
- (3) Explore ways of resourcing **workers** with children and young people as a springboard for communicating lively Christian faith to their age group.

Enablement: discerning the breadth of God's work

The Diocesan Office Team offer specialist, practical, administrative and spiritual support to enable people, churches and mission areas to engage in mission. This team plays a significant role in equipping the people of God.

The Church means very little to those outside the institution unless they can see that the life of faith makes a difference to real life issues. As Christians, we are called to join with God in bringing healing and justice to the world. The Engaging Steering Group has identified urgent needs within our communities. As Jesus proclaimed release for the captive and healing for the sick, we need actively to engage with our communities and the wider world as part of our proclamation of new life in Christ.

We will:

- (1) Ensure that Mission Areas have knowledge of and access to **a wide range of support, expertise and encouragement** from the Diocesan Office Team.
- (2) Provide **excellent communication** through print and online resources.
- (3) Ensure that Mission Areas are represented on the **Engaging Steering Group** and to share their experiences of engaging with communities and their recommendations to the wider diocese.

Mission Areas: focussing on God's Kingdom

The basic pastoral units of the diocese are the twenty-one Mission Areas. These areas have been formed to enable churches to be a community which co-operates in mission. Churches, each with strengths in different areas - be it finance, leadership, young people, talents or experience - support each other in the Mission Area. It is about working together to strengthen their common life. Leadership in the Mission Areas is inclusive, valuing and celebrating different traditions.

We will:

- (1) Support and encourage **Mission Area Conferences** as they continue to shape their vision for mission, their resources and their ministry to meet the challenges of the future.
- (2) Assist Mission Areas to build a viable and effective **Shared Ministry Team**, which will co-operate with the Mission Area Conference in living out the Mission Area vision for mission and growth.
- (3) Empower the Diocesan Property Board to work with Mission Area Conferences to ensure effective use of **buildings and resources**. The viability and long-term future of our Church buildings will be reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose.
- (4) Ensure that every Mission Area has a clear **Mission Action Plan** which sets out their strategy for mission, growth and service.
- (5) Task the Diocesan Board of Finance with the delivery of a **balanced budget** by 2021, to ensure sustainability in Mission Area finance and share.