

- discerning God
- valuing people
- serving community
- enabling change

The four mission values which have emerged from theological reflection and consultation by the diocesan leaders are:

If a church values welcome and hospitality to parishioners who do not normally attend, then change will take place to make the Church environment more hospitable. If this value is not in place then simply changing something structurally will not make a church community more welcoming. This is only done by focusing on the change of attitudes of the people who are meant to be welcoming.

Our strategic template is value based and designed to encourage, challenge and support mission rather than direct it. It has been said that "you value what you do and you do what you value." Also that you should never change a structure before you change a value. We all know that the values people adopt effect their actual behaviour and action. A prayerful values based approach leads to an evolution of structural change in supporting Gospel mission.

Four Values

For example a parish away day might review the life of the parish in the light of the four values; a deanery might use the four challenges to begin thinking about its mission strategy; and a PC might use the mission questions to plan evangelistic opportunities.

We invite all those in leadership across diocesan life (parishes, networks, clusters, deaneries, departments, chaplaincies, Bishops' Council, Bishops' Staff, etc.) to use these values, challenges and questions in their own community and cultural contexts.

God is at work in his world, in other churches, other faiths, other institutions and individuals. In shaping the future, we as a diocesan family are called to work together with them, bringing our own understanding of the gospel and our own life as a church, joining together means we will be collaborative and eumenical in the working out of these values and our place in God's mission. In response, the strategic leadership team of Southwell & Nottingham Diocese offer the diocesan family and other mission partners the following strategic template for mission, based on four values, four challenges and four questions.

Jesus used the image of growing plants to illustrate the kingdom of God and the life of the church. A trellis or framework supports plants as they grow in particular directions. This template is offered as a framework to support the mission and growth of our Christian family life, revealing the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ in word and deed. Just as a trellis has gaps so this template provides spaces which need to be filled with local mission shoots and branches rooted in our churches and communities.

"The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it is grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."
Matthew 13 vv. 31 & 32

What has the Church to offer the communities and cultures we serve in the early 21st century?
How are we to promote the message of Christ afresh in an ever changing world?
How do we become a more mission-shaped church?

The challenge!

conclusions

Working with these values, challenges and questions a local church leadership team has a template through which to identify need and build a mission strategy which is flexible, detailed, and properly resourced. The whole diocesan family has a tool which can share mission effectively and collaboratively.

All involved in diocesan leadership are encouraged to own this template and shape the future, making our diocesan life and outlook more mission orientated. We are called to work together in mission as the one body of Christ in Southwell & Nottingham Diocese:

'Joining together in the Mission of God'

- discerning God
- valuing people
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What next?

- Please pray & reflect on your response
- Ask for further copies of the template
- Download copies and power point presentations from the diocesan website download area: www.southwell.anglican.org
- Use it in your situation
- Request assistance/advice

Contact point for all the above: Barbara Wilds, P.A. to the Chief Executive, The Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham, Dunham House, Westgate, Southwell, NG25 0JL Tel: 01636 817205 email: barbara@southwell.anglican.org

shaping the future

A template for mission

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Matt 13 vv. 31 & 32



mission values...

in the setting of prevailing cultures



NB. The cultural framework outlined above is illustrative rather than exhaustive.

cultural interpretation

These values will need interpreting according to local cultures, needs and Christian tradition: mission flesh will need to be put on their bare bones. The diagram above is an attempt to place these values in an illustrative cultural and collaborative framework. It highlights the need to resource the diocesan family in theological reflection on mission and in understanding the cultures in which we now live, work and minister. A prior question in strategic thinking is always: **“What are the cultures within which we seek to do mission?”**

mission challenges

If our diocesan mission is to be better shaped for the future we need to back these mission values and what emerges from them with appropriate deployment and resourcing. This applies to posts, buildings, planning and finance. Hence these four challenges to all:

- **Every post** - a mission rationale
- **Every building** - a community purpose
- **Every deanery** - a collaborative mission plan
- **Every benefice** - to give “more than enough” for its mission (Exodus 36:5)

mission questions

If we are to prayerfully discern what God is calling us to we must share our experiences, giftings and needs. We also need to focus our energies on what is important: what is God's thing amongst the many good things we could give our energies to. In all probability this means doing less better! So we must ask each other:

- **What will we do differently?** - specifically in mission
- **What must we stop doing?** - those things that bring death rather than life!
- **What do we need?** - new ideas, skills, resourcing, personnel, buildings...
- **What can we learn together?** - as a diocesan family and as ecumenical partners