

**Helping bring change without losing
what is loved.**

The Mixed Ecology of Church

Richard Priestley

Christian Communities Development Adviser

The Church of England Vision

To be a church where mixed ecology is the norm – where every person in England has access to an enriching and compelling community of faith by adding new churches and new forms of Church to our parishes, cathedrals, schools and chaplaincies.

The Vision in Bath and Wells

“

In response to God's immense love for us, we seek to be God's people, living and telling the story of Jesus.”

Growing church, transforming communities

Shared priorities: to be

1. Valuing and cherishing **existing people and resources**
2. **Developing** New Christian worshipping communities
3. **Sharing** in ministry and leadership
4. Deepening and growing faith

1 Corinthians 3:6 —

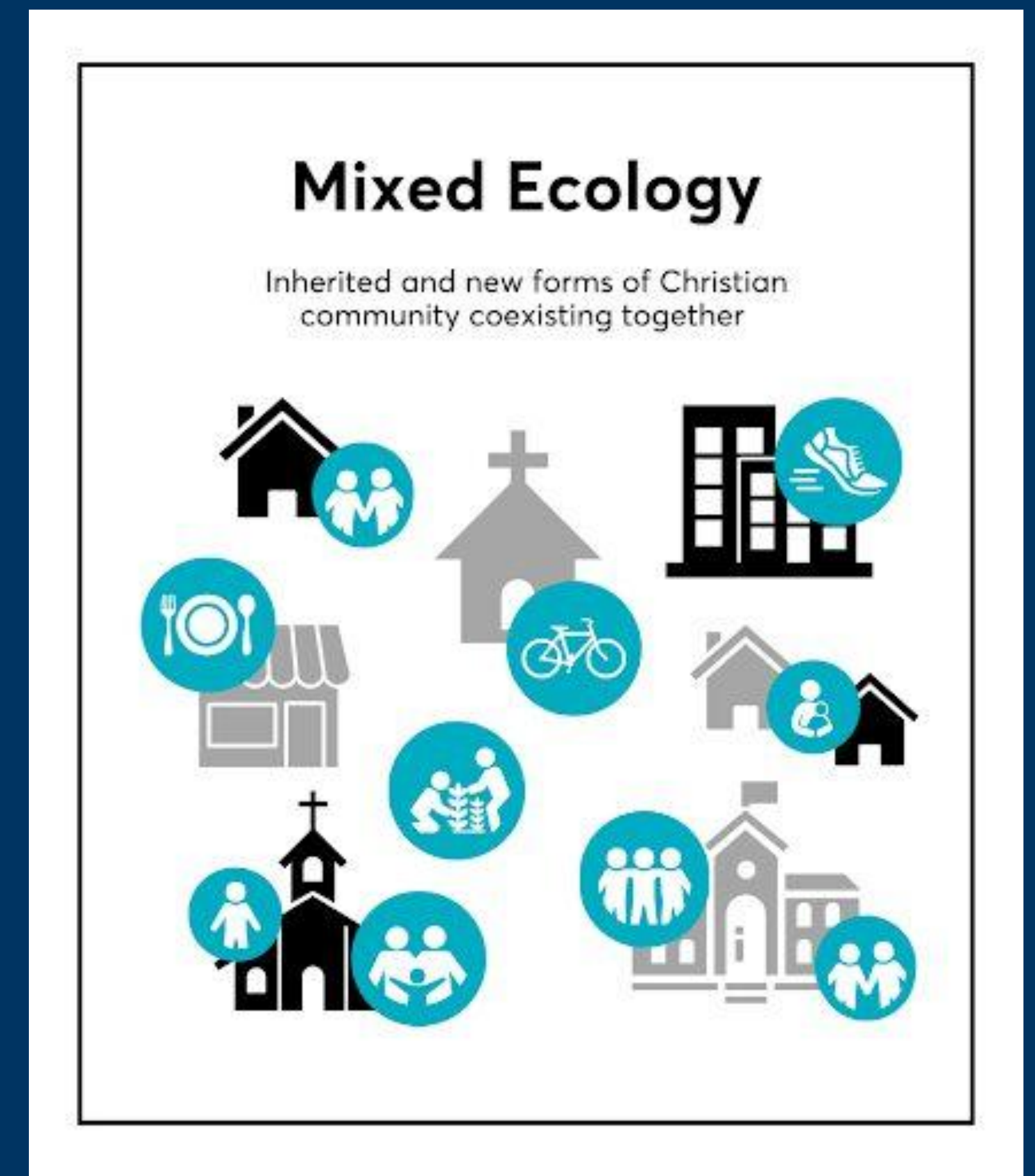
“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.”

“What does this passage say about our role in nurturing diverse expressions of church?”

The Mixed Ecology of Church?

C of E website

the mixed ecology describes the flourishing of church and ministry in our parishes, and in other communities of faith through things like church planting, fresh expressions of church, chaplaincy and online existing alongside traditional time-honoured parish churches.





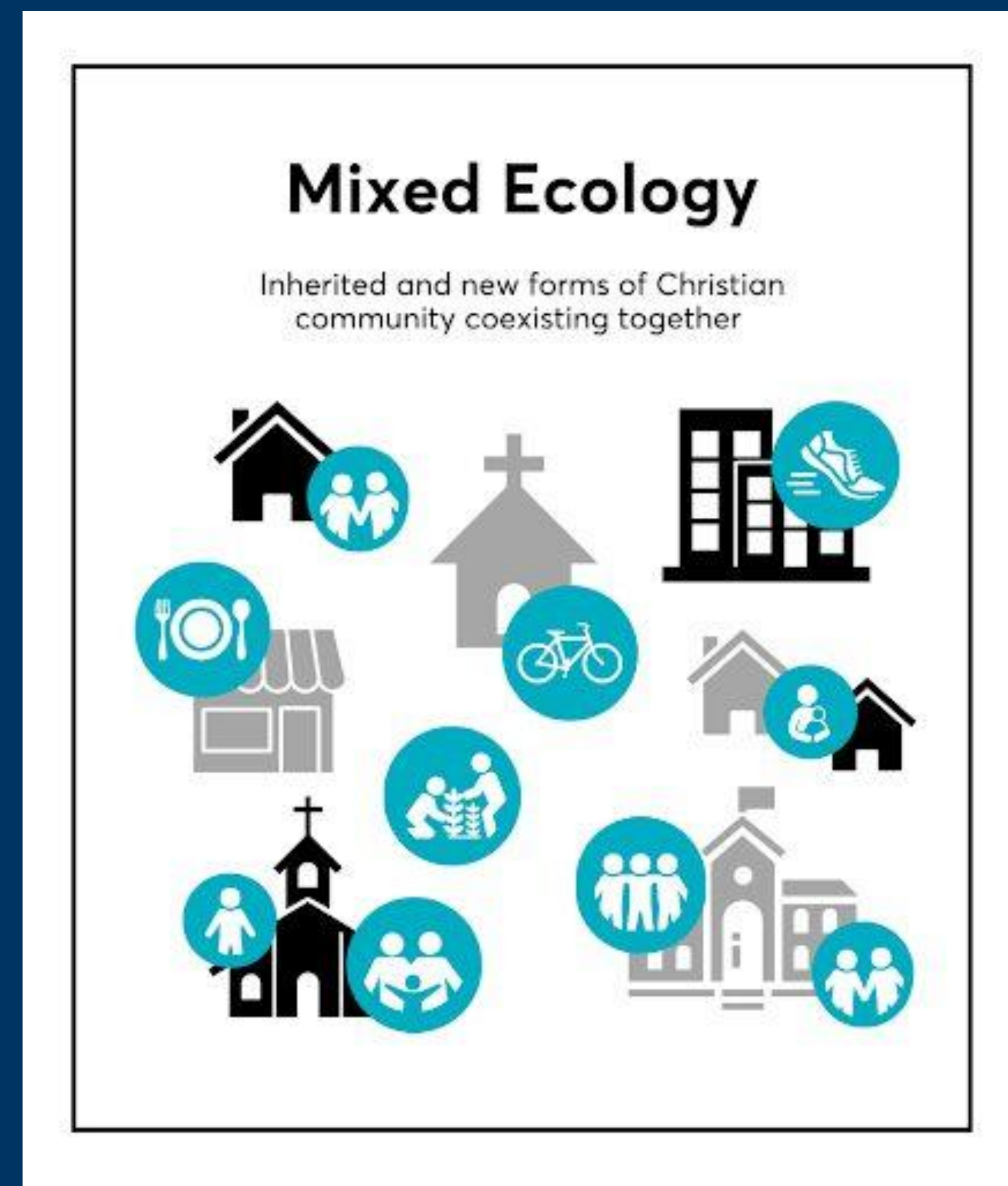
DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living and telling the story of Jesus

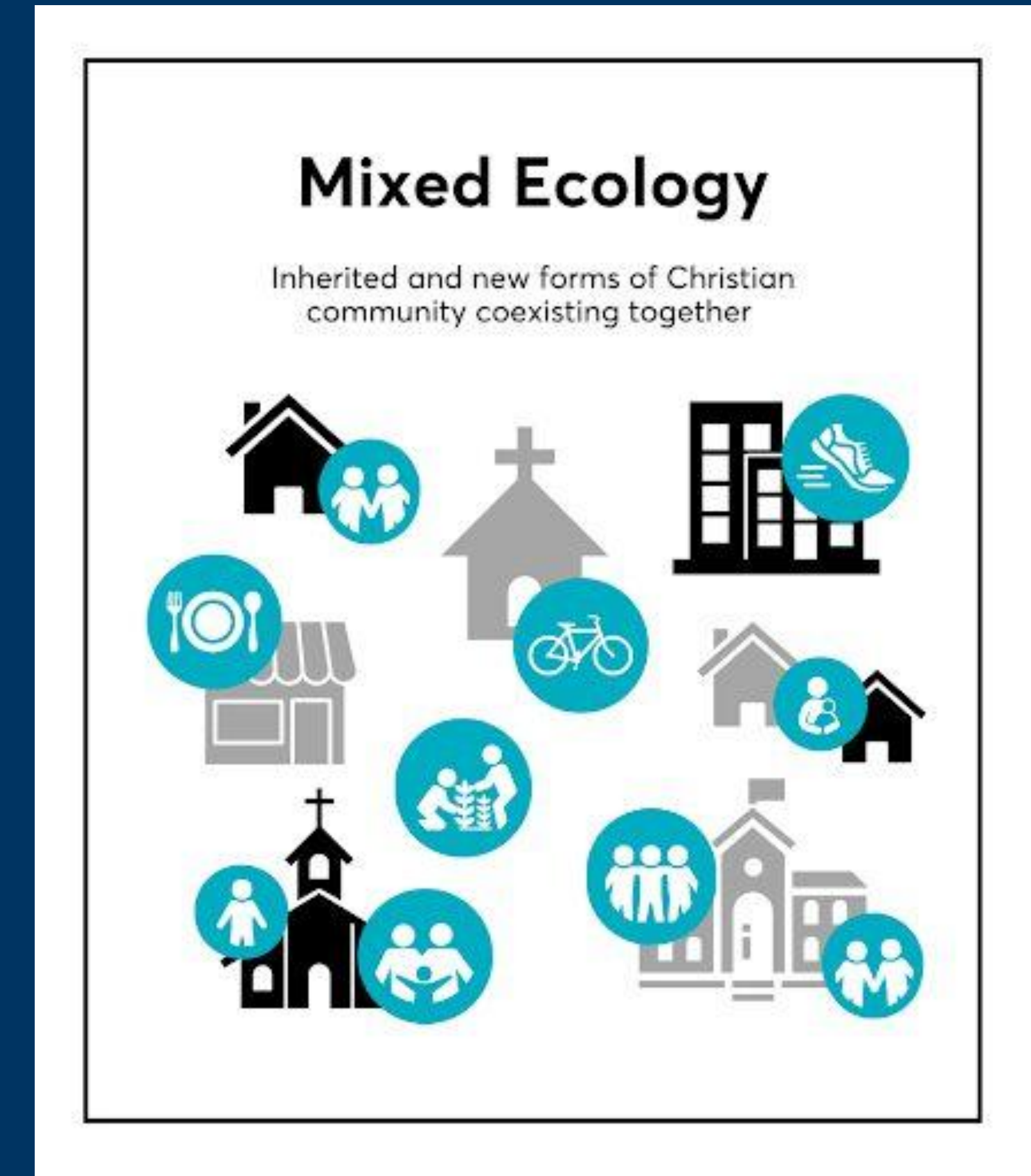
mixed ecology =
time-honoured church +
fresh expressions +
pioneering +
chaplaincy +
digital +
community-based models +
New worshipping communities.



The Mixed Ecology of church is a diversity of worshipping communities, involving, listening to, and serving a diversity of people and co-existing with mutual benefit and affirmation.



The Mixed Ecology of church is a **diversity** of worshipping communities, involving, listening to, and serving a diversity of people, **co-existing with mutual benefit and affirmation.**



The Vision (C of E 2020's)

A pathway for everyone into an accessible and contextual expression of church through:

- A parish system revitalised for mission so churches can reach and serve everyone in their community.
- Creating ten thousand new worshipping communities across the four areas of home, work/education, social and digital.

New Worshipping Community – a definition

New - aiming to reach people who are currently not attending church;

Worshipping - through practices involving (at least two of) prayer, scripture, praise, sacrament, and acts of service;

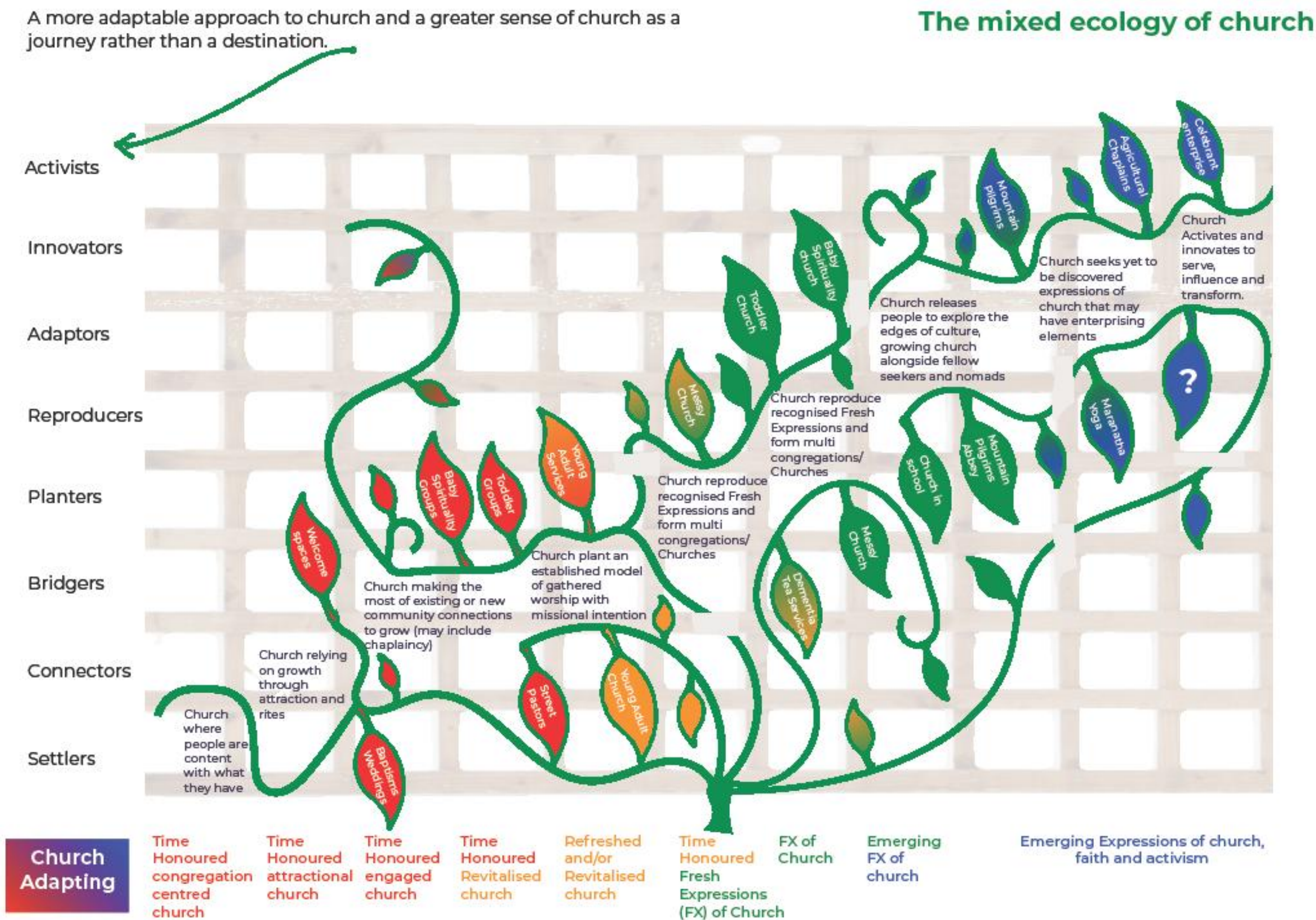
Community - meeting together at least monthly in person or online, and connected with the wider Church through the parish church, deanery or diocese.

Lesson from Winnie the Pooh

Here is Edward bear, coming down the stairs now, bump, bump, bump, bump on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it.



All expressions of church are valid!



Types of church

Increasing cultural distance
from church as 'known'

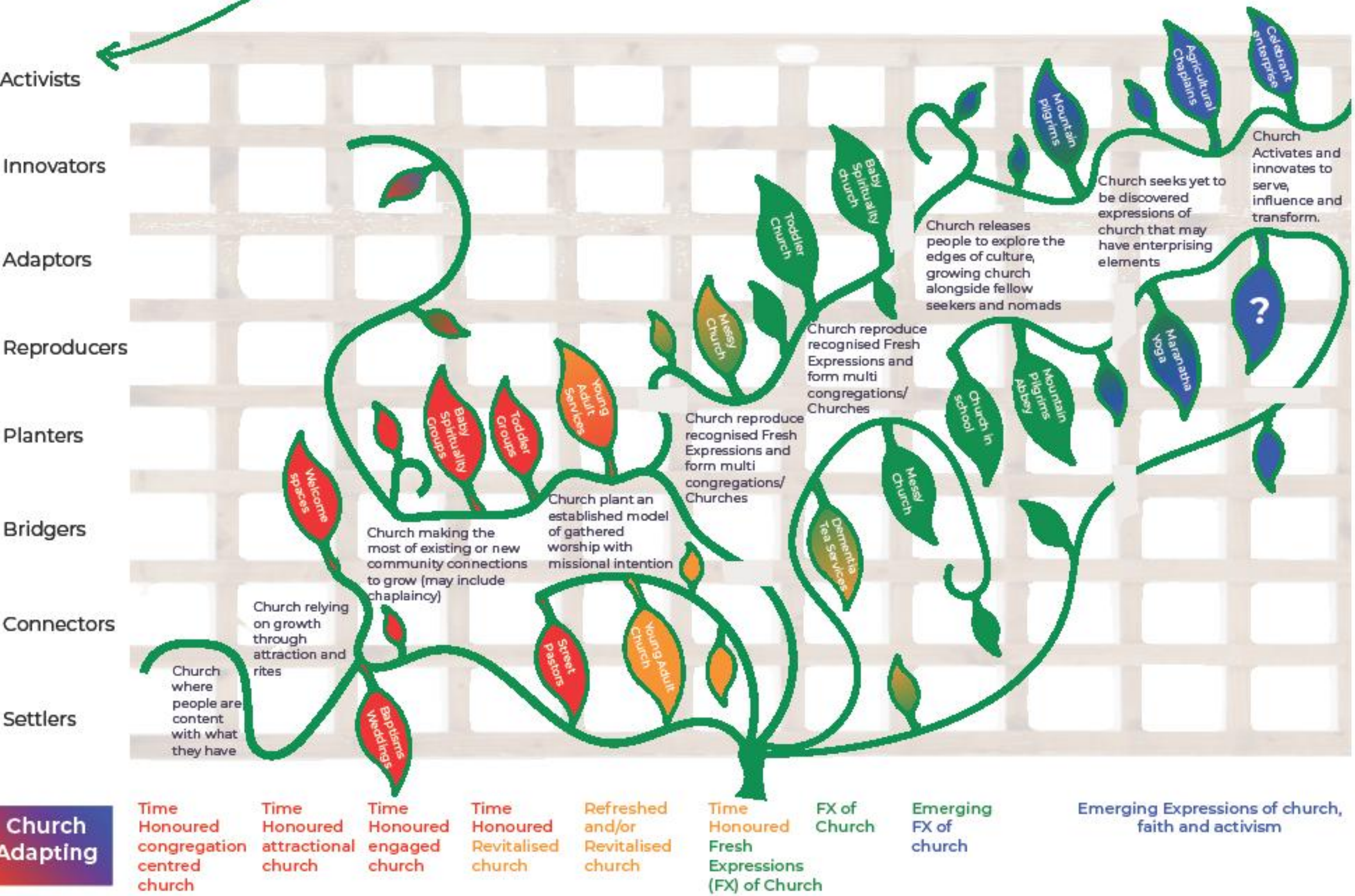
Time-honoured Congregation centred
Time-honoured attractional
Time-honoured engaged
Time-honoured revitalised
Refreshed and/or revitalised
Time-honoured Fresh Expression
Fresh Expression of church
Emerging fresh-expression
Emerging fresh expression of church,
faith and activism

Settlers
Connectors
Bridgers
Planters
Reproducers
Adapters
Innovators
Activists

*attitudes
and
aptitudes*

A more adaptable approach to church and a greater sense of church as a journey rather than a destination.

The mixed ecology of church



Mixed ecology Advocate /
Accommodators

What do we need to become a Mixed Ecology of church?

What might it look like in your context?

church-plant
taize chaplaincy soul-space
mutual-benefit cafe-church affirming
all-age inherited community youth
pub co-existing forest-church
new-monastic time-honoured eco-church
diversity toddlers sweaty-church
eucharistic worshipping bubble-church
messy-church contemplative
flourish
older-people sacramental fresh-expression
intergenerational

Hope and Vision

I just want to
keep the
church open

Why don't
people come to
church any
more?



The church
has always
been here, it
cant close

I want a church
for my
grandchildren

Hope & Vision

Hope & Vision

Where there is vision

- shared direction
- faith and passion
- energy towards the same goals
- continuous involvement of new people
- effective sharing of tasks and responsibilities
- sacrificing short-term convenience for long-term gains
- common reference point for resolving conflict

Where there is no vision

- ministry is likely to be reactive and short-term
- there will be conflicts of expectation and direction
- co-operative work is difficult
- “ Where there is no vision, the people perish.
Proverbs 29.18 (AV)

**How do we create a mixed
ecology?**

**Hope, Vision
&
Values**

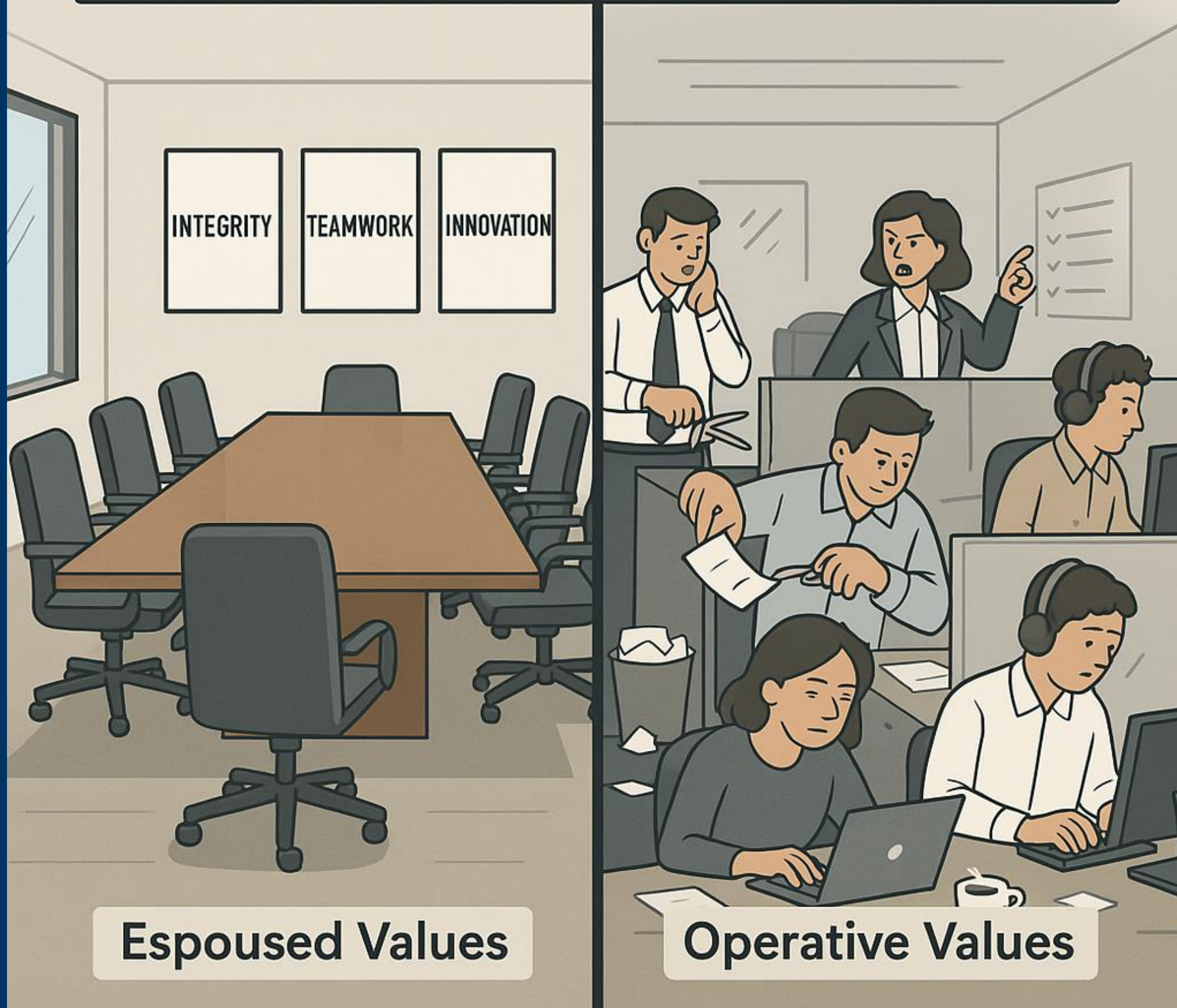
Values - definitions

- Values are those things 'held in high esteem, prized, of worth or importance.'
- “ Values express our deepest convictions and passions, how we want to be known, how we expect to behave.

Stuart Murray Williams

What are the values of your parish?

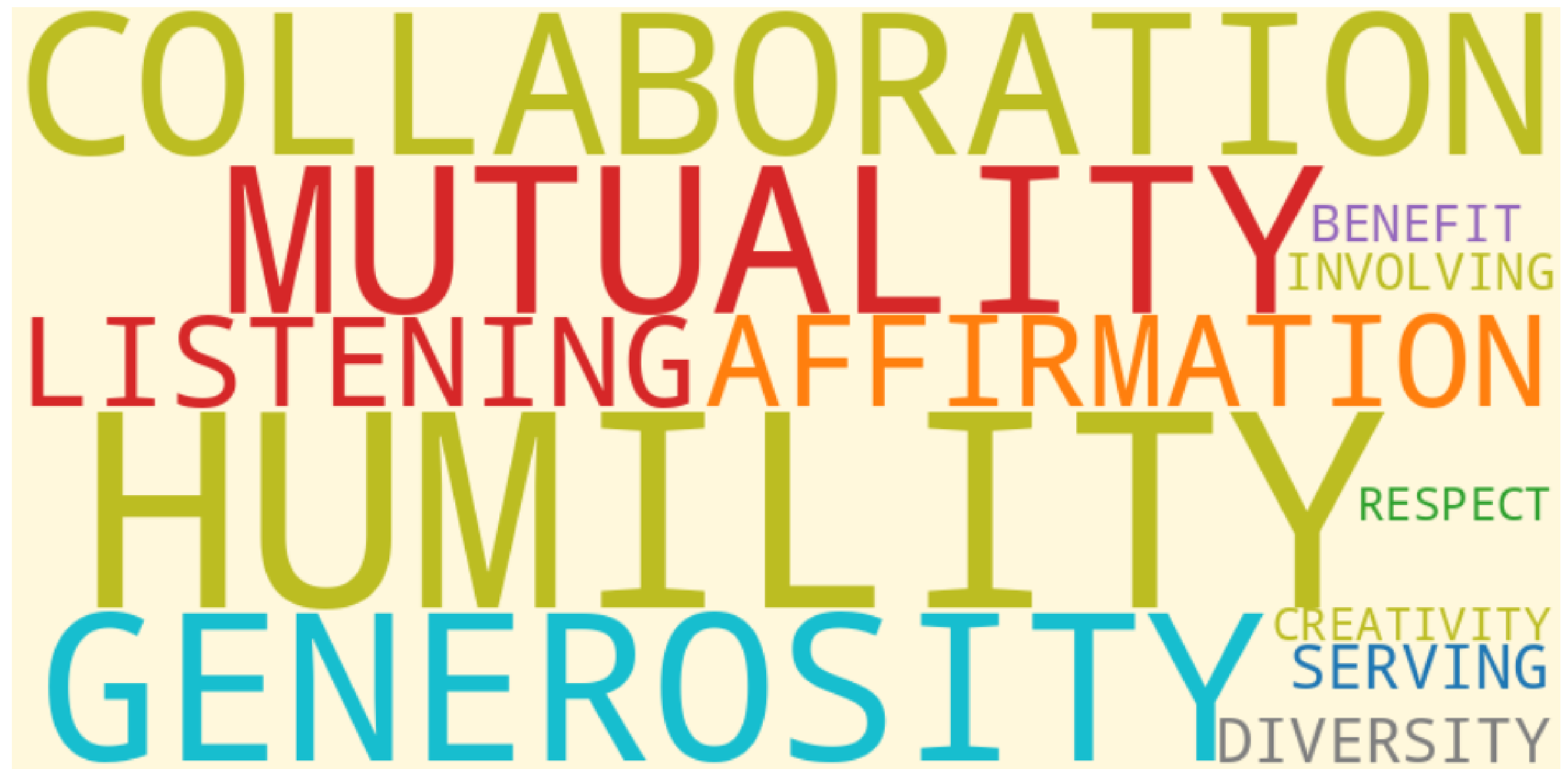
Espoused vs Operative Values



“Do our actions align with our words?”

VALUES

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COLLABORATION
MUTUALITY BENEFIT INVOLVING
LISTENING AFFIRMATION
HUMILITY RESPECT
GENEROSITY CREATIVITY SERVING DIVERSITY



GREENHOUSE

Designing, growing and cultivating
fresh expressions



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living the story. Telling the story.



