Refreshing our diocesan vision together

For the past seven or so years we have been living and telling the story of Jesus across Bath and Wells. With a new bishop in place, now seems like a good time to ask ourselves how we are doing that, and how we want to do that in the next season of our diocesan life together.

As he has travelled around our diocese in his first months, Bishop Michael has identified four areas that might help us focus our activity in the future:

* Valuing what we already have
* Sharing our faith and worshipping in new and different ways
* Growing in faith
* Sharing in ministry and leadership

We’d like to hear, between now and the end of April, what you think about these four areas, whether they are good areas to focus on and what they look like in your context at the moment.

So, how can you share ideas from your context without this turning into a huge piece of work?

There is an [online form](https://forms.office.com/e/nbVk9npbBU) for feedback, with a couple of questions on each of the areas above. To make it easier, we’ve put the contents of the form at the end of this document as a point of reference. It would be great to hear from people from different contexts across our diocese: from parishes, schools and chaplaincies; from groups and individuals; from people of all ages.

Some ideas to get you started:

* Perhaps pick a couple of the questions and give people time to discuss them during the sermon slot or after the service and feed back their thoughts using the [online form](https://forms.office.com/e/nbVk9npbBU)
* If you have home groups, discuss this in a session and send in your thoughts on the [online form](https://forms.office.com/e/nbVk9npbBU)
* If you have contact with schools then perhaps see if they’d like to respond to the questions – or [get in touch with one of the Go Team advisers](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/contact-us/diocesan-contacts-list/growing-faith-everyday-faith/) for help.
* In a chaplaincy context? [Mike Haslam](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/contact-us/diocesan-contacts-list/mission-development-team/mike-haslam.php) could offer some ideas
* We’ll be offering some other online opportunities to hear from people so look out for invitations in Connect and on the website and our social media channels
* You might hold an informal gathering to discuss one or all of the areas – food always helps fuel discussion and then you can use the [online form](https://forms.office.com/e/nbVk9npbBU) to feed back (pun intended!)

Below is the content of the Refreshing our diocesan vision together online form, for reference.

## Online questionnaire text

As we enter a new stage in our diocesan life, with Bishop Michael as our relatively new diocesan bishop, we want to think afresh about our common directions of travel. We want to hear from people across Somerset about how we can live and tell the story of Jesus in churches, schools, chaplaincies and communities. This will help us all to better plan and do things together.

Since joining our diocese, Bishop Michael has noticed a number of areas that could form the basis of some positive ways forward.  
  
The questions in the sections below relate to the four areas about which we want to hear your comments, stories and ideas.  
  
Thank you! We look forward to hearing your responses. If you have questions about this work, please contact us on [livingandtelling@bathwells.anglican.org](mailto:livingandtelling@bathwells.anglican.org)

Valuing what we already have

Valuing and cherishing the people who are already part of the church family in our context; celebrating and using the assets we have available to us.

Sharing our faith and worshipping in new and different ways

When we share our faith and worship together in new and different ways, this often connects with people who wouldn't engage with our traditional offering.  Putting in place something different offers us the scope to grow and become younger and more diverse.

Growing in faith

Developing our own faith and the faith of others.

Sharing in ministry and leadership

Sharing in ministry and models of leadership together – lay and ordained, across all ages, using the gifts, skills and passions of all so that no one person is overburdened or left out.

Under each area, the follow questions are asked:

* What does this look like in your context at the moment?  Do you have stories of encouragement or challenge to tell?
* What might good, success or impact look like or feel like in relation to this area in the next 2-4 years?

The end of the form asks what your key priorities are in any or all of the four areas over the next few years, so that support can be better planned.

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