

MAP Facilitators recently requested that one of the six strands be described anew for the sake of clarity. This seemed like a good opportunity to offer a slimmed-down version of the original 'Strands on the Vine' document. It is important to refer to that earlier document, however, as it emerged directly out of the seven consultations that were made at the outset of thinking about growth, and used only the words which members of each Region chose to describe their hopes for the strategy.

At the core of the diocesan strategic intention for growth is the belief that as Christians we have a message of good news which we can do none other than share generously, for we are caught up in a cycle of graced growth. We need to reconnect with that truth, reminding ourselves about what lies at the heart of our faith: God's steadfast love for us and desire that we 'love one another'; to know ourselves as blessed and from this confidence to be 'a people of promise' and blessing, expressing the fullness of this graced relationship in, to and for the world.

The diocesan intention aims to help congregations become more world-facing and Kingdom-focussed; to become aware of the needs and gifts of those around them in such a way that they make loving connections, share the message, and in time draw others into fellowship - so that together all may experience *the fullness of life* that comes through knowing God and being grafted onto the Vine. In what follows, we offer a description of the six strands that make up this intention. These are the fruits of a holistic picture of growth, intertwining organically with each other as they would on a vine.

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| Worship, prayer and spirituality | developing the personal and corporate life of prayer and spirituality of the church community, and its liturgical life: study groups; alternative worship and reordering of space; growth in liturgical prayer and music; growth in contemplation and meditation; opportunities for Quiet Days and Retreats; labyrinths; pilgrimage. |
| Learning and discipleship | deepening everyone's discipleship: seeing congregations as 'learning communities, places in which all grow in wisdom, understanding, and discernment of their particular gifts and are equipped to use them; extending the idea of 'vocation' to daily life and work; helping people feel a valued part of the whole. |
| Missional leadership | developing everyone's sense of being not simply members but disciples, called to share the good news of Christ with others in daily life: becoming congregations in which all members see themselves as co-responsible with Rector and vestry for the missional life of the charge; working on the skill of sharing one's faith; thinking about how to build spiritual resilience into personal and congregational life; thinking about the grace of generosity in the use of plant and money, both shared and individual; learning about 'new ways of being Church'. |
| Welcome, integration and numerical growth | deepening our sense of being part of something bigger with eternal values: knowing that God is with us so that we feel confident in offering this gift to others - by developing skills in evangelism invitation, welcome, inclusion and integration: growing welcoming teams; improving gifts' discernment techniques and ensuring that both newcomers' and old-timers' talents are used, supported, evaluated and appreciated; growing and incorporating the next generations. |
| Imaginative outreach into communities | developing our engagement with those around us: listening to the heartbeat of our local community and connecting appropriately with it; carrying out a community audit; getting to know our neighbours; using all the creativity and art forms at our - and the local community's - disposal; getting involved in service in, to and with our communities; thinking about pilgrimage and sacred buildings. |
| Children and young people | developing our involvement in taking care of the saplings, sowing seeds, growing younger: exploring new ways of doing children's and youth work; Godly Play; Messy Church events; thinking 'events' not just weekly Sunday School; offering resources even when numbers are few; joining forces with others for big events. |