

"Here for Christ, here for you"

Our Vision: We are committed to growth in discipleship, service, invitation, and welcome. We believe that growing a church is not a matter of running temporary programmes, but of fostering a healthy, Christ-centred congregational culture where service, invitation and welcome are the natural fruit of deep discipleship. We have noted CofE and Diocesan plans and are not out of alignment with them.

1. Foundational Discipleship: The Root of Growth

We recognise that deep Christian discipleship—rooted in prayer, grounded in union with Christ, and nourished through Scripture and the sacramental life—is the foundation from which all church life grows.

- Formation: We will promote prayer and discipleship using recognised resources, e.g. The Chosen, the Prayer Course, as well as in our services
- Faith Sharing: We will introduce conversation-starter resources to help members share their personal faith stories naturally during daily life, while encouraging informal lay testimonies within our standard worship services.
- The 2026 Away Day: The parish Away Day on Saturday, 31 October 2026, led by Madeleine Light, will serve as our primary catalyst for anchoring this culture, focusing on how discipleship naturally bears fruit in service, invitation and welcome even beyond the building.

2. Reaching Younger Generations and Working-Age People

Recognizing a long-term decline in working-age members, we are prioritising evening and weekend initiatives to offer flexible pathways into community life.

- Midweek Evening Fellowship: We will support and seeking to expand the new home group meeting at Julie and Alistair Bolt's home for younger members, using it as a sustainable template for future evening Bible studies and groups.
- Low-Barrier Seeker Courses: Future introductory faith courses (such as 3-2-1) will move out of the vicarage study into household settings, incorporating a shared meal and a social element.
- Schools and Seasonal Pacing: We will build on the attendance at our all-age and school services to create intentional connection points for young families, while reviewing the pacing of the Crib Service to ensure it remains highly engaging for children and adults alike.

3. Fostering a Culture of Personal Invitation and Welcome

Our attendance data suggests a highly committed core but highlights an excess of leavers over joiners. We must transition the congregation from a passive culture of welcome to an active habit of personal invitation.

- **Equipping the Congregation:** We will provide clear sermon applications and simple relational tools to build congregational confidence in inviting friends and neighbours.
- **Navigation for Life Events:** While investigating permanent physical signage on Christ Church Road, we will maintain clear parking, navigation, and welcome guides on our website specifically tailored for wedding, funeral, and baptism guests.
- **Parish Invitation Cards:** We retain our high-quality, substantial A5 parish invitation cards to ensure a tangible Christian presence in every home in the parish, utilizing an easily foldable format suitable for narrow letterboxes.
- We will review, improve and seek feedback on our publicity, website and Facebook presence.

4. Developing Sustainable Pastoral Care and Leadership Formation

To ensure our community care remains resilient, we are shifting our volunteer model from simply filling rota tasks to offering intentional leadership formation, e.g. the Authorised Pastoral Assistants course.

- **Hospitality Support Teams:** We will seek dedicated volunteer support teams for major social initiatives—such as the Fish and Chip Fridays and talks@2—in advance, to prevent fatigue.
- **Safe Communal Eating:** having formal PCC approval, we will utilize a practical food safety and allergen framework for all bring-and-share meals to facilitate safe meals.
- **Ministry Renewal and Training:** We celebrate Jane Colman taking leadership of the Chat over a Cuppa ministry, providing an occasion for fresh ideas. We will continue regular reviews of our Worshipping Community and pastoral lists while offering lay leaders Diocesan training in pastoral care, mental health first aid, and dementia-friendly practices.

5. Generous Stewardship of our Buildings and Environment

We view our 150-year-old church building as a vital resource for discipleship and mission, rather than an end in itself.

- **Planned and Sacrificial Giving:** We will continue to promote the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) and take-up and issue annual congregational thank-you letters to secure our regular baseline ministry.
- **The Nave Roof Campaign:** We will launch a major capital campaign to raise approximately £150,000 for essential nave roof repairs. We will frame this campaign theologically as a spiritual opportunity for sacrificial giving, mutual trust, and collective investment in future generations.
- **EcoChurch Upgrades:** In line with our environmental commitments, we will actively investigate the feasibility of installing solar tiles and infra-red heating during the roof restoration to lower our carbon footprint and establish a warm, sustainable community space.