



Faith in
our Future

Diocese of Monmouth
Esgobaeth Mynwy

Culture Guide

Faith in our Future



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Why are we having a culture guide?

“All of us in the church want to do our best to live our lives following the example of Jesus. God calls us to help share his love. But as we know, it isn’t always easy to live as we hope to. The culture guide offers an outline of the qualities we are trying to model both inside and outside of our churches.

The guide is intended to be used to help you consider how your actions impact others, and how this impact can be really positive. The ideals included in the guide can provide valuable measures to help you review how you and your church work together and how we are seen in the wider community. It is for individuals, particular groups or committees and for the whole church.

Examples of use might be:

For individuals – How well do we live out the ideals in the guide? For groups or committees – Can we use the values in the guide to help us make decisions. For example we can test our decisions to see whether they reveal the values we are trying to model.

For whole churches – As well as in our decision making, these values should be displayed in all of our activities: in our worship, in our invitation, welcome and hospitality, in how we share the gospel with others etc.

This isn’t a booklet to be put away on a shelf and left there, but one that can help us to really measure up the culture we are seeking to portray as we build closer relationships with God and with each other. What does our culture look like?”



Why Faith in our Future?

The Diocese of Monmouth has been a family of church communities for over 100 years.

Together, we enjoy a faith that goes back more than 2000 years. A faith that has transformed millions through the centuries and continues to impact people today. As part of the Church in Wales and the worldwide group of Anglican Churches, we follow Jesus who shows us how to live with one another, how we should care for the world and how we are invited to enjoy a relationship with God in our daily lives.

We have Faith in our Future because Jesus' message is positively life-giving and offers hope to all. It calls us to love God and everyone around us. As believers in this message, we are asked to share this confidently with others.

The diocese now has sixteen Ministry Areas which, along with the Cathedral, are committed to working together to share the love of Jesus through our words and actions. Whilst doing this, we also value the unique nature and importance of every church in the diocese.





Our Vision

The five branches of our vision help us to focus our faith, life and work:



Discipleship

Growing more like Jesus



Stewardship

Living as thankful and generous people



Social Justice

Serving together to strengthen our communities



Equality and Diversity

Welcoming all



Environment

Caring for God's creation

The branches challenge us to confidently look outside of our churches and engage more deeply with our communities. The vision calls us to grow closer in our relationship with God through inspiring worship and meaningful prayer. It is a vision to inspire growth in us and in our churches.



The Culture Guide

Discipleship is a branch of our diocesan vision and it is an essential foundation for the life of the church. Our discipleship allows us to journey in faith; exploring, developing and strengthening our beliefs, and encouraging us to live out the gospel in words and actions. There will be lots of characteristics and emotions that will be more freely shared as people see that we are living out these values. The words on the following pages are general ones, but they encompass so much of the gospel to which we are committed. It is a gospel about love and relationships, about grace and forgiveness and about good news, whilst also acknowledging that there are times for reflection and even lament.

The diocesan vision encourages us all to reach out into our communities through the five branches. This culture guide challenges us to consider how we do that and how we are perceived by those within our communities.

Put simply, the vision is about doing and the culture guide is about being.





We will live out our faith with....

Love

An intense feeling of deep affection. It is unconditional. It is kind, compassionate, generous, and nurturing, even to those we find difficult. It is warm and forgiving. It is given without expectations of reciprocation.

Let all that you do be done in love.
1 Cor. 16:14

Generosity

God sets the standard for our generosity with our time, talents and money. By his nature, God gives. Not just enough, he gives abundantly, lavishly and extravagantly!

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.
Ephesians 3:20,21



Joy

Joy is more than a happy feeling. It is a lasting emotion that comes from the choice to trust that God will fulfil his promises.

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. **Philippians 4:4***

Humility

Humility is to disregard all concern for rank and privilege and to live our lives in service to the least of Christ's disciples. It is to accept all and serve all – in Jesus' name.

*Follow the example of Jesus, "who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited." **Philippians 2:6***





Courage

To express boldness and the confidence to take risks fuelled by faith in God's presence and promises.

*The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? **Psalm 27:1***

Integrity

Integrity is the encapsulation of having an honest, sincere and genuine character that is unwavering and consistent.

*But you have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in your presence forever. **Psalm 41:12***



The Christian faith is an attractive and transformative message and our values, behaviours and attitudes help us to enjoy and demonstrate that faith.

As we grow as disciples and continue on our journey of faith we can use these values to confidently, effectively and authentically share our faith with others.

We want our churches to grow in order to respond to God's love for us and all people. This is part of developing our ongoing relationship with God.

Jesus said, 'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.' **John 13:34,35**





How does this look?

In our churches and in us

Through our calling as disciples we are called to experience, follow and reflect Jesus and we are called to invite others to share this with us.

As people encounter us and our churches we hope that:

Everyone who comes to church will experience **worship** that is joyful, generous and loving.

We have a culture of **prayer**, and times of **fellowship** outside of worship, to intentionally support and encourage everyone to move forward in their journey of faith.

All our communities can share in God's love through the joyful celebration of **life events and festival services**, experiencing the generous welcome of church.



We have the courage and humility to look outside of ourselves towards the needs of others, so that our communities can see that we stand with Christ through **social action and loving service.**

Our **care for the environment** embodies God's love for creation which gives us courage to stand against the misuse of the world's resources. This challenges us with integrity and humility to be conscious of our actions.

We express a courageous invitation for new people to join our church communities, showing a **loving welcome and generous hospitality.**

We celebrate our **differences** with humility and we have the integrity to **address barriers to belonging.**

We appreciate that all we have is a gift of God and so we give our **time, talents and money** generously in service of God's Kingdom.



Some Important Resources

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is part of our core faith and an integral feature of Christian life in our churches. The Church in Wales sets a clear expectation that all clergy, staff and volunteers are familiar with and understand the Safeguarding Policy and related guidance. Further, it is expected that they follow the professional advice of the Provincial Safeguarding Officers.



The full Safeguarding policy can be accessed here.

Dignity Charter

“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

Ephesians 4.32

The right to be treated with dignity and respect extends to all aspects of our church life including those which are outside of the typical workplace, for example, working with the community, church services, business meetings and work-related social events or through the use of social media.

This Dignity Charter applies to both groups and individuals by providing a framework of expectation for managing how we behave towards one another. It sets out standards which everyone should meet. It is intended to create a supportive environment where mistakes are recognised, acknowledged and which can result in positive learning and progressive change in behaviour. The Charter sets out how respect and the valuing of individuals are core principles which positively increase diversity and the subsequent flourishing of our common life.



The full Dignity Charter can be accessed here.



The Diocesan Vision

The 'Faith in our Future' vision was launched in October 2022. It encourages us to look at how we engage with our communities to carry out God's mission. It also invites us to look at our own relationship with God and how we grow as disciples.



The full Diocesan Vision can be accessed here.



Resources are also included (and regularly updated) on the Diocesan Website:



