

The Rt. Revd. Dr. Andrew Emerton
The Bishop of Sherwood
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4th November 2021

Dear All,

We are pleased to announce that the Diocese has been successful in securing national Church of England funding to support our vision of Growing Disciples, reaching wider, connecting younger and nurturing deeper roots of faith. This Strategic Development Funding (SDF), amounting to £3.5m given over 5 years, will support our project, "Growing Younger and More Diverse".

This is a vitally important endeavour for us which aligns well with the national Church of England vision and seeks to transform children & families and youth ministry in churches across Southwell and Nottingham. Investment will be focused on 40 churches but we hope and pray that we'll see development across the whole diocese as learning and expertise is shared more widely.

We are planning two aspects for the project: one focusing on children and families (3 to 11 years) and another on youth (12 to 18 years).

The project will see the establishment of 10 flagship churches for children and families' ministries and 5 youth hubs. There will also be investment available for a further 25 churches where signs of significant potential for growth in youth and children and families' ministries have been identified, which means that we will be working directly with 40 churches across the diocese. The aim is to see many more children and young people come to know Jesus and grow as disciples of Christ.

Following a period of consultation with relevant stakeholders, churches were selected based on a broad range of criteria such as population, deprivation, age breakdown, church schools and local leadership. A significant element of the implementation envisages developing more intentional links between our churches and schools.

Although the funding for this project is available over 5 years, it is anticipated that this is just one strand of a longer-term investment that will seek to build upon the excellent work already underway in many of our churches and parishes. The aim is to support ministry development in



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children and families and young people that results in the raising up of a new generation of future leaders for the church. Beyond this project, we continue to offer assistance to all our churches through the [Growing Disciples Fund](#) and we remain committed to supporting and enabling the life and mission of the church in every community across the diocese.

We all have a part to play as we seek to pass on our faith to the next generation and give everyone an opportunity to respond to the good news of Jesus.

For further details, [click here](#)

With every blessing,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long tail on the final 'y'.

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