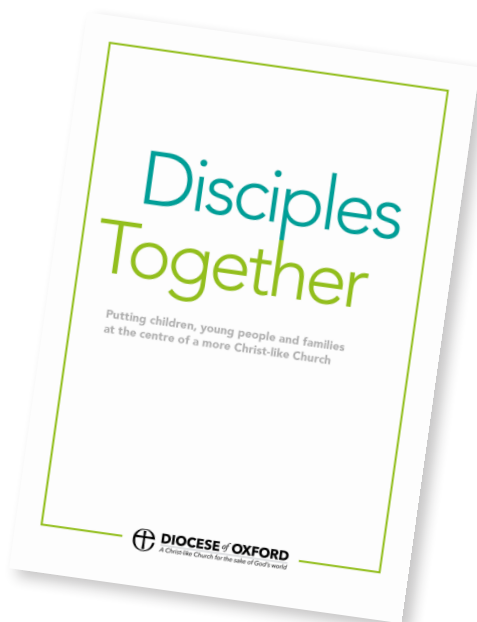


# Disciples Together



A discussion guide for small groups, PCCs  
and Deanery Synods



**DIOCESE of OXFORD**

A Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world

**As we seek to become a more Christ-like Church that is more contemplative, compassionate and courageous, we are invited to consider what this means for children, young people and families inside and outside our churches.**

*Disciples Together* sets out five cultural shifts we can take and invites us to consider how God is calling us to respond in our local area. There is no one size fits all answer! This discussion guide offers some questions to help you reflect on how your church is already being Good News for children, young people and families. It also helps you to discern where God is asking you to sow seeds and nurture new growth.

## **Before you start.**

You are strongly encouraged to involve children, young people and families, and those who Minister with them in church, the community and schools in these discussions.

Distribute and read *Disciples Together* and watch the short introductory film by Bishop Steven. All of the resources you need can be found at [oxford.anglican.org/disciples-together](https://oxford.anglican.org/disciples-together)

Have a conversation with a child, young person or parent you know. You could ask; 'how do you feel welcomed and valued in the church?', 'when and where do you feel closest to God?' or 'what would you like to see the church doing to make the world a better place?'

All the information you need for your time together is included in this discussion guide and *Disciples Together*. Try to allow at least 50 minutes for reflection and discussion, longer if you can. We'd love to know how you get on, email [commonvision@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:commonvision@oxford.anglican.org) with your feedback.

## **Other resources you can draw on**

You might also like to draw on the approach used in *Emerging from coronavirus*, a new tool from the Diocese based on the Anglican Five Marks of Mission:

[oxford.anglican.org/emerging-from-coronavirus](https://oxford.anglican.org/emerging-from-coronavirus)

The themes and questions set out in the following pages are modelled on an approach known as appreciative inquiry. It's an approach that's at the heart of the *Parish Planning Tool*:

[oxford.anglican.org/parish-planning-tool](https://oxford.anglican.org/parish-planning-tool)

# Some questions to think about

## Discover

What do you enjoy most/celebrate about children, young people and families in your church, community, school, or family?

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If you had a chance to talk to children, young people or families before this meeting, share what you heard from them. How do children, young people and families know they are welcome and valued in our church?

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## Dream

Thinking about our church community... How are we playfully and creatively blurring age group (and other) silo's so that we promote inclusion, mutuality, relationship and listening with all?

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Thinking about forming and growing faith... What are the opportunities for children, young people and families to encounter God and grow spiritually?

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Thinking about how we are a church growing as disciples of Jesus, nurturing all as we journey together... How are children and young people present and participating in the life, mission and ministry of our church?

Thinking about those who minister among children, young people and families (within the life of the church, or in wider ministry, community and employment)... How do we value, equip and support them?

Thinking about how children and young people have a voice in the life and decisions of our church... In what ways will we amend our practices to enable us to hear from them to inform and influence our thinking more regularly?

Noticing our responses to the questions above, if we begin to experiment and play, in three years:

- What might be better?
- What might have been left behind?
- What might have surprised us most?

## Design

What do the next steps look like? Do you need to appoint a small task group to do some further thinking and report back with a plan? Are there any first steps that you can take straight away?

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## Further support

**Yvonne Morris** [yvonne.morris@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:yvonne.morris@oxford.anglican.org)

Discipleship Enabler (Dorchester & Oxford) and Children's and Family Ministry specialist

**Ian Macdonald** [ian.macdonald@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:ian.macdonald@oxford.anglican.org)

Discipleship Enabler (Berkshire) and Youth Ministry specialist

**Bev Higgs** [bev.higgs@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:bev.higgs@oxford.anglican.org)

Administrator for the Children, Young People and Families Team

## Tell a story

Tell a story of your most recent spiritual encounter with a child or young person (notice if you start the story 'it's not 'spiritual' but...').

Tell a story of when you've noticed a child or young person being contemplative, compassionate and/or courageous.

What do you notice about the stories that have been shared?

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**[oxford.anglican.org/disciples-together](https://oxford.anglican.org/disciples-together)**

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