

A God who Transforms

Too often in church life ideas flourish for a short while and are then set aside. **Investing in our Faith 2008-2013** is an ongoing commitment to a process of change and transformation. Through **Investing in our Faith** it is hoped that the Christians, churches and deaneries of Wakefield Diocese will be shaped and strengthened for the present and the future.

The main call in **Investing in our Faith** is to focus on God, and to look to God for wisdom, courage and joy as we seek to know and serve him.

The second call in **Investing in our Faith** is to do this well – for churches, deaneries and the diocese to think, pray, plan and review what is being done so that we give glory to God and can together help transform God's world.

PROGRAMME AND TIMETABLE

Bishop's Council	29 May 2008
Pastoral Committee	5 June 2008
Rural Deans Meeting	10 June 2008
Diocesan Synod	18 June 2008
Clergy information lunches	September/October
Launch of 'Investing in our Faith'	October 2008
Diocesan Day of Prayer	2 November 2008
Open meetings with the Bishop	4 and 6 November 2008
Deanery Transformational Planning	October 2008 to February 2009
Bishop's Council	March/April 2009
Start of Parish Transformation Planning	March 2009
Transforming Lives Celebration	14 June 2009
Transformation Plans Event	Autumn 2009

The Diocese of Wakefield

Working together throughout God's world

- Transforming lives
- Transforming congregations
- Transforming communities



THANKFULNESS

We have so much to be thankful for in the Diocese of Wakefield. Over 14,500 people worship in our churches each week; 24,000 children attend our church schools. 3300 baptisms, 1100 weddings and 5000 funerals each year put us in contact with well over 100,000 people. We have more clergy, Readers and Lay Pastoral Ministers than ever before, and more in training. There are many outstanding community projects and examples of effective, caring and challenging mission and evangelism through which people's lives are changed and transformed. We are blessed by God, and all this comes from the on-going and faithful work and witness of lay people, clergy and bishops across the diocese over the past 120 years.

THE FUTURE

I am now asking the diocese to prepare for our 125th Anniversary in 2013. My challenge and encouragement is for us to be a people who are being transformed by God.

My vision is for a world that is being shaped by God as we know him in Jesus Christ. Because of our encounter with God our lives are transformed. God's generosity and grace causes us to respond by giving ourselves wholeheartedly to Him, to prayer and to others as disciples of Jesus.

The *Arise* Pilgrimage to York Minster in 2005, *Back to Church Sunday*, *Everyday God* and *All the Saints* in 2007, and *Transforming Lives* in 2008 and 2009 are initiatives that have helped us respond to the call to be changed and transformed by God so that we may help change and transform our communities and the world.

During the next year, and in consultation across the diocese, I intend to launch a programme to help prepare us for our 125th Anniversary. That programme will be called **Investing in our Faith 2008-2013**. It is an invitation to expand our vision of what God can do in our congregations and communities as we work together for his Kingdom and seek to make Jesus known *in* and *through* our churches and our lives. Transforming lives, congregations and communities.

I invite all churches and church members to give their active and prayerful support.

+ *Sefton Wakefield*



This Synod believes that the transformation of *individual lives, congregations and communities* is central to the Gospel message.

We therefore call on the whole diocese to engage prayerfully in the next stage of our life together:

Investing in our Faith 2008-2013

Leading the Diocese to our 125th Anniversary and beyond

Investing in our Faith 2008-2013 : Leading the Diocese to our 125th Anniversary

– a diocesan initiative to renew and transform our lives and our churches –

Transformed Churches

Churches will be invited to develop a Transformation Plan. Plans will result from prayer and reflection together on ways to strengthen and develop the life and mission of each church.

Churches will be encouraged to look at different aspects of church life, including worship, pastoral care, spirituality, evangelism and community involvement.

These areas will be looked at in the Lent 2009 Transforming Lives materials, and PCCs will be supported by a mixture of resources.

Churches will be invited to bring their Plans and ideas to a Diocesan Event in autumn 2009 (although there is no deadline or cut-off, and churches can take longer to develop their thinking if needed).

Transformed Deaneries

Deaneries will be invited to develop a Transformation Plan. Plans will result from prayer and reflection together on ways to maximise mission potential across the Deanery, given the resources of people, clergy and buildings that are available. Part of the context for Deanery discussions will be opportunities for mission and evangelism. And part of the context will be the falling number of stipendary clergy.

Deaneries will be asked to identify better ways of allocating Parish Share across their Deanery.

Each Deanery Transformation Plan will be discussed and reviewed with Archdeacons and Bishops, the new Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee and the Bishop's Council. This will mean that the Deanery plans proposed locally will eventually be supported by the Diocese.

Transformed Diocese

The **Diocese** will develop and promote:

Resources and ideas to strengthen the success of 'Transforming Lives' into 2009.

Resources and ideas for an effective Diocesan Stewardship programme, to help Christians respond to God's generosity through the giving of their time, talents and money.

Information and resources to help deaneries with their Transformation Plans.

A review of diocesan structures, committees and policies to ensure they are effective and efficient, and best-support ministry and mission.

The Diocese will continue to encourage mutual support and commitment across our Diocese, so that we work together to make Christ known in our lives, our churches and the world.

Pray

We depend on God for our life and faith. So prayer will be at the heart of **Investing in our Faith**. A diocesan Day of Prayer will be called for Sunday 2 November, along with a call to renewed prayer for what God is doing throughout the diocese.

Think

By seeking God's guidance we will explore together options and plans for the future, so that our churches, deaneries and the diocese are organised and resourced to build our common life and move us on in mission.

Do

Investing in our Faith is not a talking-shop. It is about practically equipping ourselves and our churches to make Christ known by word and deed, and through prayerful reflection and action making a difference in our communities.

Transforming Lives : Transforming Congregations : Transforming Communities