



As a Diocese we are facing both a short-term and a medium-long term challenge as we live through a time of shrinking resources, institutional decline for our Church, but also a pandemic and economic crisis for our nation.

For our Diocese, the short-term challenge relates to the 2021 Diocesan Budget and its implications for deployment. While the medium to long term challenge can be best described as: ***how to renew the local church in a time of crisis?***

In facing these challenges we need firstly to turn again to Christ, in penitence and faith, renewing our hope and confidence in him and the place he has prepared. But we also need to keep resources and vision together in our planning.

So our 5-year financial plan will sit alongside a simple, attractive and aspirational pastoral plan for the growth of mission and ministry in the same period.

Our pastoral plan (or ministry strategy) should also address new forms of mission and emerging church, improved provision for clergy wellbeing, support and training, and a policy for the future of our historic church buildings, including alternative models for their funding. It might involve proposals for new 2-year schemes for local lay and ordained ministry that would grow a new cohort of associate priests, deacons and lay ministers by 2025.

The main themes in this planning will need to happen at Diocesan level and their local application shaped by the Ramsbury and Sherborne teams, in partnership with you.

Underpinning this and our budget planning for 2021 onwards are some givens:

- Ministry and mission have financial implications, and without addressing total stipendiary clergy numbers and housing costs, we are unlikely to balance the budget within 5 years
- Parish Share is fundamental to our Diocesan budget and needs to cover the costs of our parish ministry
- Whilst the financial challenge is not immediately critical due to measures taken in 2020 to ensure stability, it is urgent and requires radical and imaginative action, trusting in God's provision

So as a Diocese we want to make sure we are committed to:

- Maintaining Christian ministry in every parish in the Diocese
- Eliminating our operational deficit and achieving sustainable finances by 2025
- Encouraging Diocesan-wide generous giving, that builds on our culture of Christian generosity
- Pressing ahead with other additional forms of income generation

By exploring new ways of working together in these unprecedented times, we can move Beyond the Present and together continue to Renew Hope – Pray Serve Grow in the Diocese of Salisbury.