



# STRATEGIC PLAN

2019 ~ 2024





## A Bold Vision



Our Cathedral story brings together almost 1500 years of Christian worship on this site. It's a story of faith lived out in the lives of Lancashire people who have chosen to put Jesus at the heart of their community.

It's a story of welcome and hospitality to many who have travelled from across the world to settle in the Cotton Town of Blackburn.

It's a story of change and ambition, of hard work and dedication, of trust and hope. It's a story still evolving and transforming our community and the lives of the people we encounter.



During the last five years there has been significant development and change within our community life. Cathedral Court has been a remarkable achievement, opening up new and varied opportunities for mission and ministry. We have seen the coming and going of staff and clergy colleagues and change within our governance structure. We have welcomed many new faces to our Sunday and mid-week worship and have worked in partnership with organisations across the borough and county. We have much to be thankful for, but much still to do.

The launch of our Strategic Plan is another significant moment in the life of our community. We seek to build on our history as we keep on telling the story of Jesus and helping people to encounter God afresh through worship and service to the wider community in ways that are meaningful and have relevance in our world today.

As the Cathedral and the Diocese of Blackburn approach 100 years of faithful witness across Lancashire, the story continues. In the pages that follow you can discover more about how we intend to realise our vision today and how you can play your part in the ongoing story of the Cotton Town Cathedral.

Through confident proclamation, abundant joy, costly love and self-giving service, we are committed to building the Christian community at Blackburn Cathedral and engaging more effectively across our town and county. It's an exciting moment: I look forward to what the future holds and the next phase of our story.

Peter Howell-Jones  
**Dean of Blackburn**



# The Diocese of Blackburn - Vision 2026

**Blackburn Cathedral's 'Strategic Plan' is a response to the Diocese of Blackburn's 'Vision 2026' which was agreed by Diocesan Synod in 2015.**

The strapline of the Vision is to be 'Healthy Churches Transforming Communities' and this document is an outworking of that broad aim as it applies to the life of Blackburn Cathedral. As the seat of the Bishop, we see our role at the Cathedral as working in partnership with the Bishop and Diocese.

As a healthy church, we want to put worship first, to equip our people as disciples of Jesus Christ, to be generous with our time, talents and money and to foster leadership amongst others. In transforming our community, we want to make our facilities available to all, to share the good news of Jesus Christ with confidence, to engage with a broad section of people across Lancashire and to play our part in the regeneration of our town.

**The Vision has three sub-headings by which this broad aim is to be delivered. These are:**

**Making Disciples of Jesus Christ  
Being Witnesses of Jesus Christ  
Growing Leaders for Jesus Christ**

**The priorities that we identify in this strategic plan are intended as ways for Blackburn Cathedral to live out these three objectives:**



# Our strategic framework

## Purpose

**Blackburn Cathedral is open to all.**

In telling the story of Jesus Christ, we seek to help people encounter God through worship and service to the community.

## We will focus on:

Being Witnesses of Jesus Christ

- **Mission and Engagement**
- **Welcome and Hospitality**
- **Buildings and Heritage**

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ

- **Worship and Prayer**
- **Finance and Stewardship**

Growing Leaders for Jesus Christ

- **Our Bishop and Diocese**
- **Growth in Faith**



# Our values

**It has sometimes been said that, 'Christians don't have values. We have a person, Jesus Christ, and relationship with him.'**

The values we seek to live out at Blackburn Cathedral are therefore rooted in the person and life of Jesus Christ and in the community that he builds. In particular we draw inspiration from John 13 where, at the table of the Last Supper, Jesus takes the towel to wash the feet of his disciples.

We would therefore summarise our values as:

Confident **proclamation**. The Cathedral wants to be a place which makes new disciples of Jesus Christ. We will live out the Gospel in every aspect of our common life and take steps that will enable people to come to faith in him.

Abundant **joy**. The Cathedral will celebrate to the full the joy that flows from the saving work of the Cross. That is why excellence in worship, prayer and preaching will lie at the heart of our common life.

Costly **love**. The Cathedral knows that love does not come without sacrifice. We will make tough decisions where necessary to ensure that we can continue to be a place where Christ's love is made known.

Self-giving **service**. The Cathedral seeks to be a place where all are served in the name of Jesus Christ, especially the young, the elderly and those who are seeking, broken or lost. We will be a safe place for all and put first those whom society often disregards.



# Delivering the Cathedral's Strategy

**Along with the Dean, it is the Chapter, who will drive the delivery of our vision. This will be achieved through the seven focus areas and the critical projects outlined in the following pages.**

Over the five years that the Strategic Plan covers, our aspiration is to complete as many of the critical projects as possible. The timing of the projects has been carefully thought through and determined, partly on the basis of priority, but also with regard to available funds. We accept that some of the critical projects will not be carried forward during the current life of the Strategic Plan, but they will remain as tasks for the future. The Plan is about aspiration as well as execution.

A number of our critical projects overlap the focus areas, however to simplify the Strategic Plan, these projects will be aligned to the focus area of best fit. Understandably, the critical projects will evolve and change over the five years of the Strategic Plan as new priorities and opportunities emerge.

Like many other cathedrals, Blackburn Cathedral is under constant financial pressure and to achieve all that we have outlined in this document, additional funds must be raised and new sources of income found. We hope and pray for your continued commitment in taking this Strategic Plan forward.





# Our focus areas and critical projects

## Mission and Engagement

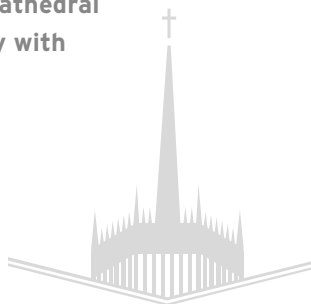


### **What we want to do:**

We will live out and proclaim our Christian faith in the local, national and international communities to which we belong.

### **Our critical projects are:**

- To develop meaningful partnerships in the town, county, Church and the world
- To implement a mobile 'Cathedral on Tour' to strengthen relationships across the Diocese / County and to promote the Cathedral's mission
- To explore the development of a 'Mission School' to resource the wider Church
- To set up a Community Forum to equip the Cathedral worshipping community to engage more fully with issues of social justice, world mission and Christian discipleship





# Welcome and Hospitality

## **What we want to do:**

In seeking to reflect the generous hospitality of God, we will welcome and engage with people of all ages and backgrounds, of all faiths and none. We will improve and enhance the experience for tourists, visitors and pilgrims.

- To redevelop the Crypt to serve more fully the welcome and hospitality of the Cathedral
- To analyse the volunteer resource and then recruit, train and retain the appropriate volunteer teams
- To develop and implement a marketing plan to promote services, events and activities
- To develop a communications strategy including maximizing the use of social media, website and written communication
- To recruit, train and develop a pastoral team
- To ensure that we provide a safe space for all, both through our commitment to safeguard and protect those who are vulnerable, and also in our offering of an open public space / forum



# Buildings and Heritage

## **What we want to do:**

We will continue to celebrate Blackburn Cathedral as a living building with over 1400 years of Christian witness on this site, by ensuring its fabric and interpretation is fit for purpose and supporting our mission.

## **Our critical projects are:**

- To improve and develop our interpretation of faith and heritage
- To ensure the satisfactory completion of outstanding issues with Cathedral Court
- To deliver the recommendations of the 2019 quinquennial report
- To improve the experience for users of our building by updating our sound and AV system
- To undertake a feasibility study of the use of Cathedral space in relationship to both commercial activity and worship
- To celebrate 100 years of service to the Diocese of Blackburn, its Cathedral, and its Bishop's Cathedra, through worship, events and activities

# Worship and Prayer

## **What we want to do:**

We will provide a daily offering of prayer and worship and be a centre of excellence for preaching, liturgy and music.

## **Our critical projects are:**

- To develop and implement a liturgical plan
- To review and refresh our current liturgical practices In order to enable people to encounter God through both traditional and contemporary styles of worship.
- To review the relationship between our musical and liturgical offerings and the wider mission of the Cathedral, to achieve better integration of both
- To develop our prayer and preaching



# Finance and Stewardship

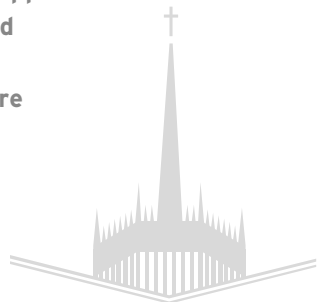
## **What we want to do:**

As part of our understanding of Christian stewardship and responsibility, we will operate a sustainable financial model, rooted in good governance, and we will develop opportunities for focused income generation.



## **Our critical projects are:**

- To develop new income streams and a focused strategy for marketing and sales, using Blackburn Cathedral Enterprises as our vehicle
- To promote stewardship as a Christian imperative including the introduction of a legacy scheme
- To develop our columbarium in partnership with Life Treasury
- To enhance and promote Blackburn Cathedral as a venue for events and exhibitions
- To maximise the potential use and letting of the Cathedral conference facilities and Church House
- To ensure our financial improvement plan is approved and initiatives are launched and implemented
- To develop a fundraising department to secure additional funding so that we can become increasingly self-sustaining



# Our Bishop and Diocese

## **What we want to do:**

We will provide a supportive environment for the Bishop of Blackburn to exercise his ministry of teaching and mission and we will strengthen our partnerships with the wider Diocese.

## **Our critical projects are:**

- To continue our ministry of prayer for the Bishop of Blackburn and the wider Diocese
- To build on our commitment to support parishes in their Christian mission
- To ensure the establishment of a more integrated approach to Diocesan related activities
- To support the 100th anniversary of the Blackburn Diocese in 2026 by ensuring the Cathedral is at the heart of events and activities



# Growth in Faith

## **What we want to do:**

We will support and enable our worshipping community to grow and flourish. In seeking to serve the Diocese, we will endeavour to provide opportunities for discovery, learning and education.



## **Our critical projects are:**

- To develop our network of home groups
- To establish a programme of events and courses for those who wish to explore or develop their Christian faith
- To develop and implement a cohesive programme for engaging young people with the Christian faith and the life of the Cathedral community
- To embrace a model of community, including a Rule of Life which would be part of our mission to the wider church
- To make the most of the Cathedral as a place of pilgrimage in order to encourage and support people on their journey of faith







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