

Youth Strategy for the Diocese of London

The problem

Introduction from the Archdeacon of Middlesex

By some accounts this is a difficult time to be young in London. We are accustomed to media stories of young people as stressed by the expectations of the education system and pressured as customers of the consumer society. We are equally familiar with pictures of young people as a danger to one another and society at large through knife and gun crime, anti-social behaviour and political radicalisation.

The answer

London Challenge 2012 begins with a 'vision statement', that of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21). Our challenge is to present London with a new vision of itself, informed by the Christian Faith. London is "a world city that struggles to comprehend where its own well-being might lie". Part of that struggle is to understand how better to nurture and encourage the young.

Jesus places children at the centre of those who are following him. He declares, without qualification or condition, that the Kingdom of God belongs to "such as these" (Matthew 18:1-5, Luke 18:15-17). What would a church look like that was to take this declaration seriously?

London Challenge 2012 expresses a commitment to a strategy for youth "with a particular concern for the training of young people in Christian leadership". To this end the Diocese of London has enjoyed a fruitful three-year partnership with The Children's Society through the Youth Development Project. This strategy is a direct reflection of the experiences of many of our parish churches through this Project and a distillation of the things the churches of the Diocese have asked for through a series of consultations.

Venerable Stephan Welch

'I saw a new
heaven and
a new earth'

REVELATION 21

How it works

When will it start?

The Strategy will start from November 2008 until October 2011 but we will take a good look at how things are going in 2010 to see what we should do next to keep building on the good work.

Purpose

This strategy is a plan for how youth work and ministry should look in the Diocese and how we can make it happen.

We have decided what our youth ministry should look like based on four things:

- What Jesus tells us about young people and the world we live in
- The London Challenge 2012. This is a plan for the whole London Diocese and explains what we want the Diocese to be like for everyone
- Ideas and suggestions that young people and youth leaders gave us in 2007 through a consultation process co-ordinated by The Children's Society Youth Development Project of the Diocese of London
- What young people have said is important to them through The Good Childhood® Inquiry. This is a national investigation that has involved 1000's of young people.

The purpose of the Strategy is not to tell youth groups what to do but to help churches do great youth work.

Aim

To obey Jesus' teaching to put children and young people at the centre.

- model a society within which Christ's vision of the Kingdom is reflected. Where children and young people are prioritised and have full possession
- model values and relationships of the Kingdom to come. Full membership of which is confirmed by baptism and where children and young people are empowered to express themselves as full members.

This can mean lots of things including young people being asked what they think rather than being told and making church or youth club somewhere young people and their friends want to be.

Targets & Expectations

God's concern for young people means that the interests and safety of the young people we reach out to should come first in all we do.

All parishes engaging in regular contact with young people will ensure that safeguarding procedures are in place and are being followed.

The Strategy will be reviewed regularly by the Steering Group and through feedback from parishes. Young people will have an active voice and an opportunity to make a difference.

'As young people,
we understand
what young
people want'

YOUNG GRANT MAKER, GO FOR GOLD

How we listened

1

Empowerment of young people

- Young people asked for opportunities to be heard
- 58% young people wanted to be asked their views
- London Challenge commitment to train young people for Leadership and 2012 Ambassadors

Empowerment involves:

- listening to someone
- letting them make decisions
- letting them change things

This underpins all of the targets in this Strategy. Young people will be involved in the Steering Group for the Strategy. We will also provide the following:

A Participation Worker – to train youth leaders and help develop ideas that promote the participation of young people.

Go for Gold A youth-led grant making scheme offering small pots of money to youth groups.

Young Leader's Scheme

Training for young people who want to take on more responsibility in their youth club, church or community.

The Year of Young People – The London Challenge

A year dedicated to young people offering events and activities.

'Being asked what we think is a good idea'

YOUNG PERSON

How it will be done

2

Training and accreditation

- 65% youth leaders identified training as a priority need
- London Challenge – training young leaders
- London Challenge – encouragement of vocations

Training for all youth leaders including basic knowledge for those just starting and more in depth training for those who have more responsibility.

Young people can receive training and be involved in training others.

'The best thing about being a grant maker is learning new skills and working with other people'

YOUNG GRANT MAKER, GO FOR GOLD

How we will help

3

Support and guidance

■ 53% youth leaders wanted more guidance

This is for all youth leaders to make sure that they have the information they need to do great youth ministry and develop new ideas.

It will include things like:

Leaps and Bounds Tool Kit

Created by the Youth Development Project for the Diocese it contains guidelines, sample policies and documents that parishes can access electronically and adapt to suit their needs.

Support

Youth leaders can contact staff at The Children's Society Youth Development Project of the Diocese of London for support and guidance on all issues relating to youth work.

Supervision

Support and guidance from the Youth Development Project will be available for parishes needing external supervisors or supervision partners from other parishes.

'We need a written guide - a 'how to' do our youth work'

YOUTH LEADER

How we will share

4

Networking and sharing ideas

- **A regular theme at each consultation event was that you asked for more networking and information sharing opportunities**
- **London Challenge – telling the gospel afresh in our generation**

Youth leaders and young people need to meet up on a regular basis to have fun, socialise, share best practice and inspire more great youth work across the Diocese.

Diocesan Youth Conference

A celebration and exhibition of work going on in parishes. For youth leaders and young people.

Regular events and networking

The Youth Development Project can help put youth groups and youth leaders in touch with one another to share ideas and get to know each other better.

Inspiration Booklet

A booklet that tells the story of a number of parish youth groups across the Diocese. It will give details of how work got started, ideas of resources needed, achievements and challenges and who to contact for further information.

Newsletters

Keeping you updated with our project newsletters Young Times and the Funding bulletin.

Web Site

Electronic access to newsletters and best practice updates.

Youth worker forum

Young people's page

Resource Library

A lending library packed with great ideas, guidance and session plans.

Resources

What we need to make it happen

'(we want)
the opportunity
to speak out
and have
responsibility'

YOUNG PERSON

In order to do all the above we will need money, people's time and all of us to work together prayerfully.

Provided funding is secured delivery will be in partnership with The Children's Society Youth Development Project of the Diocese of London who will provide training, support and guidance to parishes.

For more information please see the full length version of the Youth Strategy at www.childrenssociety.org.uk/YDP or www.london.anglican.org/Regulations/youth-ministry

This strategy has been produced by the Diocese of London in partnership with The Children's Society. The Diocese would like to thank all the young people, youth workers, volunteers and clergy who took part in the consultation events and therefore contributed to this strategy.

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'80% of
revolutions in
history were
started by
young people.
We have a voice
and a desire to
act on it'

YOUNG PERSON

'These children
are the Kingdom's
pride and joy'

LUKE 18:16, THE MESSAGE

www.london.anglican.org



www.childrenssociety.org.uk

