

Living Water: Reflections on our Diocesan vision

Transformed by Christ:
Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic





Contents

Part 1: Transformed by Christ
by the Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd Graham Usher

Part 2: Being Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic
by Revd Richard Lamey, Director of Mission and Ministry

Part 3: Transformed by Christ:
in voices from across the diocese

Part 4: Transformed by Christ:
developing the vision together
by Revd David Lloyd, Mission Development Officer

Dear friends,

This is a slightly unusual book to send out as part of a process to turn an accepted and popular Diocesan vision (Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic) into a strategy which will help to make that hope and prayer real and grounded.

But we are offering it as widely as possible because we believe that there is wisdom, purpose and clarity here, and the invitation to meet with the God who longs to transform both us and our common life more and more into his image - the image of the one who loved us first and loves us always and who proved that love for all time in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and who is at work in us through the gift of the Spirit.

In early 2025 we started to explore the reality of Church life across the Diocese by studying the data and by listening carefully and deeply to the voice of the local church in every context and tradition.

We also wanted to understand more deeply what the vision is and means so we spent time prayerfully and prophetically reflecting on it and on what God is saying to us, as a Diocese, as individual church communities and as individual disciples, through our longing to be transformed at every level more and more fully into the image of Jesus.

What follows is a document gathered from this deep listening in a range of voices from across the Diocese. Our hope is that it will be read widely and that people will be inspired by the process and content and will find in it some ideas and phrases to reflect and build on.

As you read, it might be helpful to think about these questions:

- What ideas and insights stand out to me at the end of each page or section?
- How could I share something which has excited me with my congregation, my home group, my coffee morning, my friends?
- What one idea will I carry with me into my life of prayer and the way I see my work and call as a follower of Jesus?

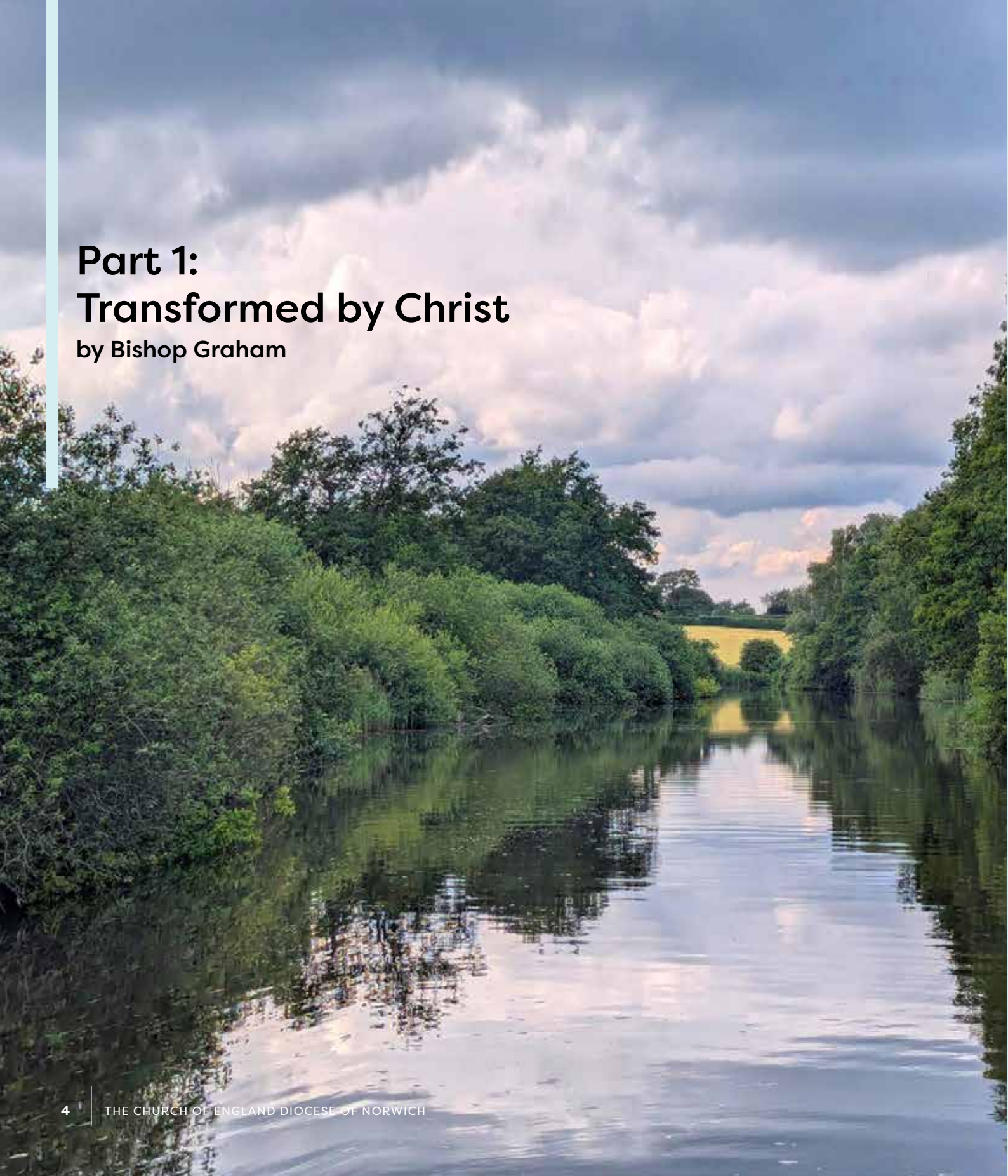
(The line which has always struck with me is “Transformed hearts transform hearts, transformed communities transform communities”- what’s yours?)

Do let me know and it will be fascinating to hear from you and to gather those insights, the things God has put on your heart.

Yours in his service,
Richard Lamey

Director of Mission and Ministry
on behalf of the Diocesan Strategy Group
October 2025

richard.lamey@dioceseofnorwich.org



Part 1: Transformed by Christ

by Bishop Graham

Being transformed by Christ is something both individual and corporate.

St Paul speaks about individuals “seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror” which leads to “being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another” by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 3.18), and that God has “predestined us to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Romans 8.29).

There is movement; a facing towards Christ.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer in *The Cost of Discipleship* suggests that in Romans 8:29 Paul is calling us to become “as Christ”. “That image”, Bonhoeffer explains, “has the power to transform our lives, and if we surrender ourselves utterly to him, we cannot help bearing his image ourselves.” He ends his book saying, “We shall be drawn into his image, and identified with his form, and become a reflection of him” because he goes on living in each of our hearts. For St Paul, having this face of Christ set in our hearts was important: “for it is God who said, ‘Light will shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (2 Corinthians 4.6).

Being transformed so that we will be conformed to Christlikeness is thus the goal for all who turn to Christ and trust in him. Both words share a common root, form; meaning a pattern or a mould. Jesus is our pattern or mould by which we discover holiness and life in all its fulness (John 10.10).

This is a continued process of re-turning, repenting and re-conforming due to the sin that clings so closely to each of us. As an Orthodox monk on Mount Athos, when asked how he spent his days, put it, “I fall down and I get up, I fall down and I get up”.

Transformed by Christ

Transformation is being the clay on the potter's wheel, or the butterfly slowly emerging from metamorphosis. However, these images don't convey the continued renewal needed in our lives. If we think we've arrived in the Kingdom, then we have more work to do!

Alongside this *chronos* (a length of time) transformation, Paul sees something of a *kairos* (a moment in time) change in each conversion; "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being!" (2 Cor 5.17). We see this as Jesus captures the imagination of those he met: the disciples leave their nets; Levi leaves his tax booth; Nicodemus comes by night; Zaccheus climbs down from his sycamore tree to cook dinner; the woman caught in the very act of adultery, or the one who touched the passing hem of Jesus' garment; Mary with her jar of perfume; Peter in the courtyard; the common criminals arguing as they are crucified on either side of Jesus; and those blind folk and beggars and lepers whose names we will never ever know who were welcomed home.

As we "turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ", as said in the Ash Wednesday liturgy, lives transformed by Christ should show the hallmarks of the fruit of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5.22-23). These fruits will also be seen in a Church willing to be transformed by Christ because transformation and conformation is also the goal of every gathering moment of Christians in their corporate life of being the Church, as well as the goal for individual church communities as they share a common life gathered around their bishop as a diocese. The Church is, as is too often seen, not immune from falling away from the transformed life it should model and live, and is in need also of continued re-turning, repenting and re-conforming.

Being transformed by Christ means that individually and corporately we must listen to his voice as it is he who calls us by name and leads us (John 10.3). His sheep follow him (John



10.4), he knows his sheep and his sheep know him (John 10.14 see also 10.27). The shepherd keeps the flock together and seeks out the lost sheep (Luke 15.3-7).

When Jesus is at the heart of our lives and our church communities, we begin “to live and move and have our very being” (Acts 17.28) patterned and moulded on him. We seek to do the will of the Father, however challenging that might be. My prayer for church communities across the Diocese of Norwich is that they will show the characteristics of Jesus by being:

Communities of welcome because Jesus’ invitation remains, “Come, follow me” (Matthew 4.19). He leads us to invite others to become fellow pilgrims, learning from each other as we walk in his steps.

Communities of prayer because that is the bedrock of our life and mirrors how Jesus “would withdraw to deserted places and pray” (Luke 5.16). He leads us to confession, lament, praise and intercession.

Communities of attentiveness to scripture, just as the young Jesus was found in the Temple “among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions” (Luke 2.45-46). He leads us to be resourced, inspired and challenged by the bible, to allow our imagination to explore its riches, and then to share our knowledge and insights with others so that all are nurtured in their faith.

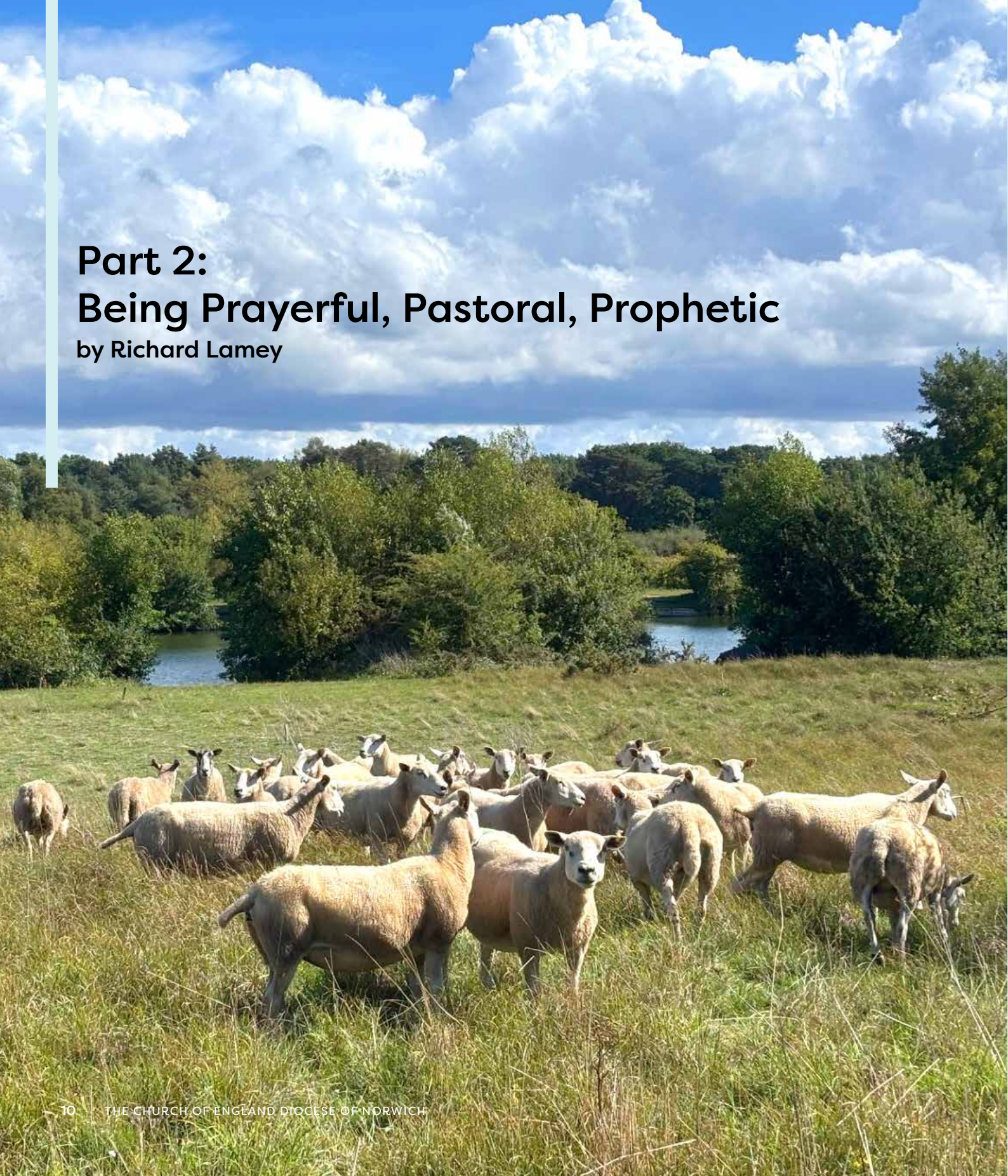
Communities of forgiveness and reconciliation because Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23.24). He leads us to build relationships of honesty, safety and compassion.

Communities of Kingdom building because Jesus said “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6.33). He leads us out to live and share the joy and challenge of the Gospel, equipping each other with the task of evangelism.

Communities of mission because Jesus “saw the multitudes [and] was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd” (Matthew 9.36). He leads us to be with God’s people where they are, responding to their needs and longings, to be seekers after peace and justice, to form new worshipping communities, and to care for the planet we share.

In conclusion, being transformed by Christ means allowing God to live in us, penetrating the depths of our being, and transforming us into his image; to live as images of Christ. This is done, individually and corporately, when we embrace the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ, extend the love of God in Jesus to all whom we encounter, and allow the breath of the Holy Spirit to fill our sails each day.

+Graham Norvic: Lent 2025



Part 2: Being Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic

by Richard Lamey

The danger of visions is that they don't always connect with the whole life of the church and we don't always build on them.

We have our vision set - Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic. We are confident in who God is - that he longs for the church to grow as more and more people encounter the grace of the Holy Spirit and the person of Jesus Christ, as more and more people find in the Trinity their light, their purpose and their home. It is our anxiety, our fear, our lack of faith which set the limits on the life of the church. We ask:

What if it doesn't work?

What if we are the last generation to worship in this building?

What if things get worse and not better?

God cares and God longs for us to have faith. God is interested in heart speaking to heart, in lives transformed in Christ, in courage and vision and confidence, in people set on fire with love by the Holy Spirit all across Norfolk and Waveney in every type of place and in every type of worshipping community.

Living things grow. And though we might be like the tiny Mustard Seed, that seed gives life to a tree in which all of the birds of the air can make a home. (Matt 13.31-32).

Our church communities should be like beating hearts in every community- pumping out prayer and pastoral care and prophetic vision, and taking in need and loss and the cries of the poor.

Prayerful is not just a word, a platitude. Prayer is the oxygen of the church. We will be transformed by Christ when we learn in prayer to see God's world and God's people as he did and does.

Being Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic

To learn in prayer what it is to stand shoulder to shoulder with those who grieve and hurt and fear and with those who dream and long and hope.

To learn in prayer what it would look and feel like for my home, my street, my village, my community to be filled with the love of God.

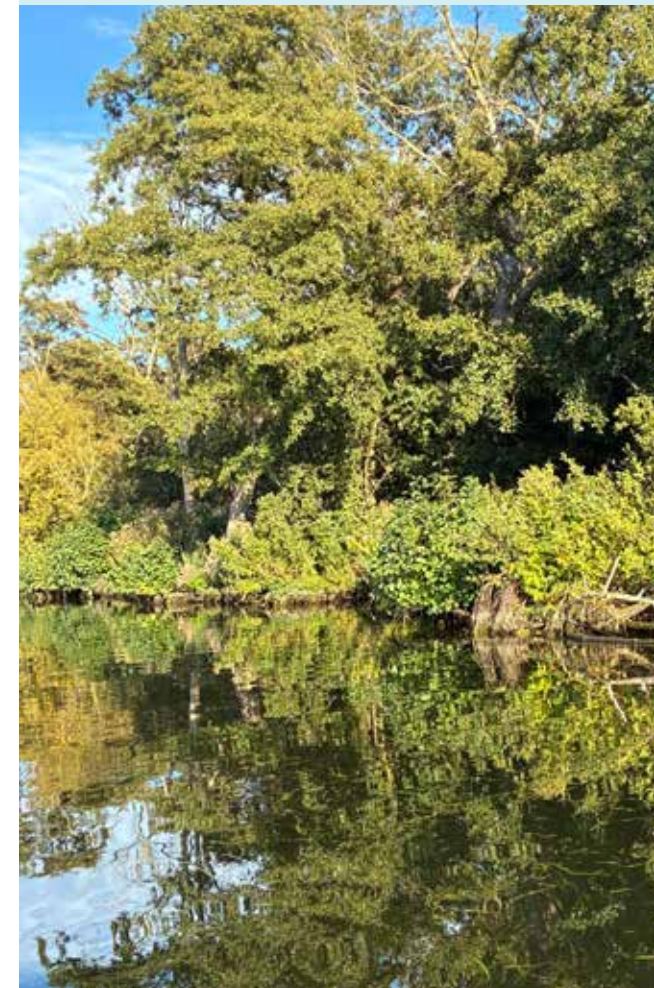
To learn in prayer what the priceless pearl is, to go and buy the field in which the treasure is buried. (Matthew 13.44, 45)

To learn in prayer what it means that the church is the Bride of Christ (Ephesians 5.25-27) and part of God's eternal Kingdom, that we are the saints, that the church is called and inspired to be a blessing to those within it and to those without it, to lift our eyes and glimpse what power and beauty there is in the church and through the church when we live like the church.

And it means being pastoral so we know how to pray: and it means being prophetic for prayer makes tyrants tremble.

Pastoral is not just a word, a platitude. Pastoral is two sets of footprints on the beach at Cromer. Pastoral is how we build up the Body of Christ. Pastoral is how we show God's love for the world in the world. Pastoral is how we say to each individual that God is love and that God loves you. Pastoral is about being and building a community of safety and welcome and acceptance and grace.

To be pastoral in the way we celebrate the Sacraments as being a gift and invitation from God and not something the church must guard with jealousy.



Being Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic

To be pastoral in our appreciation that we are all the sheep of Christ's fold and Christ will rightly leave the 99 to find the one who is lost, which is good news not only for that one but for all of us when we ourselves drift away. (Luke 15.1-7)

To be pastoral in understanding the difference it makes in an individual life and in every community that the church is a place of care and safety and patience, where there is no judgement and only love and welcome in the name of Christ.

To be pastoral in such a way that our churches are known as beacons of light in a world which often turns out and embodiments of love in a world which can often feel lonely and uncaring.

Being pastoral like that does not happen by accident but has to be intentional, purposeful and committed. It is partly about programmes and invitations but it is mostly about the quality of relationships within the church and the attitude of heart.

And it means being prayerful as an engine room: and it means being prophetic in reaching for a community and a world yet to be.

Prophetic is not just a word, a platitude. Prophetic is being a midwife for the kingdom. Prophetic is looking at the world around with clear eyes and then speaking out about injustice and selfishness and cruelty and abuse with courage. Churches can be prophetic in the decisions they make and so can individuals, when they are inspired by the Holy Spirit to see the world as Jesus does and strengthened by the Holy Spirit to stand in the space between Now and Transformed Life as Jesus himself did.

To be prophetic is to live with empathy and kindness, knowing that nothing which happens is unimportant because no one is unimportant to God. Even the hairs on our head are counted. (Luke 12.7)

To be prophetic as a church and as individuals is to accept discomfort and criticism now for the reality of a better future for others. (2 Cor 6.2-11)

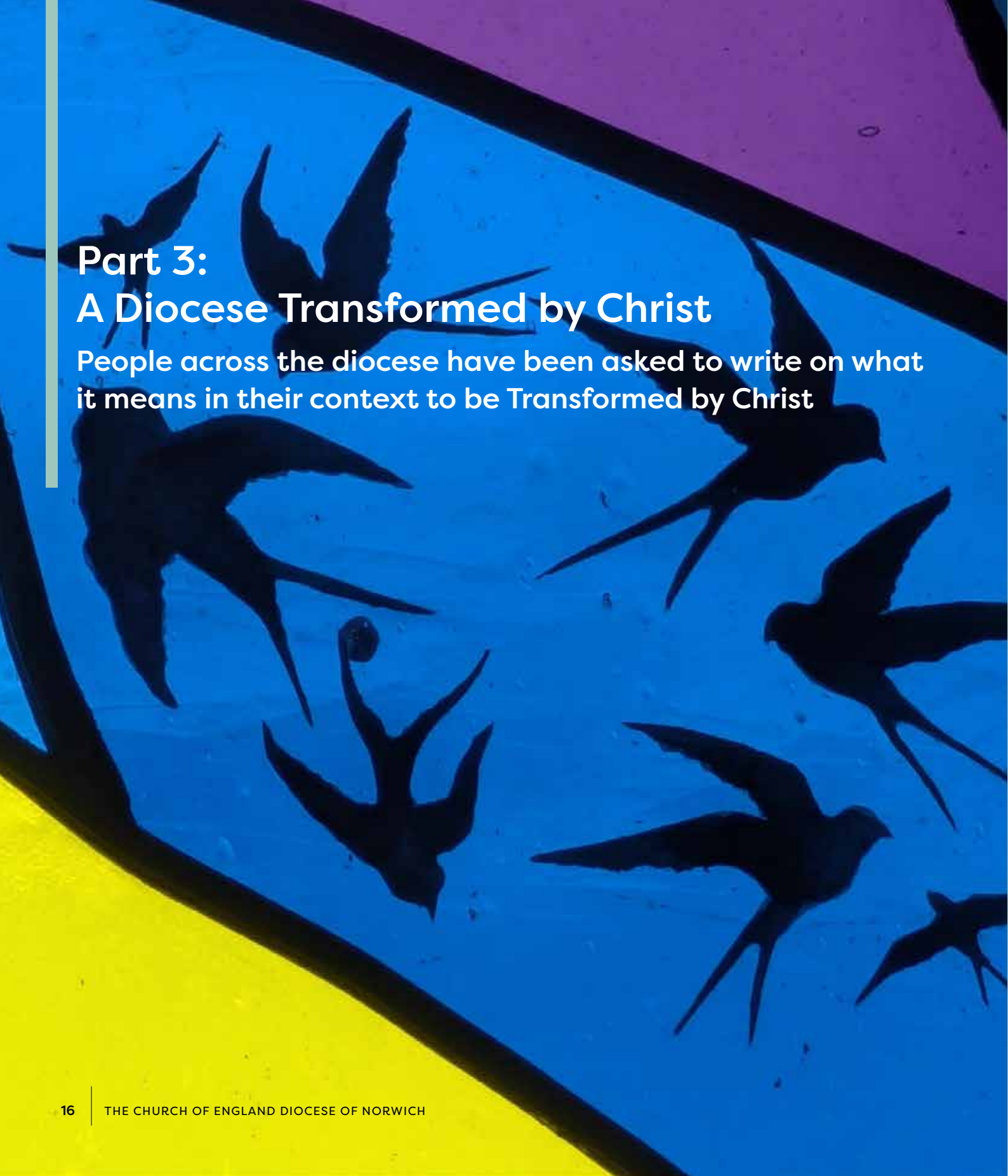
To be prophetic is to use the voice and the influence and the privilege we have on behalf of those who have no voice, no influence, no privilege.

To be prophetic is to read the Beatitudes not as something Jesus preached but as an invitation into a brave new world of courage and beauty and promise and joy.

And it means being prayerful so we can ensure that our heart beats with the heart of God: and it means being pastoral so we remember always that we are standing up for those Jesus came to love.

It means being Transformed by Christ.

Revd Richard Lamey
Director of Mission and Ministry
February 2025



Part 3: A Diocese Transformed by Christ

People across the diocese have been asked to write on what it means in their context to be Transformed by Christ

Be transformed, Saint Paul urged: be transformed, no longer conformed to this world but changed, able even to prove what is the good and perfect and acceptable will of God.

This, taken seriously, is an alarming prospect. What human being can truly prove the will of God? Who dares to wish to do so? And so, although the call to transformation runs like a red thread through the Christian gospel, the call to forgiveness, the call to love and the call to union with God, here we are.

As G. K. Chesterton remarked, it is not that the Christian ideal has been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried. To reassess

our Christian ideal is less daunting than to prove the will of God. To reform our knowledge gives us agency, where to be transformed threatens to change us beyond what we have imagined. To re-examine ourselves and our faith in Jesus is but one step towards readying ourselves for transformation, yet where it is done it prepares us for the radical change which only God can effect: our transformation into the likeness of Christ.

A Bishop



The heart of the Christian faith is the belief that God not only desires the fulfilment and restoration of creation, the redemption and salvation of humanity, but comes in Jesus Christ to win it, scattering darkness and bringing life. We fell from Grace in Eden and Christ comes to restore us. We must allow that transformation to happen, letting the Holy Spirit do her work in us. Transformed people transform people. Transformed communities transform communities. We must allow, enable, embrace our transformation, for our own sake and for the sake of Christ's world. Our transformation is the return to Eden, walking with our Maker again in the garden of delight.

Christ longs to transform us as he does with Peter, whose threefold denial in the palace before the crucifixion is transformed by his threefold commitment at the lakeside after the resurrection. Christ longs to transform us as he does with Mary Magdalen, who is brought to the very heart of the Gospel, the

apostle to the apostle, called by name in the dawnlight of Easter day. Christ longs to transform us as he does the woman with the hemorrhage who touched his cloak, as he does Nicodemus who came to him by night.

A Member of the Parish Support Team

A Diocese Transformed by Christ

Our context is that of several rural Norfolk parishes, and we are in the business of seeing our communities transformed by Christ. In one of our more ‘successful’ churches within the Benefice, we do that by taking our faith out into the community.

On a Sunday, we aim to be a welcoming congregation, receiving solid teaching, so our lives are continually being transformed by Christ as the Word and Spirit, convicts and transforms, before being sent out into the community to live that transformed life. Within the community you won’t find the ‘church (institution)’ running things, however you will find the ‘church (people)’ being involved with most activities within the community, transforming it by action.

From the Tuesday meal to the Thursday coffee morning, to the village bar rota, to directing the village pantomime, to the giving of lifts, to the village litter pick, to sitting on the parish council or the village hall committee.

Wherever you look you will find someone living out their faith transforming the community. You then find that spiritual conversations are had in the most random of places and strange of circumstances, leading to opportunities to share faith and invite others to church, to be welcomed and have their lives transformed by Word and Spirit through Christ. A true ‘parish’ church.

A Rural Incumbent





For myself, to be transformed in Christ is to be a witness to love in everything you are and do. When going about my daily life, to be a witness to Christ's love is to see the abundance in the world around me and to try and feel God's love with as much trust, keenness and passion as Jesus would have. I have found when you turn your inner self towards God's enfolding love, your outward attention to the world also experiences a transformation. Each moment of God's witness, attention and love becomes blessed, and you share the joy of life with God in everything you do, together in companionship.

One of the hardest but also best things about the idea of being transformed in Christ is trying to turn your mind in recognition of God's love and abundance. Sometimes it can be difficult to feel like

you are being transformed in Christ - like you are wandering around in the dark. However, when you draw near to God's forgiveness, you fall gracefully into what always is and always be. Even if you become confused or hurt or in pain. Christ is always patiently waiting for you to see his face again, drink from his cup and know that all is and shall be well.

A Young Person

A Diocese Transformed by Christ

Christ died to bring us ‘life in all its fullness’ (John 10:10). To be transformed by Christ is to be utterly changed and restored. In this earthly life we begin to experience this in part as it starts to affect every aspect of our lives, individually and corporately. It is the first fruits of what is yet to come.

We see this in our very urban parish and across Norfolk in individual lives and the communities of our churches and that transformation spills over into the wider community as church communities “seek the peace and prosperity” of their places (cf Jeremiah 29:7) as they are prayerful, pastoral and prophetic.

We see addictions being broken and life, work and relationships being restored; the hungry fed, debts paid and abused children being provided with loving foster or adoptive families; children receive the foundations of the transformative Christian life at school and youth clubs; the humble

are lifted high, the broken-hearted receive comfort and the hopeless begin to find a future. The transformation in Christ is and will be physical and emotional.

But it is ultimately spiritual. Perhaps we don’t physically see the deaf hearing, the blind seeing and the lame walking - but certainly spiritually we see those with these disabilities have so much to teach us from their trust and joy in Christ

An Urban Incumbent

Part 4: Transformed by Christ: developing the vision

by David Lloyd

Jesus said “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10.10)

Our diocesan vision is to cultivate an environment in which the growth, health, and flourishing of each disciple, every local church, church school, and community, is not only possible but inevitable – because we know and trust that, under God the Father, all living things grow.

We believe that the Church is the organism by which God chooses to bring the renewal of all things. To fully embrace this call is to see the Church in Norfolk and Waveney become more of a verb and less of a noun. The transforming love of Christ will move God’s people to action and contemplation, to deeper service and fuller engagement with God’s people and God’s world.



Being Transformed by Christ

Transformation happens in individuals and in communities. Transformed people transform people. Transformed communities transform communities. In Jesus Christ, the love of God comes to each of us. His wounded hands and feet offer forgiveness, healing, and purpose. His resurrection brings hope and power to live His way and follow His plans.



Beholding Christ

Being transformed by Christ happens when we clearly see the person of Jesus, believe His promises, and long to see His love and healing made flesh in the communities, institutions, and congregations of the diocese because it is manifest in the lives of individuals. Being transformed is being drawn into the life of the Trinity—it is also about what we are willing to change or do differently (or stop doing) so that transformation through Christ can deepen.



Becoming Like Christ

Christ longs for us to be transformed and to become the Church He longs for us to be so that the world, in turn, might be transformed by the love of a God who is more involved, more generous, and more wonderful than we can imagine.



Breathing in the Holy Spirit

We recognise the need for the Holy Spirit to breathe God’s divine life into our ancient institutions and to teach us to learn to travel light once again. The key agent for transformation is always the Holy Spirit, who challenges and equips, reassures and unsettles, strengthens and blesses.



Being Pilgrims for Life

Being transformed in Christ is ongoing and requires us to be pilgrims for life. We will move beyond defining what is settled and what is new, instead speaking of the emerging Kingdom of God and the inspiring work of the Holy Spirit. Whether the Holy Spirit inspires new congregations through new ways of prayer and service, or brings renewal through a revived and revitalised parish system, we will be ready to celebrate a fruitful mixed ecology.



Building Conditions for Growth

The diocese has a key role in creating the conditions in which growth, health, and flourishing are made possible and made easier. By prayerfully placing the life of the diocese where our sails can best catch the wind of the Holy Spirit, God will take us where He longs for us to be.



Belonging to a Church of Safety and Love

At the heart of all of this must be an absolute commitment to safeguarding. We cannot speak of Good News or strive to build anything good if we are not putting the protection of all of God's children at the heart of it, are not taking seriously our duty to follow processes and systems, and are not living as individuals and congregations who know that safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole Church.



Believing in God's Abundance

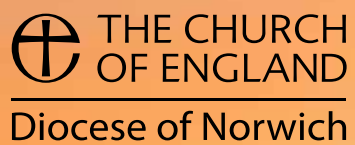
In Scripture we see God uses the particular to bring about the universal. He uses Abraham to bless all nations, Moses to rescue a people in slavery, David as a sign of his coming and Jesus to save the world. He uses a staff, some stones and a sling, fish and loaves, a lost coin, a lost son, a leper, blind man, lost sheep or the image of a mustard seed to glorify God and multiply His Kingdom on earth.

We have great hope that in God's abundant ecology 'one thing' in faith and obedience can lead to much fruit. The fruit of an apple is not just a seed, but a whole apple tree.

Revd David Lloyd
Diocesan Mission Development Officer
and Lead Pastor of the Garden Church Network
May 2025







Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic