



The Church of England
in Essex and East London

Diocese of Chelmsford

Transforming Presence:
Inhabiting the World Distinctively

School for Disciples

Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Chelmsford

www.transformingpresence.org.uk

*St Cedd's Window in Chelmsford
Cathedral by Mark Czalet*

St Cedd

The picture on the cover shows an engraved window depicting St Cedd (c 620-664 AD) in St Cedd's Chapel at Chelmsford Cathedral.

Cedd was a monk who lived on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, Northumbria. In the 7th century monks were missionary disciples. In 654 AD, as the newly appointed Bishop of the East Saxons, Cedd set sail from his monastery down the East coast for the Kingdom of the East Saxons, which our diocese embraces today, to engage a largely pagan people with the good news of Christ. He landed on the Dengie peninsular, at a place we now know as Bradwell-on-Sea in Essex, where there was an ancient Roman settlement.

Cedd was not the first person to bring the Christian faith to the land of the East Saxons. There had been a mission from St Augustine, a mission from Rome to Canterbury which had come up from London. St Mellitus was the first Bishop of London and he led some missions to the East Saxons but they had never been very successful.

Cedd built a chapel at Bradwell, now called St Peter-on-the-Wall. It is one of the oldest and most significant Christian buildings in the whole of the British Isles. Cedd went to Southminster, which is not far from Bradwell, and to Upminster. The word, 'minster' in an English place name usually means that it has some sort of monastic heritage. He set up many mission centres, from which the monks would go and take the Christian faith to the surrounding villages.

Cedd's missionary discipleship was people-based. We can imagine Cedd and his monks venturing out from their mission centres on foot or horseback along unmade roads and country tracks. Their mission was precarious but step by step and little by little they began to connect with the local inhabitants gradually forming small worshipping communities.

Cedd and his followers spread the Gospel by living a distinctive Christian life and meeting with people where they were. Now we can respond to God's call on our lives to live out our faith, tell the good news afresh and reach people in ways they find attractive today.

How can we make the most of the opportunities we have for nurturing faith, prayer and discipleship across all generations, so that all Christians can grow in their faith and be transformed as followers of Jesus in their understanding of the Christian faith and by their actions in the world?

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More resources can be found online at
www.transformingpresence.org.uk.

The following pages reflect the programme of the School for Disciples roadshow in the deaneries of Chelmsford Diocese in 2017. They are designed to be read in conjunction with the ideas contained in the accompanying *We Can Do It!* booklet which aims to help put this training into practice in Sunday worship.

In Chelmsford Diocese one of the Transforming Presence priorities is to **inhabit the world distinctively**. This is about how live our Christian life as a disciple of Jesus.

The local church is the place where we can learn this missionary discipleship. It is the place where we will be **formed in order to be sent**. We, therefore, want every church to be a **‘school for disciples’**.

‘You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.

‘You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.’ (Matthew 5. 13-16).

The work of the Church is to be -

- Preservative – holding onto the faith we have received.
- Flavouring – offering the world something new and beautiful.
- Light – showing the way to Christ and the way to true humanity.

The Church is also like vinegar, it is the environment within which Christians are changed and transformed. When the local church is a school for disciples this transformation takes place.

Therefore -

How can we make the most of the opportunities we have for nurturing faith, prayer and discipleship across all generations, so that all Christians can grow in their faith and be transformed as followers of Jesus in their understanding of the Christian faith and by their actions in the world?

1. Opportunities

List the things we already do as a church where there are opportunities for nurturing discipleship - everything from PCC meetings to parent and toddler groups to Sunday mornings.

2. Ingredients

These are the key areas where we need to develop faith, prayer and discipleship – the things we want to weave into the life of the local church in order to make disciples.

 **Nurture and Catechesis** - How can each church be a learning community where people are formed in the Christian faith in order to be sent out in service and witness; to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them; and to have some real understanding of what it is to live the Christian life? And particularly –

 **Biblical reflection** - How can we help each church encourage biblical literacy and a prayerful reading of the scriptures as the heart of Christian formation?

 **Prayer** - How can each church be a house of prayer and a place where people are formed through prayer and worship and learn the spiritual disciplines that undergird and sustain the Christian life?

 **Stewardship** - How can each church not only pay its share by teaching about giving, but develop a culture of sacrificial generosity so that the overall ministry and impact of the church can develop?

 **Evangelism** - How can each church continue to be a place that is growing and attracting new disciples and engaged in on-going evangelistic ministry year in year out?

 **Christianity 24/7** - How can we enable people to live a distinctive life in and for the world, particularly focusing on issues of social justice and environmental concern, and actively serving the needs of the local community so that each church and each individual Christian is a source of blessing to others?

Finally, we need to be aware that just as people of every colour and nationality are called to be missionary disciples, so are people of all ages. We need to make sure that what we do is accessible and relevant for **children, young people and families** so that they too can be formed as disciples of Christ. Moreover, children and young people will often be our teachers on the way of faith.

Looking at your ‘opportunities’ list, what could be weaved into what you are already doing to help develop missionary discipleship and to help make your church a school for disciples?

Some key questions & challenges

- In these key areas of our life together, what could be done differently and how could this improve what you are already doing, so as to make sure making missionary disciples is at the centre of Church life? *Consult your Mission and Ministry Advisers, who are listed below, to help explore this question.*
- Could every benefice/MMU run some sort of discipleship programme for the existing church membership and some sort of nurture/evangelism course for people who are exploring Christian faith at least once a year? *Some ideas for this are included in the Resources section below.*
- Could every benefice/MMU look at what it does on Sunday mornings so as to engage more people with the challenge of discipleship? *Look at the ideas for Sunday worship in the accompanying “We Can Do It!” booklet.*
- What else could we do each year to encourage missionary discipleship?

What does every local church need to do to take forward this agenda?

If we did take this agenda forward, what would we like to have seen change and develop in our church in two years’ time?

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Resources

Alpha is the famous and much loved nurture/evangelism course for those wanting to explore the Christian faith for the first time. More details at: www.alpha.org.

The Bible Reading Fellowship supports Christian discipleship by publishing daily bible reading notes, such as New Daylight, and other prayer and discipleship resources. More details at: www.brf.org.uk/christian-growth-and-understanding-bible.

Bible Society www.biblesociety.org.uk and Scripture Union www.scriptureunion.org.uk also produce bible reading notes.

The Certificate of Evangelism is a foundational course offered by the diocese and run in six centres, equipping people to share their faith naturally and helping others to do the same. Details can be found at: www.chelmsford.anglican.org/evangelism-enablers.

The Chelmsford Holding Cross is a way of helping Christians live their faith distinctively and to pray. The crosses, many of them made from old pews, can be ordered through the Diocesan website, and there is an accompanying free five-part course called 'Holding On' that helps participants reflect on their Christian discipleship. Details at: <http://ow.ly/NhDP306BLqV>.

Christianity Explored Ministries publishes several courses: an evangelism/nurture course as well as a discipleship course. More details at: www.ceministries.org.

The Course in Christian Studies is our own two year course exploring the Christian Faith with others, and delivered weekly in local centres around the diocese. CCS has a foundational first year and a more flexible second year and leads to the Bishop's Certificate. Since it began in 1987, over 2500 lay people from Essex and East London have completed the course. More details at: <http://ow.ly/U5UW306BLld>.

Evangelism Enabler is further practical training in evangelism, which includes support from your incumbent, PCC and Area Evangelism Adviser. On completion of training, Evangelism Enablers are commissioned and authorised by the Bishop of Chelmsford. Details can be found at: www.chelmsford.anglican.org/evangelism-enablers.

Faith Pictures is a resource for helping people talk about their faith. More details at www.faithpictures.org It is produced by Church Army, who provide other support and help with evangelism. More details at: www.churcharmy.org.uk.

Giving for Life - Continuing the Journey is another nationally produced stewardship resource. It can be found at - www.parishresources.org.uk/givingforlife. All parishes were sent a copy last autumn.

Giving in Grace is an online Stewardship resource produced by Liverpool diocese and can be found at - www.givinginrace.org. It makes a clear link between discipleship, mission and generosity. It has excellent teaching and preaching resources, including for young people and children. And it frames everything it does in prayer.

Mini Orders began in Galleywood and is a resource for helping a small group of Christians to develop a rule of life. More details at: www.mini-orders.weebly.com.

Mothers' Union produce prayer and discipleship resources for families www.mothersunion.org.

Pilgrim, the Way of Faith is a library of discipleship short courses, published by Church House Publishing in two stages: initial exploration of the faith and then ongoing discipleship. More details at: www.pilgrimcourse.org.

Preparing for Mission Weekends is the resource for our Centenary evangelism initiative. It is still available online at www.transformingpresence.org.uk.

Reflections for Daily Prayer are the official Bible notes for the Church of England and follow the lectionary readings. As well as a book of readings that is published each year there is also an app. More details at: www.chpublishing.co.uk/features/reflections.

Time to Share is an Evangelism course run by the Newham deanery. Information from chigor.chike@sky.com.

Transforming Work is produced by the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity to help Christians serve as disciples in their work place. Details at: <http://ow.ly/pgcv307gHHp>.

Mission and Ministry Advice

Mission & Evangelism Adviser - Diocese of Chelmsford

Revd Charlie Kosla Tel 01245 294419

Email ckosla@chelmsford.anglican.org

Barking Area

Rt Revd Peter Hill, Tel 020 8509 7377

Email b.barking@chelmsford.anglican.org

Bradwell Area Mission & Ministry Adviser

Revd Canon Martin Wood, Tel 01268 552219

Email mwood@chelmsford.anglican.org

Colchester Mission & Ministry Adviser

Revd Canon Jenny Tomlinson, Tel 01799 500757

Email jtomlinson@chelmsford.anglican.org

Children and Families

Children's and Families Ministry Adviser

Steve Kersys, Tel 01245 294448/ 07541 240607

Email steve@saltshaker.org.uk

Children and Families Missioner - Barking Area

Emma Anderton Tel 07903 831965

Email eanderton@chelmsford.anglican.org

Youth Advisers

Barking Area

Hannah Robinson, Tel 07973 769359

Email hrobinson@chelmsford.anglican.org

Bradwell Area

Mark Tiddy, Tel 07845 349542

Email mtiddy@chelmsford.anglican.org

Colchester Area

Vacancy – Contact the Barking or Bradwell Adviser (details above)

Chelmsford Diocesan House of Retreat

The Street, Pleshey, Chelmsford CM3 1HA

www.retreathousepleshey.com,

Email retreathouse@chelmsford.anglican.org

For when you get home

1. With your PCC

Each church is being given a plan for a PCC Evening so that you can take home the learning from this evening and begin to embed it in the life of your church and develop what you are already doing.

2. For your own prayers and reflection

Here are three brief passages from scripture. Read them prayerfully and ask how these qualities are evident in your life. They each seem to be addressing this question -

How do you recognise a disciple of Jesus?

- If you have love for one another (John 13. 35)
- If you offer service to others (Mark 10.43)
- If you take up the cross (Mark 8.34)

Read the accompanying 'We Can Do It!' booklet for ideas to help put your learning into practice in Sunday worship.

More resources can be found online at www.transformingpresence.org.uk.

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