

# FUTURE SUPPORT

To support and equip our mission communities there will be a focus on seven key areas.

**MINISTRY:** helping discern and release the ministry churches need, both in terms of people and gifts.

**BUILDINGS:** helping plan the future of our physical presence in local communities and think through how buildings can be sustainable servants of our communities.

**GROWING YOUNGER:** helping the Church to engage more effectively with young people.

**CHURCH PLANTING AND PIONEERING:** exploring a range of approaches to reach out to those who do not currently engage with Church.

**ECO:** helping achieve our environmental goals e.g. the Church of England's target for becoming Net Carbon Zero by 2030.

**SCHOOLS:** supporting our local schools, particularly (but not exclusively) the Church schools family, in line with the Church in Cumbria's Vision for Education 2018 to promote Jesus' promise of 'life in all its fullness'.

**DIGITAL:** helping the Church to engage more effectively in the digital environment.

# A GARDEN PARABLE

So what will a flourishing Church in Cumbria look like in the future? Well, perhaps it could be useful to think of a 'parable of the Garden'.

For a garden to be healthy it includes past, present and future influences.

For a richness of Church landscape we must tend **well-established plants** (traditional patterns of ministry), **graft** and grow something new (Fresh Expressions), **take cuttings** and plant elsewhere (church planting), **sow** seeds (pioneering), **work** the soil (digital presence), let some beds lie fallow, others run wild and prune where need be.

It is a mixed ecology but, most importantly, together the whole becomes the Church!

For more visit [www.godforall.org.uk](http://www.godforall.org.uk).



## CUMBRIA'S ECUMENICAL VISION & STRATEGY

[www.godforall.org.uk](http://www.godforall.org.uk)





## FOUR THEMES

**Follow Daily** : We will help each other to follow Jesus more closely, seeking to grow as his disciples in all aspects of life, both corporately and as individuals.

**Care Deeply** : We will listen to our local communities and respond in loving service, seeking to transform injustice, challenge oppression and pursue peace and reconciliation.



### Follow Daily



### Care Deeply



### Speak Boldly



### Tread Gently

**Speak Boldly** : We will share our faith in Jesus Christ in everyday ways, seeking to connect with everyone, especially those currently unrepresented in our churches. We'll do this in both time-honoured and pioneering ways.

**Tread Gently** : We will strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, seeking to sustain and renew the life of the earth

## THE NEXT STEPS

We know there are challenges ahead: church attendance has been declining steadily, finances are tighter.

But as Christians we all have the eternal and everlasting hope that comes from knowing Jesus Christ. It is that **hope** which we must bring to the vision, married with a dose of **realism** as to what our objectives should be.

We must all be willing to engage in **faithful improvisation**. Think of a jazz band in which each musician fashions a new melody around a central theme. So too our churches must have the freedom to experiment.

Central to this will be the work which is being undertaken in each of our 30-plus mission communities. But what works well in certain places may not do so elsewhere. So churches must feel enabled to **faithfully improvise** in order to best develop as a mission community.

We give thanks that our mission communities are **empowering, collaborative, prayerful, ecumenical, resourceful, locally-focussed and mutually accountable places**.



## WELCOME

Thank you for taking time to read about the exciting ways in which our county's refreshed God for All vision and strategy is developing.

Since 2019 we have been committed to working together across denominations to refresh God for All: from 100 Days of Prayer, then 100 Days of Listening which led to the creation of four key themes undergirding the strategy.

Those four themes came from you. You told us what was important for our churches and faith communities as we look to grow God's Kingdom across Cumbria in the years ahead.

You explained what our priorities should be and they represent the four cornerstones of our vision and strategy.