



RECONCILIATION
INITIATIVES

Reconciling Mission 2024

A dynamic learning and
development programme



WHAT IS RECONCILING MISSION?

- A learning and development programme for small groups of diocesan and cathedral clergy;
- A programme which resources participants with a vision for mission:
 - as a journey towards greater reconciliation in the world,
 - marked by deeper engagement with local communities,
 - drawing on an asset-based community development approach.
- *Note: this is not a process for training a diocesan mediation team, or for equipping participants with skills for handling conflict.*

WHY IS THIS NEEDED?

The church currently faces a significant missional challenge:

- There's a need to respond to social hardship, which has:
 - increased since the economic crash of 2008;
 - been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic;
 - intensified through the recent cost-of-living crisis.
- There is also a need to address:
 - the ongoing climate emergency; and
 - persisting racial inequalities.

Reconciling Mission has been developed to address this context. We offer:

- a vision for the emerging future of the church, following the Covid disruption;
- an approach which connects with the enduring Anglican Five Marks of Mission.

WHO IS RECONCILING MISSION FOR?

- Experienced parish and cathedral clergy, or diocesan officers, of diverse theological traditions;
- Clergy from both rural and urban ministry contexts;
- Leaders wanting to explore fresh approaches to missional engagement with local communities, in company with others; and
- Anglican Dioceses wanting to incorporate diverse approaches to the current missional challenge, and draw on external resourcing.

“ When leading woolly Anglicans [...] in the fluid ... theological space of parish life – where people’s theology is ‘who they are and what they do’, and not ‘what they say and preach’ – Reconciling Mission is helpful as it gives an articulation of our participation in the [wider] reconciliation of God. This puts a more robust framework around an alternative model of evangelism to the [traditional] ‘go preach’ model. ”

PARTICIPANT IN COHORT 2



WHAT SORT OF GROUP?

- A group of **five** participants, including ideally one from the Cathedral;
- Identified by the Bishop, Dean and senior staff against criteria such as:
 - A mix of genders (2/3);
 - Experienced leaders, people of emotional maturity;
 - Collaborative leaders, who welcome working in partnership with others;
 - Participants representing the diversity of their Diocese, including ethnic diversity;
 - Participants of relative geographical proximity, for ease of face-to-face meetings;
- Ideally, participants will previously have:
 - Completed foundational training in handling conflict; and
 - Developed group process and facilitation skills.

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

1. A week-long residential course of learning, at the outset;
2. On-going coaching over 18 months, meeting online every couple of months in small groups;
3. Two additional online webinars;
4. Two in-person day-conferences at Coventry Cathedral, mid-way and at the end of the process.

WHAT DO PARTICIPANTS NEED?

- A commitment to learning, and to engaging with the entire programme, over a 2-year process;
- An enthusiasm for reaching out to local neighbours and localities;
- A desktop or laptop computer with a webcam, for online Zoom meetings; and
- A mobile phone with the WhatsApp app, for communication with facilitators and diocesan group.

WHAT'S THE RESIDENTIAL COURSE?

A dynamic adult learning process, integrating:

- Theoretical input;
- Theological and Biblical reflection;
- Experiential learning; and
- Anglican worship;

The venue is Launde Abbey in Leicestershire, offering:

- a fruitful learning environment;
- a space which facilitates community-building.

Facilitated by a highly experienced team:

- **Alastair McKay**: director of RI, with 30 years' experience in leading adult learning;
- **Barbara Macnish**: an independent facilitator, with 15 years' experience of training and consulting with churches;
- **Al Barrett**: rector of Hodge Hill Church in Birmingham, with over 10 years' experience in applying an asset-based approach to community development;
- **Paul Wright**: a community animator and street connector, with many years' experience in community-building in Birmingham.

Visiting speakers include:

- **Jenny Sinclair**, Together for the Common Good;
- **Catherine Morgan Hickey**, HeartEdge;
- **Rosemarie Mallett**, Bishop of Croydon;
- **Frauke Eicker**, CMS/Partnership for Missional Church.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES?

The overall programme objectives are:

1. To introduce a vision for the church's mission within a wider understanding of God's reconciling work in the world;
2. To offer key frameworks and practical tools to enable the church to engage deeply with local neighbourhoods;
3. To resource participants for taking action in their local context, grounded in listening to the community;
4. To nurture collegiality and contribute to a creative missional movement in Anglican Provinces in Britain and Ireland.

“ *It's been an incredible experience to see how readily others have created a safe space in which all, who wanted to, were able to share situations or problems that they were going through. I found the structured approach really helpful in getting to the actual issue(s). ... I also found the webinars informative, engaging and interesting. These were times in my diary that I looked forward to.* **”**

PARTICIPANT IN COHORT 1

The planned learning outcomes for the residential are that participants will have:

- Reflected theologically and located the church's mission within the arc of God's reconciling work, connecting with the Five Marks of Mission;
- Worked with a theoretical framework for engaging with social divisions and injustices, and mapped existing outreach onto this;
- Explored an asset-based development model, drawing on a community's gifts and strengths;
- Connected with the approaches of associated networks and organisations;
- Developed a provisional plan to begin implementing a collaborative community-building approach in their own context.

HOW IS IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORTED?

After the initial residential, there's an 18-month process of follow-up coaching:

- Participants form part of regular online gatherings, at two-monthly intervals, with a group from another Diocese;
- Groups meet on a rotational basis to facilitate dialogue with all groups in the cohort;
- These gatherings are action learning groups, using a group coaching process, led by an RI facilitator.

By the end of the process, each group should also develop a plan for sharing some of their learning with others in their Diocese.

WHAT'S SPECIAL?

Distinctive features include:

- A focus on serving local neighbourhoods and addressing issues of injustice;
- An investment in leaders who can share learning with others;
- Intentional mixing of diverse people to form a supportive learning community together;
- Designed for small groups attending together for more effective support, follow-through and implementation; and
- A setting to develop good practice, identify next steps, share learning, and move churches into a deeper engagement with their local communities.

“ Working alongside and serving ‘with’ rather than ‘to’ means that the church has a humbler place in its involvement with the community. Not talking down and giving prescriptions; but being a listening and supportive partner in what’s already going on. As a humbler listener, co-worker and partner, that will be a much better place [from which] to be able to share God’s loving, and our faith... ”
This process has driven us deeper into community partnership.

Participant in Cohort 2

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Independent research with the first two cohorts highlighted the following benefits:

- Peer support and non-competitive collegiality in the process of addressing missional challenges;
- Connection with fundamental questions about mission, ministry and sharing good news, and articulation of the value of working with local people;
- Prioritising the work of listening, to peers, congregation members, local people and the Holy Spirit, to discern how God is at work; and
- The evolution and development of existing and new outreach to local neighbourhoods, typically in partnership with others outside the church.

WHAT’S THE COST?

In 2024, the invited diocesan contribution is £995 per participant, and coverage of travel and associated expenses. This contribution:

- Covers around two thirds of the delivery costs;
- Gives full participation in the whole programme, including:
 - The initial residential (excluding travel costs);
 - The follow-up group coaching sessions;
 - The two day-conferences (excluding travel and hotel costs).

The balance of the costs is covered by RI, from our reserves.

WHAT ARE THE KEY DATES AND DEADLINES?

By mid-October 2023: Senior staff identification of diocesan group of five

31 October 2023: Deadline for Cohort 4 applications from all diocesan groups

February 2024: Preliminary online meetings with Cohort 4 groups

28 April – 3 May 2024: Cohort 4 residential at Launde Abbey

June 2024 – December 2025: Online action learning groups

18 March 2025: Day conference at Coventry Cathedral

17 March 2026: Day conference at Coventry Cathedral

RECONCILING MISSION RESIDENTIAL

OUTLINE OF RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMME
28 APRIL – 3 MAY 2024, LAUNDE ABBEY

		Sun 28 April	Mon 29 April	Tue 30 April	Wed 1 May	Thu 2 May	Fri 3 May
Typical Timings							
9am - 10.45am	Travel to Launde Abbey from home location	7:40am Contemplative prayer; 8:15am <i>Breakfast</i> S1: Intro to two theological models, echoed in the RM theoretical framework, with an exploration of related theological themes	7:40am Contemplative prayer; 8:15am <i>Breakfast</i> S1 (9:00-10:30am): 'Dwelling in the Word' practice with intro to Partnership for Missional Church, led by Frauke Eicker , Church Mission Enabler, CMS	7:40am Contemplative prayer; 8:15am <i>Breakfast</i> S1: ABCD4: Nurturing a neighbourhood ecology, including identifying & nurturing 'connectors', 'bumping spaces' and interconnections	7:40am Contemplative prayer; 8:15am <i>Breakfast</i> S1 (9:00-10:30am): Bible study, led by Rosemarie Mallett , Bishop of Croydon, Southwark Diocese	7:40am Contemplative prayer; 8:15am <i>Breakfast</i> S1: Presenting provisional plans, in plenary, and being commissioned for next steps	7:40am Contemplative prayer; 8:15am <i>Breakfast</i>
11.15am - 12.45pm	12:30pm Arrival at Launde Abbey	S2a: Reflecting on 'detours' and God's integration in our lives S2b: Categorising exercise, of existing projects and initiatives, using the RM framework	S2 (11:00-12:45): ABCD1: Intro to an asset-based community development (ABCD) approach for engagement with a local neighbourhood Al Barrett & Paul Wright	S2: ABCD5: Accompanying churches in a 'journey outwards', including being interrupted and adopting a new stance towards leadership	S2 (11:00-12:45): Exploring wider issues about moving towards reconciliation in society today	S2: Closing programme elements 12:00pm: Eucharist	
1pm Lunch							
2pm - 3:30pm	S1: Participant introductions, and intro to the Reconciling Mission (RM) programme	S3: Mapping our local neighbourhoods, and relating this to our understanding of 'community'	S3: Free time	S3: Free time	S3: Free time	S3: Individual time reflecting on next steps and preparing a provisional plan for what going to take forward on return home	1:00pm Departures from Launde Abbey
4.15pm - 5.45pm	S2: Intro to the RM theoretical framework of mission as a journey towards greater reconciliation, connecting with the Five Marks of Mission	S4: New approaches to Christian mission today: Jenny Sinclair , Together for the Common Good; & Catherine Morgan Hickey , HeartEdge network	S4: ABCD2: Exploring missional economies (and institutional pressures) of 'counting in' and 'giving out', and their relationship with power and its use	S4: An introduction to and experience of Action Learning Groups	S4a: Sharing provisional plans in diocesan groups S4b: Space to plan diocesan group contributions to the evening party, e.g. a game		Travel back to home location
6.30pm Dinner							
7.30pm - 9pm	S3: Free time	S5: Free time	S5: ABCD3: Discovering abundance in our communities, and engaging in 'good life' conversations	S5: Leading when you don't know where you're going	S5: Party, incorporating participant planned activities		
9pm Compline							

RECONCILING MISSION: FULL PROGRAMME SCHEDULE (COHORT 4)

	2024										2025					2026
Timing	28 Apr - 3 May	w/c 3 Jun	w/c 15 July	2 or 3 Sep	w/c 30 Sep	w/c 4 Nov	w/c 2 Dec	w/c 20 Jan	18 Mar	w/c 7 Apr	12 or 13 May	w/c 7 Jul	w/c 1 Sep	w/c 6 Oct	17 Nov	18 Mar
Activity Interval		4 Weeks	6 Weeks	7 Weeks	3 Weeks	5 Weeks	4 Weeks	7 Weeks	8 Weeks	5 Weeks	5 Weeks	8 Weeks	8 Weeks	4 Weeks	6 Weeks	17 Weeks
Activity	Residential training course	Action learning group (coaching)	Action learning group (coaching)	Webinar	Action learning group (coaching)	Action learning group (coaching)	Action learning group (coaching)	Action learning group (coaching)	Day Conference	Action learning group (coaching)	Webinar	Action learning group (coaching)	Action learning group (coaching)	Action learning group (coaching)	Last Reflection Group	Concluding Day Conference
Location / Platform	Onsite: Launde Abbey	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Onsite: Coventry Cathedral	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Zoom + WhatsApp group	Onsite: Coventry Cathedral
Length	6 Days	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	Overnight + 9.30am - 4.00pm	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	2.25 hrs, including a short break	Overnight + 9.30am - 4.00pm
Participants	Plenary group, 4th Cohort only, 20 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	Plenary group, 20 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	Plenary group, 4th Cohort + Senior Staff + Network Members	2 groups per session, 10 participants	Plenary group, 20 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	2 groups per session, 10 participants	Plenary group, 20 participants	Plenary group, 4th & 5th Cohorts + Senior Staff + Network Members

Note:

- Action learning groups work on a rotational basis, so every diocesan group gets to work with every other group, in turn.
- There will be an additional online check-in meeting with each diocesan group in January 2026 to support their planning for presentations at the March 2026 day conference.