



# CROSSROADS

Northern Bishops' Mission  
Blackburn Diocese  
8-11 September 2016

## Mission Preparation Guide

## Welcome

During a retreat on Lindisfarne in 2014, Archbishop Sentamu, together with the Bishops of the Northern Province, felt called by God to refocus our ministries on mission and outreach. A practical outcome of this was a decision to share together in mission in one another's dioceses. In September 2015 we joined with Bishops from the North of England for a mission in Sheffield Diocese. This year, we are delighted to be joined by Archbishop Sentamu, and fellow Bishops and their teams, to share in the Crossroads mission in our diocese from 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

Vision 2026, Healthy Churches Transforming Communities, contains three priorities: making disciples, being witnesses and growing leaders. Crossroads gives us a fantastic opportunity to focus on these priorities as we engage in a period of outreach and faith sharing.

The prophet Jeremiah spoke to God's people during times of uncertainty and hardship. In the midst of words of challenge and rebuke, God says:

*Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.*

*Jeremiah 6:16*

These words speak to the people of Lancashire, encouraging us all to look afresh at the ancient paths of the Christian faith, to choose to walk the way of Christ and to discover the rest and restoration that come from Jesus.

Let us all use the Crossroads mission to share the Gospel with prayerful, humble confidence, so that God's Kingdom is extended and glory brought to His name.

*+ Julian, + Geoff and + Philip*

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Information about Crossroads will be available on the diocesan website [www.blackburn.anglican.org](http://www.blackburn.anglican.org) under the Mission and Growth tab.

## **Introduction:**

This resource has been created to help our Diocese prepare for the Crossroads mission and to equip the local church, as we make Vision 2026 a reality in our parishes.

### ***Included within this guide you will find information to help you:***

- Pray - as deaneries, as churches, and as individuals.
- Prepare - with resources and training information.
- Build a programme, plan events and invite people to attend, including ideas that you can use or adapt.
- Host your visiting team.
- Follow up people who respond, including suggestions for literature and running enquirers' courses.



### ***What is Crossroads?***

Crossroads is an opportunity for us as a diocese to unite together in locally organised mission, outreach and evangelism. Archbishop Sentamu, together with the Bishops of the Northern Province and their teams, will be working in our diocese from 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> September 2016. We anticipate having about 15-20 Bishops visiting our diocese alongside 14 or 15 teams composed of a mix of lay people, youth workers, ordinands and clergy. The essence of Crossroads is local churches engaging in local mission. The events and style of the mission are decided at local church and deanery level, with the visiting mission team supporting what has been decided by parishes.

### ***How will Crossroads be organised?***

One (or more) Bishops, together with their teams, will be allocated to each deanery. Archbishop Sentamu's office have sent invitations to the Bishops, and, once responses are received, we will be advised who will be coming to Blackburn Diocese in September, and Bishops and their teams will then be

allocated to deaneries. Deaneries are therefore key to the planning of this mission, and each deanery will need to appoint a Deanery Co-ordinator to help plan Crossroads in their local area.

### ***What does a Deanery Co-ordinator do?***

The Deanery Co-ordinator will play a vital role in helping Crossroads work at a local level. The Co-ordinator will liaise with the diocesan planning team, the visiting Bishops and their teams, and will co-ordinate the events being planned by individual local churches. A vital part of the Co-ordinator's role will be receiving suggestions for events from local churches to build up a deanery programme. The Co-ordinator will also ensure that arrangements are made regarding the hosting of the visiting team.

The Deanery Co-ordinator should be someone who:

- Has a passion for mission and for the message of the Gospel to be proclaimed in word and deed.
- Holds the respect of colleagues in the deanery.
- Has good communication and organisation skills.
- Is able to negotiate conflicting demands.
- Has understanding and respect for those of other church traditions.
- Has a reasonable working knowledge of the deanery and its parishes.
- Inspires and encourages others.

The role of Deanery Co-ordinator is to provide a focal point for the organisation of Crossroads within the deanery, and the gifts and skills of the Deanery Co-ordinator are more important than the deanery role they currently hold.

### ***Why are the dates so early in September?***



The dates we are working with have been given to us by the Archbishop and the Northern Bishops and, as you can imagine, co-ordinating this many diaries is very complex! The dates give us an opportunity to

'kick start' September and begin a new period in the churches' year with a strong focus on outreach and evangelism. The key to making the dates work well will be good preparation and forward planning. In particular, if you want to do work in local schools, this will need to be organised in the summer term prior to schools breaking up for summer holidays.

### ***Do we have to get involved?***

As has been said before, the essence of Crossroads is local churches engaging in local mission and outreach... so churches can decide not to get involved. However, the experience of churches from Sheffield diocese in 2015 was that the Northern Bishops' mission was a real blessing. Churches who were hesitant about the mission but chose to get involved were delighted to have participated.

### ***Who do I contact for more information?***

For more information about Crossroads, contact your Deanery Co-ordinator or David Banbury and Stephanie Rankin at Diocesan Offices (contact information on page 2).

### ***What about finance?***

A budget for Crossroads covering things such as publicity, training and outreach resources has been built into the Diocesan budget. The visiting teams' travel costs are being paid from their own diocesan budgets. We hope that local church costs would be met from the PCC's budget for mission for 2016. If a deanery wants to put on larger mission events it may be possible to apply for small grants to help with costs.



### ***What about hosting the teams?***

Information about accommodating and feeding the team is on page 20.

## Prayer:

When Billy Graham, the vastly experienced mission speaker, was once asked to name the three most important things about a mission, he did not include preaching, nor the use of a stadium, though this would be the caricature of his style of mission. The first thing he singled out was prayer, the second ... prayer; and the third... prayer.



Prayer is essential in preparing for mission. In outreach, as in any other area of our lives, we are totally dependent on God. Though we need to put effort into preparing events, prayer is just as important and must remain central. Research has shown that evangelistic activities are more effective when Christians identify specific non-Christian friends and pray that they will come to faith. A mission will not bring people to faith unless Christians are actively praying for and making friends with non-Christians in their local neighbourhood.

### ***Suggestions for prayer:***

- Encourage people to identify three friends or family members who they hope would find faith in Christ, and then pray for opportunities to invite them to events.
- How about starting or ending each Deanery Synod and Clergy Chapter with a time of prayer for Crossroads?
- Include prayer for Crossroads in the intercessions in your Sunday and midweek services.
- Between Pentecost Sunday and Trinity Sunday (15<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2016) we will have a novena (period) of prayer for Crossroads.
- Each deanery could consider organising a prayer event or regular prayer gathering.
- Don't forget to pray for the team who will be coming to work in your deanery.

## Preparation - Getting Started:

Alongside communicating with God through prayer, good communication with people is also an essential part of preparing for Crossroads. Please make sure you keep members of the congregation regularly informed of plans and preparations. Communicate by a variety of means and never assume other people know something simply because you do!



Work with others to create a plan for your local involvement in the mission. Try to organise a handful of good quality events and don't try to do too much. Consider working in partnership with other churches to organise joint events.

Consider what will help get the parish ready for Crossroads. Things you may wish to consider are:

- Encouraging people to invest in relationships with people outside the life of the church.
- Form a local planning team who will help organise events at a local level.
- Use training events to equip people to feel more confident in living out and speaking about their faith. The following training events are planned:
  - GO, Runshaw College, Leyland - 16 April 2016 9.30am-4.00pm. This is an equipping event, organised between the Diocese of Blackburn, the Methodist Church Lancashire District and the United Reformed Church North Western Synod. It is aimed at equipping the local church for growth and will include workshops and exhibition stands.
  - In late May and most of June, we will run training evenings at venues across the diocese, where we plan to include information about organising outreach events, running enquirers courses and faith sharing/inviting. Details of dates and venues will follow.
- Encourage people to invite guests to social events at church.



- Don't wait until September to organise outreach events! Other things you could do include:
  - Visit some of the outreach events organised by churches in Preston to get ideas (Believe in Preston - 14-20 March 2016).
  - The Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations in June give a wonderful opportunity to organise a community celebration.
  - July 2016 is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme in which many people from Lancashire fought. Bring a group of people to the commemorative 'Brothers in Arms' outreach evenings in June and July. Details of dates and venues will follow.
- Developing a culture of invitation is very important to our mission preparation. The three 'mission' steps are pray, invite, bring. The simplest form of invitation is 'I'm going, it's going to be good, would you like to come too?'

### **Planning a Programme - First Steps:**

A basic rule in planning a mission is...

*'If we do something, God will do something; if we do nothing, nothing will happen'.*

We suggest that each church/parish tries to organise two or three events, which could be shared with other churches in the deanery or with other Christian churches in the area. The great thing is that most churches are experienced at putting on 'a bit of a do' and are able to organise great events. This is a good foundation in preparing for Crossroads.



When thinking about events to organise, you may find it helpful to consider the following questions:

- What are we already doing that could be used as an outreach event? For example men's meetings, women's groups, youth and children's work and existing groups and contacts.
- In our parish, what type of event would non-Christians be most likely to come to so they can hear the Good News in a clear and relevant way?
- What kind of events would church members find it easier to invite their friends and family to?
- How will we use the Crossroads team to present the Christian Faith in a positive, engaging, relaxed, natural and helpful way?
- What kind of venues would suit the events we are planning?

Outreach events work on a number of levels and it's important to clarify what type of event you are hoping to run.

### *Level One*

These events are mainly social with a very small amount of Christian content. This type of event is ideal for first contact with people.

### *Level Two*

An event that provides more information about the Christian Faith and encourages people to explore further.

### *Level Three*

These type of events explain clearly the central message of the Christian Faith, present people with the benefits and costs of choosing to be a committed Christian and present a clear invitation to respond to Jesus.



Key things to remember about any events you run:

- Choose a location that is easy to find and makes people feel at ease.
- All guests need to be made to feel welcome.
- Make sure people can find their way into the building, or consider having someone greeting guests at the door as they arrive.
- Events don't need to be big – how about organising some informal discussion groups in people's homes?
- For events with a charge, can the person inviting a friend offer to pay for their ticket?
- Make sure the Crossroads team are clear on the purpose of the event. Is it a level 1, 2 or 3 event?

A simple planning template for organising Crossroads events is being created. Churches will need to complete a sheet for each event they are proposing to run, keeping a version for their own records and also sending a copy to the Deanery Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will fit the proposed events into an overall deanery plan. Sending your plans to the Deanery Co-ordinator will ensure that we don't try arrange 15 events at the same time or leave the team with nothing to do. The Deanery Co-ordinator will liaise with local churches and will do their best to meet the requests they receive.

In putting together the mission programme it is important to leave space for the team to meet together and to pray. They may wish to do this first thing in the morning or perhaps to gather together for a shared lunch.

Do consider how you can use the Deanery Crossroads team to engage with local schools on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September. The final day of the mission, Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2016, is also the national day set aside for Education Sunday. You may wish to consider how you can involve your local schools in the mission focussed outreach services you are planning for Sunday morning.

## Planning a Programme - Choosing your Events:

### *The Pattern of the Crossroads Mission: the basic outline of the four days:*

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Thursday 8 Sept	Bishops and their teams travel to Blackburn Diocese	Commissioning Service in Blackburn Cathedral at 2.00pm	Community outreach events
Friday 9 Sept	School and community outreach events	School and community outreach events	Community outreach events
Saturday 10 Sept	Community outreach events	Community outreach events	Community outreach events
Sunday 11 Sept	Morning services	Final event for the whole diocese at 4.00pm	Travelling home

- **Commissioning service:** During this service the visiting teams will be commissioned and we will also pray for all our deaneries and the outreach events that have been organised. This service will be open to all local churches as well as the visiting bishops and their teams.
- **Final event:** Plans for a final Crossroads event are being made. This event, at which Archbishop Sentamu will speak, will be held on Sunday afternoon at a central location. More details about this event will be provided as soon as they are available.

### ***Deanery Welcome:***

Following the commissioning service at Blackburn Cathedral on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September, Bishops and their teams will travel to their assigned deaneries. It might be helpful to organise a central meeting with a welcome from the Area Dean and some interaction between members of the deanery and the visiting team. It



may also be helpful to take half an hour to brief the visitors on the finalised programme and to pray for it. Following this, team members should have time to get to their accommodation and meet their hosts.

### ***Community Events:***

Thursday evening, Friday and Saturday provide opportunities to organise community outreach events. Some suggestions are outlined below.

- **Servant evangelism.** There are many forms of this, including things like litter picking, washing cars, shoe cleaning and other events that bless your local community. Please remember: you will need to discuss these kinds of ideas with your visiting bishop!
- **In the open air.** Are there open spaces in your community (e.g. shops) where many people pass by?
  - Perhaps you could you set up a prayer table and offer to pray for people's needs? You may wish to also offer prayer for healing and wholeness.
  - You may wish to engage people with a short beliefs survey?
  - Perhaps you could set up a sofa with a big sign next to it, saying 'I will listen' and then make the mission team available for conversations.

Open air outreach doesn't have to mean shouting at people! It can be engaging and creative, but it works better in some places than others.

- **Local businesses.** This is a more challenging area. Churches are often very disconnected from local workplaces and can find that there is no real interest (or time) for the businesses to engage with the church. But you might feel that there is a way to offer something for businesses — maybe a lunch event on the Friday, for example. This might work particularly well if your visiting bishop happens to have a background in business, commerce or public services.

- **Food - Often a winner!** Many of the examples below will feature food. Why? Inviting people to a service may require them to jump a 'cultural hurdle'. An event with food and a speaker simply seems much less 'alien' to people unused to church events. It also models hospitality and community, which are two attractive qualities of church.



- **Events for different groups:**

- **Events for men and/or women.** Breakfast, lunch, dinner, BBQ with a bishop or team member to speak after the food. Sports-related events are also popular and are not just for men. Craft events or a pamper evening can also be popular mission events. Why not make sure that there is one event each for men and for women in your deanery? Or you could consider a 'Couples Night' with a talk related to marriage/life together.

- **Youth event** (e.g. Friday night)/**children's event** (e.g. Saturday morning). You'll need to check the skills of your visiting team for either event and it would certainly be advisable to involve local children's and youth workers for continuity etc. Bringing together youth and their friends from different churches, for example, could really encourage them. They might like to fire questions at a bishop

or team member, as well as enjoy food and lively activities.

You could organise a youth talent night in 'X Factor' style along with a short talk from a team member.



- **Interest based events:** What sorts of interests? To be honest, almost anything! Orienting a mission event around a theme obviously means it will appeal to a more limited group but, if you have a good mix of events across the deanery, this isn't a problem.
  - **Sports** (5-a-side football, rounders, badminton, golf, paintballing); can just be fun or a competition with prizes, presentation and a short talk
  - **Games** (darts, pool, skittles, ten-pin bowling, board games, scalextric even!); some of these allow lots of time to chat as you play and you could have a short talk and buffet at some point.
  - **Arts-based** event. Music, drama, paintings ... or a film night with discussion afterwards.
  - **Fun events**, such as a family fun day or a barn dance (suitable for all ages) and again a brief talk at the break.
  - **Cookery**. Events on a 'Great British Bake Off' theme, perhaps between a locally well-known person and the bishop (or someone from their team or a host vicar) can attract interest.
  - **Wine tasting evenings** or **brewery tours** can also be good mission events.
- **Apologetics:** This simply means 'giving a reason for the hope we have in Jesus' (1 Peter 3:15); meeting some of the challenges put to us by our society.
  - **Grill-a-bishop**. Many people have questions about Christian faith, including those within church. Too often our events do not allow space for questions/debate. You could run an 'Any Questions' event about matters of life and faith with either the visiting bishop on their own or a panel (could be a mix of locals with visiting team). The venue could



be church-based or a pub or somewhere like Costa Coffee (they will often open up in an evening for such an event for a nominal fee and the associated custom).

- **Themed event.** You might want to advertise a specific topic, e.g. one of the big questions such as suffering or other faiths or science and faith. If you are planning to do this, check in advance that the bishop is willing to address a specific topic. (NB. Some of the visiting bishops will be particularly strong on certain topics).

### ***Trying different venues:***

- **Pubs.** Pubs, bars and restaurants often make great venues for outreach events. You might wish to contact your local venue to see if they would host your Crossroads event. Be aware that Friday and Saturday evenings tend to already be busy/popular but they may have a function room you could use.



- **People's homes.** Churches often forget the simplest sort of event; Christians inviting a number of their friends to meet with one or two of the visiting team. This can either be 'a brew and a biscuit', 'coffee and cake' or over a meal. The team can either informally chat with people, seeing how conversations develop, or a team member could give a brief talk and then field questions. You could easily have 3-4 such events in the deanery at the same time.
- **Outside/other.** This could include detached youth work (streets, park), soup kitchen, night church for clubbers (if you are in a city centre area), etc.



## Schools:

We are very fortunate in our diocese to have strong connections with the world of education and a large family of church schools and Crossroads presents a marvellous opportunity to build on these links. Do consider how you will use members of the Crossroads team in local schools.



You will need to contact the schools before the summer holidays in order to make arrangements and organise input into the life of the school. If this is a first approach to a particular school, then speak to the head teacher (or possibly the head of RE or ethics in a secondary school).

The final day of the mission, Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2016, is also the national day set aside for Education Sunday. You may wish to consider how you can involve your local schools in the mission focussed outreach services you plan on Sunday morning.

- **Collective Worship input:** Sending a team into school opens up opportunities for creative input that are not easily reproduced by the regular visit of a minister on their own. You will need to give the visiting team clear information on how much time they have, whether there is any set theme, and a contact person in the school.
- **Lessons:** In primary schools, these are more often with Key Stage 2 classes. In secondary schools they most often take place in RE or Ethics lessons and an 'Any Questions' format may work well — or the school might have a specific ethical or spiritual theme that they'd like to explore with the visiting team (usually a mix of brief input and then questions).

- **Guidelines.** Good practice guidelines for mission work in schools will be made available. It is very important that mission teams understand what is appropriate in the schools context.

### **Invitation:**

Many outreach events suffer from the phenomenon of ‘dozens of nodding heads’. This is not people who are bored and nodding off, but folk nodding in agreement with the message that is being presented because they already believe it!



It is vitally important that we invite people who are not yet Christians to the Crossroads events we are organising. Churches often produce large quantities of publicity for distribution. Though this might be helpful, the most effective way of encouraging people to attend is a personal invitation. Most people attend because someone personally invited them rather than because of publicity.

The simplest form of invitation can be

*“I’m going, it’s going to be good, why don’t you don’t come too?”*

### **Making the most of Sunday morning services:**

**Invite a friend.** Those of you who have done Back to Church Sunday in the Season of Invitation will know that this is usually at the end of September, but we’d like to suggest that you make Back to Church Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September this year. Having the visiting Crossroads team provides you with a good opportunity to invite guests.

**Times and venues.** Clearly the bishop can't be everywhere! But ... does your pattern of services across the deanery allow them, say, to be at a 9.30am service in one place and 11.00am elsewhere? Secondly, bear in mind that some of their team will be preachers, so use them too!

**Type of service.** Some churches know that their best attendance or their highest number of newcomers is in, say, the all-age service. It's quite possible that this falls on a different Sunday of the month but, if you give enough notice, would it be worth switching it to make the most of the opportunity? 11<sup>th</sup> September 2016 is also Education Sunday, which provides an excellent mission opportunity to link with local schools and encourage pupils, parents and staff to participate in worship with the local church. Within the services you might find it helpful to also allow space for a team member to share their story of coming to faith in Christ or for other creative input, such as drama.

**Readings.** Sometimes lectionary readings do not readily lend themselves to a gospel message. However, we are fortunate that the Common Lectionary gospel reading for 11<sup>th</sup> September is Luke 15:1-10, providing an opportunity to explore how God seeks to find those who are 'lost' and restore them to relationship with Himself.

**Sermon.** The aim of the Crossroads mission is to share the Good News of Jesus with others. The sermon should have a clear outreach focus and encourage people to consider for themselves Jesus' invitation to follow him.

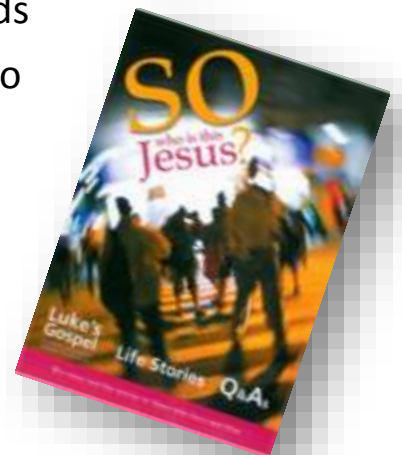
**Visitor-friendly service.** If you are making a special effort to invite guests, then make sure that the welcome is warm and genuine. This includes making sure that the service itself is accessible; visitors will not automatically know which page to turn to, or when they should sit or stand, etc.

## Resources:

**Publicity:** A template for invitation cards and posters onto which you can print local details is being designed. These will be available to download from the Diocesan Website in the summer.

**Event resources:** A range of materials, such as drinks coasters and information cards, will be available to use at Crossroads events. These will provide more information about exploring the Christian Faith.

**Follow up Booklets:** All the parishes involved in Crossroads will be provided with some high quality materials to give to people who want to know more about the Christian Faith. Churches will be given copies of a magazine called 'So, Who is this Jesus?' which includes Luke's Gospel, personal testimonies and some helpful apologetics material.



You may also wish to acquire your own resources. You could contact the Christian Publicity Organisation, Agape or your local Christian bookseller for suitable resources.

**Nurture course invitation cards:** We also suggest that at any Crossroads event you have information available about the enquirers' course that you have planned as part of the follow up to Crossroads.



## Follow Up:

There will be a number of people who will make a significant step of faith at an event in the Crossroads Mission. We need to be able to offer them ways to explore and grow in the faith, for example via courses such as Start!, Alpha, Christianity Explored, Pilgrim, Emmaus, etc. Look to run an enquirers' course following on from Crossroads, ideally starting at the end of September. It is important to fix the dates now, and organise the type of course, the venue and the leaders.

A variety of excellent courses exist and it is suggested you choose one that fits well in your local setting. If your church is used to running a particular course then you are encouraged to continue using that one. If you need advice, then please contact the Parish Mission Support Department at Diocesan Offices.

It is worth thinking through what you might do if there are only one or two people wishing to explore the Christian faith. Some of the courses can be adapted to very small numbers — or you could consider doing something jointly with other local churches or taking more of a mentoring approach.

## Hosting the Team:

We envisage that, by May, the Deanery Co-ordinator will be able to find out the size of the teams being brought by their visiting bishop. We expect teams will contain 5-6 people. Here are some simple guidelines regarding hospitality.

- **Bed and Breakfast.** We would suggest that you ask people to put up one or possibly two team members for three nights. When you are visiting a new place it is very helpful to have one settled base. If hosts know that they only need to provide breakfast, then this should encourage people to offer.

- **Other meals.** Your programme might well enable you to include food in mission events, which is a very simple way to solve your catering planning. If not, then aim for one ‘snack’ meal per day and one main meal; teams are generally overfed on missions! The visiting team may wish to have a light lunch together to give them a chance to catch up, plan and pray.



- **Dietary and other needs.** It’s important to ask about dietary restrictions (vegetarians, gluten free, etc.) and to communicate these to hosts and those doing any catering. Though less likely, team members might flag up specific issues relating to disability access, etc.
- **Choosing hosts.** In itself this can be part of the mission, e.g. with a more ‘fringe’ family or someone who is growing in their faith. You might need to help people not to be overawed at the thought of hosting a bishop!
- **Logistics.** As not all team members will bring cars, you may need to arrange transport to some events.

### Promoting Crossroads:



All too often, churches do fantastic work ‘under the radar’ and that means no one gets to hear about it! We often engage in mission in a similar way, but the more we share what we are doing, the more people will get to know about it, engage with us and, hopefully, hear the Good News along the way!

As there will be hundreds of events taking place across the Diocese from September 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> you are encouraged to build relationships with your local newspaper and promote local events directly to them.

### ***Publicity:***

- **Leaflet/invitations/posters.** Leaflets detailing events in your parish or deanery can be given to church members and can also be used as invitations. Don't forget to use posters on your noticeboards and in shops etc. too. Various customisable invitation and poster templates will be available on the Diocesan website, and you are welcome to use these.
- **Website and Social Media.** If you have a church website, make sure your events are advertised there. Don't forget to use social media such as Facebook and Twitter (use the handle @crossroads\_info)
- **Logo.** Use the Crossroads logo, which will be made available on the website. Having this same logo used across the diocese will make a powerful impact on local media.
- **Honesty.** If your event will include a message, which is appropriate for nearly all events, invitations should be open about this. Something like 'this will include a short presentation of the Christian message' is helpful at the bottom of an invitation. If the event is a worship service you don't really need to include this because it can be taken for granted.

### ***Diocesan Support:***

Some events could be of interest beyond your parish/deanery, so please let us know about them by emailing Stephanie Rankin.

In addition, Ronnie Semley, the Diocesan Communications Manager, will be covering a range of Crossroads events as well as promoting the whole mission to regional/national media.

You are encouraged to promote your own events to your local media. Advice about how to do this can be found on the diocesan website [www.blackburn.anglican.org](http://www.blackburn.anglican.org) under Home/News/Communication resources.

## Timeline:

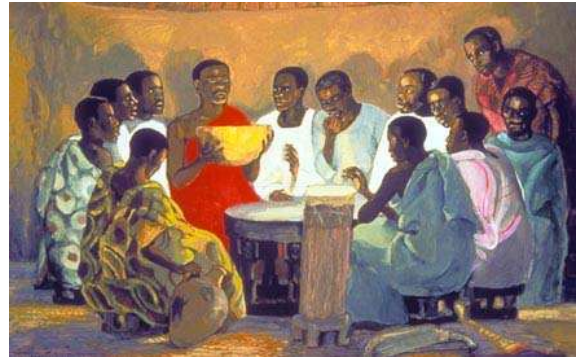
An overview of the key events related to Crossroads.

When?	What?
January/February	Attend Crossroads and Vision 2026 deanery evenings
January/February	Find Crossroads Deanery Co-ordinator
14 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> March	Consider attending some of the events planned as part of Preston's 'Believe in Preston' Mission event
March/April	Consider forming a Crossroads planning group for your parish
April 16 <sup>th</sup>	Training Event – GO, aimed at equipping the local church for growth with workshops and exhibition stands at Runshaw College, Leyland
Mid-April	Crossroads programme planning in churches and deaneries
May / June	Prayer focus from Pentecost to Trinity 15 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2016 Deaneries to possibly hold some prayer events for their area
End May	Initial draft deanery programmes ready. Where possible, arrange for bishops come to their host deaneries
End of May until end of June	Training evenings at venues across the diocese including information about organising outreach events, running enquirers courses and faith sharing/inviting. Details of dates and venues to follow
June	Finalise with your local schools any plans for visits during Crossroads
Early July	Final deanery programmes ready
Early September	Final checks, prayer and personal invitations
September 8 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup>	Crossroads Mission Events
Late September	Run Enquirers' Courses



## And finally:

The Christian faith held by each person reading this guide is a wonderful testimony to an effective piece of evangelism. Whether we learnt the faith at a young age through family, school, church or Sunday school or whether we came to faith later in life; our Christian commitment points towards people who cared enough about us to introduce us to Jesus.



Some people cynically dismiss missions such as Crossroads as ‘old hat’ or ‘hit and run’. The experience of Sheffield Diocese in 2015 was the Northern Bishops’ mission was anything but ‘old hat’. Thousands of people attended outreach events and many came from outside the worshipping life of the church. Sheffield Diocese has some wonderful stories of people finding faith in Jesus, and of people being encouraged to move on in their relationship with Him. Equally Crossroads will not be a ‘hit and run’ event if it is carefully integrated into the ongoing outreach of our churches and if appropriate follow up to the Crossroads mission is put in place.

The Crossroads mission in Blackburn diocese presents us with an amazing opportunity to share Christ with the people of Lancashire in a multitude of creative and imaginative ways.

In years to come, it will be wonderful to think of people who have come to faith through our Crossroads mission and who are thankful to God that we cared enough about them to share the Good News of Jesus with them.

Ahead of us lies much prayer, planning, preparation and perspiration. But, let’s remember the simple mission rule. *‘If we do something, God will do something; if we do nothing, nothing will happen.’*

**Notes:**

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# OUR DIOCESAN PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we embrace  
Your call for us to make  
disciples, to be witnesses and  
to grow leaders. Give us the  
eyes to see Your vision, ears to  
hear the prompting of Your  
Spirit and courage to follow in  
the footsteps of your Son, our  
Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen**



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN LANCASHIRE

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