

THE ANTIOCH NETWORK

Diverse Stream Lead

Making disciples by planting churches



Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to explore the Antioch Network.

This profile is more than a description of a role. It is an invitation to understand the vision, convictions and culture of a movement that exists to make disciples by planting churches.

As you read these pages, we hope you'll discover something of who we are, why we believe church planting matters, and the kind of leader we are praying God will bring to help shape the next chapter of Antioch.

Of course, you can always find out more at: www.antiochnetwork.org.uk

Why the Antioch Network Exists

The Antioch Network exists for one simple reason:

To make disciples by planting churches

We believe the local church is God's primary means of making disciples. When healthy churches are planted, people encounter Jesus, grow as disciples, discover their gifts and are sent to serve others. Families are strengthened, neighbourhoods are transformed and the Kingdom of God becomes visible in ordinary places.

Our call is to fulfil Jesus' command to "go and make disciples of all nations" through planting small churches that plant small churches.

We deliberately plant churches that are typically between twenty and sixty people. Small churches create space for participation rather than spectatorship. They enable local leadership to emerge, make apprenticeship natural and provide opportunities for ordinary people to discover extraordinary calling.

We have learnt that churches don't plant churches.

People plant churches.

Antioch focuses attention on developing leaders so we continue to plant churches. We want to see ordinary women and men discover the calling God has placed on their lives and be released to serve him with confidence.

Since 2018, Antioch has grown into a network of churches across Greater Manchester, with more already in development. Along the way we have celebrated baptisms, watched new worshipping communities take root and seen leaders emerge from places we might never have expected.



We have also known disappointment. Some church plants have struggled and a few have failed. Leadership transitions have been painful. These stories have become part of God's formation of us. They have taught us humility, perseverance and a deeper dependence upon Jesus.

As we look towards the next chapter, our prayer is not simply for more churches.

It is for more disciples. More leaders. More healthy churches.

More communities transformed by the love of Christ.

Recognising the Work of the Spirit

How Antioch Began

Antioch grew out of church planters recognising the work of the Holy Spirit.

As churches were planted in diverse communities and on deprived estates, we watched people encounter Jesus, disciples grow in confidence and new leaders emerge. Again and again, we found ourselves asking the same question:

How can this multiply?

That question has shaped everything that has followed.

Over time, God gathered leaders, churches and relationships into what has become the Antioch Network. We continue to develop the structures and rhythms needed to serve that calling, and those structures exist to support what God is already doing.

Our starting point has been recognising the work of the Holy Spirit and joining in with him.

This is the only healthy way it works.

Why Greater Manchester?

Greater Manchester is one of the most exciting mission fields in the United Kingdom.

It is home to more than 2.8 million people. It is wonderfully diverse. It contains communities from every continent, over 200 languages, thriving centres of innovation and enterprise, alongside some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. It has more university students than any city outside of London.

Antioch works in the poorer areas of the city. Of course, it can be a challenge: sometimes it feels as if the needs are greater than our ability to meet them.

But our call is to bring the gospel to the poor and to the places where it isn't heard.

Every one of these people matters deeply to Jesus. God is at work across this city region, drawing people to himself and inviting his Church to join him in that work.

That is why Antioch is here.

We plant churches where people can encounter Jesus, become disciples and discover the life he offers.

How We See Things

Everything we do flows from a number of deeply held convictions.

We recognise the Holy Spirit is already at work.

The local church is God's primary means of making disciples.

God delights in calling ordinary people into extraordinary ministry.



Michelle who leads our Oldham plant shares some of her story:

"I had a really tough up bringing full of drink, abuse, trauma and then violence. Aged 10 I committed my first crime which was arson and burglary. That was my life – offending and being in and out of prison. I was married at 16, which was a violent relationship and I then I went from abusive relationship to abusive relationship, many times finding myself in life threatening situations. But this was normal for me. Then I met Daz and we both

became Christians, which transformed our relationship. I met Jesus through reading a journey into life booklet and he met me in my bedroom and filled the void in my life that I'd been trying to fill. Jesus set me on fire for him. I was telling everyone, shops, streets, friends, family, even going in church and telling them too. Even when I went through mental health crises, I came out the other end even more on fire for him. For years I then worked in different types of ministry, but so often me and my past has not been accepted. When Antioch came along, they picked up and helped me do what I've always been called to do. They found a way of releasing me as a church, and we are now seeing loads of people meeting Jesus, getting baptised. You know I could go on and on about the lives we've seen changed, but you know what, NOTHING BEATS WHAT GOD HAS DONE! Right now, in Antioch there's an excitement and he going to do so much more."

People encounter Jesus, are transformed by him within the life of the local church, and through them families, neighbourhoods and communities are changed.

We plant small churches on purpose because they create opportunities for participation, leadership and multiplication. Most Antioch churches are led by lay leaders serving part-time, demonstrating that church planting is not reserved for a few professionals but is a calling that God gives to his whole Church.

Disciples make disciples.

Leaders develop leaders.

Churches become sending communities.

This is how movements grow.

One Calling, Two Streams



God's heart is for the nations.

God's heart is also for those experiencing poverty and deprivation.

Across Scripture we see both woven together in the story of God's redemption, and Antioch seeks to reflect that same calling through two complementary streams of church planting.

Our **Estates Stream** gives particular attention to communities experiencing social and economic deprivation, recognising God's heart for those too often overlooked.

Our **Diverse Stream** gives particular attention to the vibrant multicultural communities that now shape Greater Manchester, reflecting God's vision of people from every tribe, language and nation worshipping together around the throne of Christ.

These are complementary expressions of the same gospel.

Together, these two streams help us live out the calling God has given Antioch.

One of the great joys of church planting has been watching these churches learn from one another, pray for one another and encourage one another. Each brings unique gifts. Together they reveal something richer of God's Kingdom than either could alone.

The Opportunity – Local Lead + Network Oversight

This is more than a role.

It is an opportunity to help shape a movement.

Over the past few years, God has been kind to Antioch. Churches have been planted. Leaders have emerged. Trusted relationships have been formed across Greater Manchester and within the Diocese. We have learnt much, celebrated much and, at times, been stretched deeply.

As we look ahead, we believe God is inviting us into a new chapter. One with deeper roots and wider reach.

The Diverse Stream Lead will play a significant part in that story.

This is a strategic leadership role with a deeply local expression. It combines the privilege of leading an Antioch congregation with the responsibility of strengthening existing churches, raising new leaders and helping establish new worshipping communities across some of the most culturally diverse neighbourhoods in Greater Manchester.

We are not simply looking after what already exists.

We are contending for what God wants to grow next.

Along the way, we have learnt that God's work rarely follows a tidy plan. Some church plants have grown steadily from years of faithful investment. Others have appeared unexpectedly, like wild blackberry bushes, taking root where we hadn't anticipated and bearing fruit we could never have planned. Part of this role is recognising those opportunities, discerning where the Holy Spirit is at work and helping them flourish.

Rather than seeing this role as a collection of responsibilities, we see it as three interconnected callings:

Leading a Local Church

Everything in Antioch begins locally.

The Diverse Stream Lead will lead an Antioch congregation, modelling the kind of ministry we long to see across the network.

This means preaching the gospel, making disciples, nurturing leaders, caring for people and helping the church become deeply rooted in its neighbourhood.

We have learnt that credibility across the network begins with faithful local leadership. Strategy should always grow out of lived experience.



Raising Leaders

Churches don't plant churches. People plant churches. If there is one area that will shape Antioch's future more than any other, it is this. The Diverse Stream Lead will spend significant time recognising potential, investing deeply in people and helping them discern the calling God has placed on their lives. Some will become church planters. Others will lead ministries, develop teams or strengthen existing congregations. Many will simply become more confident disciples of Jesus. Leadership development is rarely dramatic. More often it happens over coffee, chai, around Scripture, in the ordinary rhythms of church life and through years of faithful encouragement.

Raising leaders in the diverse stream means being able to see beyond language barriers and cultural barriers, to be able to listen and imagine what God could

be doing through people whose outlook might be very different from our own. We're looking for someone who has a good understanding of the way that language and culture works in shaping people, and who can see God's calling on people of different backgrounds.

At the heart of this calling is apprenticeship. We want every church to become a place where disciples make disciples and leaders develop leaders, creating a culture in which people are encouraged, equipped and released into all that God has for them.



Strengthening the Movement

The Diverse Stream Lead will serve as part of Antioch's senior leadership team, helping shape the direction, culture and future of the network.

Raising leaders in the different cultures of the Antioch Network is an art. The diverse stream has leaders born in Nepal, Nigeria, India, Ghana, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and even the UK. Add in the parents of the British born, and we also have Yemen and Pakistan. It's a wonderful team, united by our vision, but it takes tact and wisdom to help people grow closer to each other, the wider network, and to harness our diversity to reach the city. The diverse lead will

help that to happen, and support the overall leader of the network to keep the movement strong and united.

This will happen as the diverse lead supports existing church planters, helps prepare future plants, contributes to our church planting course (REAP). They will work alongside colleagues and encourage generosity between churches.

No one leads Antioch alone.

Healthy movements grow through healthy relationships, and we are committed to cultivating a culture where leaders pray together, learn together, encourage one another and share honestly in both the joys and challenges of ministry.

What Success Looks Like:

Success in Antioch is not measured simply by attendance or activity.

We are contending to see...

- People discovering Jesus Christ for the first time.
- Disciples growing in confidence and maturity.
- Leaders emerging from within local communities.
- Churches becoming deeply rooted in their neighbourhoods.
- New congregations being planted.
- Partnerships across cultures becoming stronger.
- Prayer deepening across the network.
- The love of Christ becoming increasingly visible throughout Greater Manchester.

These are not targets to achieve but rather signs of God's Kingdom breaking in.

Life in Antioch

Antioch is a family of leaders who strengthen one another as we lead churches, make disciples and plant new churches. Together, that's how a movement grows.

Church planting is deeply joyful.

It is also demanding.

There are seasons of great encouragement and seasons when perseverance matters more than visible fruit.

That is why we believe no one should plant alone.

We have learnt that healthy churches grow out of healthy leaders. So we intentionally create rhythms that help us keep Jesus at the centre, recognise the work of the Holy Spirit and strengthen one another for the work he has called us to.

We Pray Together

We begin with prayer because we begin by recognising the work of the Holy Spirit.

Before we plant churches, we pray.

Before we make significant decisions, we pray.

Before we respond to new opportunities, we pray.

Our gatherings are shaped by worship, prayer, Scripture and listening together. We want to remain dependent on the Holy Spirit, recognising where he is already at work and responding with courage and faith.



We Grow Together

Leadership is formed over time, through relationships of trust, built up through friendship and service together.

Through REAP, coaching, apprenticeships and ongoing friendships, we invest deeply in leaders because we believe movements grow as leaders grow.

At the heart of Antioch is a culture of apprenticeship. We believe disciples make disciples and leaders develop leaders. That means learning alongside one another, coaching as we go, entrusting people with real responsibility and growing through faithful encouragement over time. Apprenticeship is a culture we are seeking to cultivate in every church.

We have seen God raise ordinary people into leadership again and again. Our joy is not simply seeing leaders emerge, but watching them discover the calling God has placed on their lives and helping them flourish within it.



We Walk Together

We try to tell the truth.

Church planting is joyful.

It is also costly.

Some churches grow quickly. Others grow slowly. Some leaders experience remarkable breakthroughs. Others faithfully sow seeds they may never see flourish.

John shares about Cheetham Hill:

“We had an extremely gifted group of young people from Cambridge who had a heart to plant in Cheetham Hill, one of the toughest and most Muslim parts of Manchester. They were joined by some experienced missionaries. Given the calibre of people involved we didn’t recruit an overall leader from outside. Over time it became apparent that the plant was struggling to gain traction with the locals. They struggled to get the right venue, and discouragement began to set in. Volunteer leaders struggled to give the church the direction it needed. The costly but key learnings that came from this were firstly, we need to follow our own principles. We appoint leaders for a reason, and the volunteer leaders in the church were brave and willing, but lacked the experience to thrive under the intense pressure of planting in the area. Secondly, planting is tough, it is easy to forget how much it hurts so let’s make sure there’s margin. Thirdly, resilience is essential plant leaders and the team need to know how cultivate what we call “stickability” the quality that makes people want to join churches and become part of the community.

We celebrate new churches together. We pray for one another through disappointments. We make space for honest conversations when ministry is hard. We cheer one another on because we're contending for one another as much as we are for the churches we lead.

We are in this together. We are a team, and over time we become friends. That happens in the cut and thrust of mission and church planting, as we pray together, eat together and walk alongside one another.

We want to be the kind of family where leaders know they are loved before they are needed, where honesty is valued above performance and where challenges are recognised as central to our formation.

Because no one leads Antioch alone.



How Antioch Works

Healthy structures create the freedom for healthy leaders to plant healthy churches.

As Antioch has grown, we have developed patterns, structures and relationships that help leaders flourish, churches grow in health and new communities be

planted. These structures are not the reason Antioch exists. They exist to serve the mission God has given us.

Growing Together

Church planting is never a solo endeavour: Every Antioch leader belongs to a wider family that prays together, learns together and shares both the joys and challenges of ministry.

Isa's journey from Mormon to Church plant lead:

"I've always found life quite difficult, but have found a deep sense of security through the death and resurrection of Jesus, that I have an inheritance in the Kingdom of God, that my sins have been forgiven and that the Holy Spirit is working in my life. But particularly that I access all this through faith in him. It is the free gift of God's grace, received through faith alone in Christ alone. He does it in us rather than we do it ourselves – which was my Mormon background. This has been a huge comfort to me – not just to understand Jesus, but to understand him through the gospel. One of the Antioch leaders explained to me that we meet Jesus through his word, his people and through his Spirit. And this is how I try to lead Encounter Church (Part of Antioch), by creating an environment where the Spirit of God, the people of God and the word of can intersect together right there and meet Jesus for salvation and sanctification. My journey to becoming a Christian was not a light bulb moment but more like a sunrise, where gradually light breaks out and illuminates the darkness. As I spent more time in the word, with the people and the Spirit I found changing and I want to help others do the same. Leading in Antioch has been challenging, it has definitely pushed and I have definitely grown. Being released into leadership without needing formal training has given me opportunities I don't think I'd of been able to take if I'd needed qualifications. Antioch has created a pathway where I can serve in the church without any formal credentials, but have really helpful supervision, apprenticed on the job – overseen by those in authority. This has been so helpful and has given me the opportunity grow personally in the word and lead from that place of growth. It's enabled me to mentor people, to shape and form the community and even though that has been difficult at times it has also been a great joy."

REAP is our church planting pathway, helping leaders and teams prepare well before a church is planted. Alongside this, coaching, regular gatherings and ongoing support help leaders continue to grow long after launch.

At the heart of Antioch is a culture of apprenticeship. We believe disciples make disciples and leaders develop leaders. That means learning alongside one another, coaching as we go, entrusting people with real responsibility and growing through faithful encouragement over time. Apprenticeship is a culture we are seeking to cultivate in every church.

As churches mature, we encourage them to become increasingly generous—sharing leaders, resources, learning and encouragement across the network. Over time, we hope every church becomes a sending church, helping establish new worshipping communities across Greater Manchester.

Who We're Praying For

As we've prayed about this appointment, we've been asking Jesus to bring the person he is preparing to serve in this role. Someone with the leadership experience, potential and resilience to help lead the next chapter of the Antioch Network.

Perhaps, as you've read this profile, you've found yourself recognising something of the story God has been writing in your own life. A love for Jesus. A desire to make disciples through the local church. A growing sense that he may be calling you to serve among the wonderfully diverse communities of Greater Manchester.

We're praying for someone who is committed to following Jesus and helping others do the same.

Someone who wants to keep being shaped by Scripture, learning to recognise the work of the Holy Spirit and growing as a disciple.

Someone who is committed to cultivating patience when things are hard, courage when things are scary and humility when the Lord has other plans.

Someone who enjoys investing in people, helping others discover the calling God has placed on their lives and finding joy in releasing them into it.

Someone who is willing to listen well, learn from others and build trust across different cultures, traditions and communities.

Someone who can think ahead without losing sight of the people in front of them. Someone who is willing to take faithful risks when they sense the Lord leading, while remaining deeply rooted in prayer, the local church and the team around them.

Above all, we're praying for someone who loves Jesus, loves his Church and wants to give themselves to making disciples by planting churches.

It's a wholehearted role, for a whole hearted person

Partnership and Accountability

The Antioch Network is part of the Diocese of Manchester and operates under a Bishop's Mission Order.

The Diverse Stream Lead will work closely with the Clergy Lead, the Antioch Leadership Team, colleagues across the network and leaders within the Diocese. This role combines local church leadership with wider responsibility for the life and health of the movement.

Antioch is governed by a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), whose trustees provide oversight for finance, safeguarding, governance and the long-term health of the network. Alongside this, we work closely with diocesan colleagues, ensuring Antioch remains accountable, well supported and fully connected to the wider mission of the Diocese.

Safeguarding is central to the life of every Antioch church. Every congregation has local safeguarding leadership, supported by network and diocesan structures, helping us create churches that are safe, healthy and trustworthy.

Looking Ahead

We believe Antioch's next chapter will not simply be measured by the number of churches we plant, but by the number of disciples we raise, leaders we release and communities that are transformed by the love of Christ.

Healthy structures create the freedom for healthy leaders to plant healthy churches.

That is why we continue investing in prayer, apprenticeship, leadership development and church planting—trusting God for deeper roots, greater fruit and many more lives transformed by Jesus.

Come and Join the Story

When Barnabas arrived in Antioch, Acts tells us that he “**saw the grace of God.**” He recognised that God was already at work and encouraged the believers to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

That has become our prayer too.

We long for people to look at the Antioch Network and see the grace of God.

Not because our churches are large.

Not because our structures are impressive.

But because Jesus is changing lives.

Across Greater Manchester we are seeing people encounter Christ, disciples grow in confidence, leaders emerge from unexpected places and new worshipping communities take root. We are deeply grateful for all that God has done.

We also believe he is not finished.

There are still communities without an accessible Christian witness.

There are still people waiting to discover the hope of the gospel.

There are still leaders whose calling has yet to be recognised and churches that have yet to be planted.

Perhaps God is already preparing them.

Perhaps, as you've read this profile, you've found yourself recognising something of the story he has been writing in your own life.

If you've been encouraged by what God is doing through the Antioch Network, and you find yourself sensing the Holy Spirit drawing you towards this role, we'd love to have a conversation.

Whether or not this is the next step God has for you, we would be delighted to meet you, pray with you and discern his leading together.

Thank you for taking the time to read this profile.

May God continue to guide you as you seek to follow him.