

GROWING IN FAITH | LIFE

The Bishop's Certificate
in Discipleship

2023 - 2024

Spend a year becoming more confident about
your Christian faith



The Diocese of
Southwark

Walking | Welcoming | Growing

Growing in Faith and Life

The Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship

2023 - 2024

Growing in Faith and Life is a course taking place between September 2023 and June 2024. After introductory sessions, it has six modules. It ends with a residential 24 hours. Those who complete the course are awarded the Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship.

- **Following**
About the New Testament
- **Remembering**
About the Old Testament
- **Exploring**
About the history of the church and what it means to be Anglican
- **Believing**
About what Christians believe
- **Deepening**
About living, serving and praying as a follower of Jesus
- **Expecting**
About putting your future into God's hands



Is it for me?

It's for anybody who wants to be more informed and confident about what they believe, read the Bible with more understanding, and reflect on their journey as a Christian.

People exploring whether God might be calling them to ordination, or to be a Reader or Evangelist often take the course. For those training as a SPA (Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary), a Pioneer, or a Commissioned Children and Youth Leader the Bishop's Certificate is their first year.

However, anybody who wants to love and serve the Lord faithfully will benefit from this course. Most people do it for the joy of growing in faith.

About the course



Each module has five sessions, and you can choose to do them on a weekday evening or a Saturday morning. You can also choose whether you want to do the course live in a venue or online from your home using Zoom.

During each session a tutor will give you some input to think about, and guide you through discussions, creative activities and time to think by yourself.

There is a course handbook which gives you everything you need, and plenty to read between sessions. Those who take the course really seriously supplement this by reading other recommended books and websites. There is a library at Trinity House (the diocesan office near London Bridge) and all Bishop's Certificate participants have a ticket.

Both the in-person and online courses climax in June 2024 with a 24-hour residential event at Wychcroft, the Southwark Diocese retreat centre set in beautiful Surrey countryside.

Later in the year a service in Southwark Cathedral celebrates the achievements of everyone who has taken part.



Is it hard work?

There are two routes through the course. The first is to attend the sessions, join in the discussions, and enjoy what you are learning. There is no pressure. At the end of the year you will receive a scroll from the Bishop in recognition that you completed the course.

The second route is to undertake a short assignment at the end of each module. You can submit a formal piece of writing, or a more creative and personal reflection. They will be marked in an encouraging way. At the end of the year you will be presented with the Bishop's Certificate. If this is the first step to becoming a lay or ordained leader (or if you just like a challenge) this is the route for you.



Which format is right for me?

The in-person course will be at Trinity House in a group of about a dozen. We recommend this for the joy of meeting Christians who have had different experiences and hearing their stories.

The online course uses Zoom. You will need access to wi-fi and a computer with a microphone and camera. We can explain how to use Zoom if you have never done it before.

When, where and how much?

The course will be taught in four groups, and you choose one.

- **Tuesday evenings from 6.30-8.30pm**

This will be taught at Trinity House, 4 Chapel Court, Borough High Street, London, SE1 1HW, beginning on 19 September. It is an 8 minute walk from London Bridge Station, and buses 21, 35, 133 and 343 stop outside. There is no car parking at Trinity House.

- **Wednesday evenings from 7.30-9.30pm**

This will be taught online, using Zoom, beginning on 20 September.

- **Thursday evenings from 7.30-9.30pm**

This will be taught online, using Zoom, beginning on 21 September.

- **Saturday mornings from 10.00am-12.00noon**

This will be taught at Trinity House, beginning on 16 September.

The cost of the course is £220 (including the residential weekend). You will need to pay £40 of that as a non-returnable deposit to secure your place. Some parishes are able to support participants financially to undertake the course. We are determined that no one should be excluded on grounds of cost, and we would welcome a conversation about grants or flexible ways of paying if that would help you. If you are doing the course because it is part of your training for a Commissioned ministry, separate arrangements will be made and we will contact you.

How to apply

Send an email to bishopscertificate@southwark.anglican.org, and we will send you an application form and a full list of dates. Use the same email address if you have any questions about the course.

Previous participants said:

‘The Bishop’s Certificate is inspirational and I am so happy to be taking part in it. I want to thank the organisers for being so kind and helpful.’

One of the participants in the Bishop’s Certificate in 2023-23