

Network



The magazine of the Diocese of Sheffield
Issue 20 Spring 2023



**Easter Vigil
Service**

**Coronation
Celebrations**

**Church Graft
Success**

www.sheffield.anglican.org

Note from the Editors

Welcome to the Spring edition of Network magazine! A lot has happened in the diocese already in 2023 and it's been heartening to see local communities coming together to help as best they can during a difficult time for many.

We have been part of the Communications and Learning team for just over a year now and are very grateful for the welcome we've received. It's been wonderful hearing people's stories and getting to know them more. We are fortunate to have people from a diverse range of backgrounds and traditions coming forward with powerful testimonies across the diocese.

Spring 2023 will include the Coronation of King Charles III in May, an event many of us won't have experienced before. Read on and you'll see a selection of some of the local events highlighted in our diocese to help bring the community together. Later that month is Thy Kingdom Come, an opportunity to pray for growth of the church here and globally.

We want to emphasise that Network magazine is for everyone, whether you are a Christian or not or whether you are from the diocese or not. We look forward to sharing more exciting updates for the diocese throughout the year, so watch this space!

Ben Fearn and Kellianne Montgomery
Communications and Learning team

With thanks to all those that have told their stories throughout the articles. Title image: All Saints Ecclesall

TEA, COFFEE &
LUNCH PROVIDED
24 JUNE 2023
9.30-15.00
ROTHERHAM UTD FC
AESSAL NEW YORK STADIUM
DON ST, ROTHERHAM
S60 1FJ

**PARISH
SAFEGUARDING
OFFICER
CELEBRATION
DAY**

**JOIN YOUR PSO COLLEAGUES, BISHOP PETE AND THE SENIOR DIOCESAN TEAM TO RECOGNISE,
SUPPORT AND CELEBRATE THE VITAL WORK OF PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS**

Welcome from Bishop Pete



Dear friends in the Lord,

Welcome to another edition of our Network magazine, published on the cusp of Holy Week.

This feels timely indeed. Globally and nationally, there are uncertain times. And for the Church of England too, the future is particularly unpredictable at present. Inevitably, this is causing many of us to feel great stress and anxiety. It is easy for us to find that our joy in the Lord is squeezed out of our discipleship.

But Holy Week drives us back to the very core of our faith, as we recall again the passion, death and resurrection of our Saviour. Holy Week can helpfully remind us that a settled and predictable future is in fact a luxury for followers of the Lord Jesus. To be a Christian is to walk the way of the cross. It is an irreducibly costly path. To be a Christian is to wager everything, even life itself, on the truth of Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Day. To be a Christian is to stake everything not on this world, but on God's coming kingdom.

And meanwhile, for as long as the Lord grants us breath, we are called to seek his kingdom and its righteousness, day by day, in the situations and circumstances where he has called us to serve him. We are called to serve hopefully and joyfully as we anticipate our eternal destiny, which is to share in the Lord's own glory. To that end, it is good to watch for the signs of God's kingdom and to draw encouragement from the moments and places in which we discern the Holy Spirit at work.

To that end, I commend the contents of this edition of Network to you. I urge you to savour the good news stories in these pages – about Dust and Glory, Net Zero, Focal Ministry, a New Congregation and the Centenary Project. I pray that as you read them, you will be encouraged and granted new joy in the Lord.

With every blessing

+Pete

The Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox
Bishop of Sheffield

Contents

- 5 **Lent and Easter 2023: Being a Light Where You Are**
- 7 **Sheffield Easter Vigil Service**
- 8 **Celebrating King Charles III's Coronation in Thorpe Hesley**
- 9 **Double Celebration in Kimberworth**
- 10 **Illuminated Gospel Coronation Project**
- 12 **Strengthening Community Spirit at East Doncaster**
- 14 **Building Others Up in Leadership: Kilnhurst**
- 16 **The Role of Church Buildings in Striving for Net Zero**
- 18 **'Thy Kingdom Come' – A Neglected Prayer?**
- 19 **Introducing... Deliberately Digital**
- 20 **Generosity Leads to Revitalisation in Sheffield**
- 22 **Life After a Church Graft: Christ Church Endcliffe**
- 23 **The Surprising Benefits on the Journey to a New Website**
- 25 **Building Foundations Day: Building up Focal Ministers**
- 26 **A Week in the Life of the Centenary Project**

Lent and Easter 2023: Being a Light Where You Are

Lights for Christ Enabler Hannah Sandoval takes a look at how we can relate the love of Jesus to others this Easter.



Hannah Sandoval

Followers of Jesus often choose to mark Lent by giving something up – perhaps resisting the temptation to eat chocolate or abstaining from meat or alcohol. During this season, our worship takes a more reflective turn, and this solemnity is often echoed in the muted décor of our churches.

Part of this turn towards the contemplative is recognising our own shortcomings, with the idea of failure forming the backdrop to the Church of England's 'Dust and Glory' Lent campaign. This year's resources are informed and inspired by the Archbishop of Canterbury's 2023 Lent Book, [Failure: What Jesus said about sin, mistakes and messing stuff up](#) (SPCK publishing) by Bishop Emma Ineson, who has also co-written the daily reflections booklet for adults

(Church House Publishing).

The Diocese of Sheffield's Lights for Christ Enabler Hannah Sandoval talks about the importance of recognising our own failures:

"I think being open and talking about our own mistakes and challenges makes us more relatable and approachable as Christians. Some of our friends and neighbours might feel that they are 'too bad' to come to church, but we can share the good news with them that they are not alone - all have sinned and fall short of God's glory, and are all justified freely by God's grace."

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York say 'Dust and Glory' is an opportunity to "explore how we can live well with the mess of everyday life" and in addition to this, testimonies have been shared from clergy and lay people across the Diocese of Sheffield throughout Lent.

In an addition to thinking about what we might give up during this season, Hannah Sandoval wonders which new habits we might also take on:

"Let's think afresh about how we can receive Christ's light, how we might walk in Christ's light and how we can reflect Christ's light to others each day, in the community where God has placed us. Often in our Lights for Christ workshops we talk about becoming more like Jesus and doing what he did, but perhaps a good way of thinking about it is to consider what Jesus would do if he were living in your time and context - if he were a person living in Rotherham, Doncaster or Sheffield, in your place of work and at your stage of life, how would he conduct



Arise: March

himself? How would he speak and interact with others?

Praying for your local area can be a helpful way to reflect on how God is calling you to be a representative of his Kingdom where you are. Prayer walks have been taking place in Sheffield throughout this month as part of the Arise:March campaign, with people being encouraged to continue doing this wherever they live into Holy Week and beyond.

Hannah says the idea behind prayer walking is simple but powerful:

“It doesn’t need to be anything big or fancy. It’s just walking around your area and praying for the things you see, the people you meet and the needs of the surrounding area. We’ve produced a prayer walking guide to help anyone who isn’t sure where to start (see QR code on this page).”

At Easter time it is important to be prepared to respond to questions about faith from people who may not be familiar with church. Hannah adds that this may be one of the few chances throughout the year where people might be more receptive to talking about faith:

“Holy Week is an especially good time to be intentional in the way you talk about your faith - people are perhaps a little bit more aware that it’s an important week in the Christian calendar. Your friends, neighbours and family members

might ask you why you’re going to particular services or doing something special over Easter weekend, such as a Good Friday meditation or vigil for Easter Eve (see Dean Abi’s article on page 7 about the Easter Vigil that will be held at the Cathedral this year). People often ask why Good Friday is called good when it involves suffering and death – this is a great opportunity to share with them the joy that comes on Easter morning.

“During Wear Your Faith Fortnight last year, we talked a lot about 1 Peter 3:15 and always being prepared to give a reason for the hope that you have. This is something we can be prepared for all year round – especially at Christmas and Easter, when we might get all sorts of questions coming our way, so I would encourage you to be open and prepared to give a simple answer explaining why this season is important to you as a Christian.”



Scan the QR
code for more
information
on the prayer
walking app!

Sheffield Easter Vigil Service

Dean Abi Thompson looks ahead to the night before Easter Sunday for a service of hope and celebration.

The Easter Vigil on the night before Easter Sunday is far and away my favourite service of the whole year. It is full of mystery and packed with drama. There is darkness and light and after the long walk to Jerusalem, the agonising wait in the Garden of Gethsemane and the desolation as we stand at the foot of the cross there is JOY and hope as we celebrate the risen Christ with cacophonous bell ringing and rip-roaring Alleluias!

Traditionally this is the time of year for new Christians to be baptised and confirmed and we invite churches across the Diocese to make your way to the Cathedral on this holiest of nights (with or without candidates for baptism and confirmation) to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The service begins with a bonfire lit outside the Cathedral. The flames begin to grow and the Paschal Candle is marked with studs filled with a tiny grain of incense – each stud placed to remember the wounds of Christ on the cross. The huge candle is lit and carried into the Cathedral and gradually makes its way to the front as the candles of all those gathered are lit, filling the place with light. During this procession, an ancient hymn dating from the 5th century known as the Exultet is sung. It speaks of the 'happy fault' of Adam that allows for the death of Christ over which he is victorious, bringing an end to death itself. It speaks of the blessedness of this holy night and most wonderfully, it celebrates the hard work of the bees that have laboured to make the candle wax that plays such a central part to this act of worship:

***Therefore, heavenly Father, in this our Easter joy
accept our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering.
this wax, the work of bees and the hands of your ministers.
As we gaze upon the splendour of this flame
fed by melting wax conceived by mother bee,
grant that this Easter Candle may make our darkness light.***

The gathered people sing the Gloria, and as the music begins bells are rung so loudly that your ears pop – a symbol of Christ trampling death itself with death and emerging victorious. Again and again the shout goes up 'Christ is Risen! Alleluia!'

A new member of God's church is always a cause for celebration, but this service is extra special, and I would love to see the tradition of baptisms and confirmations from across the Diocese returning to the Cathedral on Easter Eve. If you've already organised your confirmation services this year, don't worry, there's always next year and the year after.

There's also going to be wonderful fireworks at the end of the service – lighting up the city sky with the Good News of Jesus Christ, and him RISEN!

The Easter Vigil service takes place at Sheffield Cathedral at 8pm on Saturday 8th April.

Celebrating King Charles III's Coronation in Thorpe Hesley

Revd Lynn Broadhead shares Holy Trinity's exciting plans to mark an historic Coronation.



A packed crowd is expected in Thorpe Hesley in May to celebrate the Coronation of Charles III, a royal event which many will be experiencing for the very first time.

Holy Trinity Church is hosting a community event the weekend before on Monday 1st May (the first May Bank Holiday). Starting at 11am through to 4pm, the event will include stalls; arts and crafts; a live DJ; games and a flower display.

A craft morning is being planned for April 29th where the toddler group and children from the Sunday Clubs can get involved. It's also hoped a huge floral display will be presented within the church.

The Oversight Minister for Holy Trinity (along with St Thomas' Kimberworth and St John's Kimberworth Park) is Revd Lynn Broadhead:

"We do these sort of big events three times a year, from a May Day celebration to a village show and then the Christmas market. It's great because we open up the church to encourage the community to build up relationships and I have to say they're

always really well attended. The community love to come into whatever we do.

"The community here is made up of quite a few younger people who will have never experienced a Coronation before. Personally, I've only known the Queen and she was the Queen when I was born. So, I think for a lot of us it's a big celebration and for some it's possibly the only chance they'll have of seeing something like this."

The event will include Coronation Ale (from a local supplier) and prosecco, but afternoon tea will also be provided to help put on a street party in the courtyard. On the Sunday 7th May a special service of communion at 10am is taking place, which is using some of the Coronation resources that have been provided.

The idea of bringing people together, whether they are royalist or not, is something which Lynn says is important to commemorate during times of uncertainty:

"There's still something to celebrate and I think we need something to celebrate at the moment. We're still living in tough times, but I think in Britain people do celebrating quite well when they come together.

"The Queen had a long reign and was very much loved, something which is quite hard for King Charles to follow. However, I think he's doing a good job already. My prayer for him is that as a defender of faith, the faith or faiths, whatever he wants to call it, we really see he does lead the country in that. His mum was very much someone who was very open about her faith and so my prayer for him is he will be as open and strengthened by his faith."

Double Celebration in Kimberworth

The team at St Thomas Kimberworth will be celebrating the church's 180th anniversary alongside King Charles III's Coronation.

It's a time for joint celebrations in Kimberworth as St Thomas' is busy preparing in its 180th year for the new King's Coronation.

A bring and share lunch is being held on Monday 8th May from 1-4pm at the Community Centre on the high street, with a commemorative event being held in June to mark 180 years since the church was first consecrated.

Rev'd Diane Etchell is the Associate Priest of St Thomas Church, Kimberworth:

"This is the first king I'll have known and I'll never see another queen, so I think that is a tradition that's changed. This is an opportunity to bring the community together and remind people we're not all separate; we're all embracing what's going on in the world and the church around us.

"It's also amazing to mark 180 years of history for our church. Lots of loved ones have been laid to rest here and we get a lot of visitors coming to the churchyard. This is something we want to open our doors for and tell people this is their heritage as well. This is your

church and this is your parish."

The heritage celebrations have been inspired in part by a background check undertaken by one of the parishioners, but also by the investigative work of a former member of the congregation who now lives in Almeria in Spain.

Kimberworth remains a special place for people who have long since moved away from there, but it also holds a place in the heart of Diane and her family:

"I love the people here and it's just a joy to be with them. I also feel a strong connection because I don't come from Kimberworth but my dad did. My grandma is buried in the churchyard and my dad grew up going to that church. Unfortunately, my dad didn't live to see me in the role I'm in now, but I'm sure he's in heaven and he's looking down at me saying: 'Go for it! I'm glad you're there.'"

A key focus of the upcoming Coronation is on community cohesion and fostering new relationships with people across different groups. The event at Kimberworth on the 8th May coincides with the 'The Big Help Out', which will involve a wide range of partners and faith groups from across the UK.

Diane has this prayer for King Charles III as he prepares to mark a key moment in history:

"I hope he holds God as close to himself as his mother did. She was truly a remarkable person and had such a strong faith. I absolutely loved Queen Elizabeth II, even though I never met her. I pray that Charles keeps his focus on God and the plans for the future."



St Thomas Kimberworth

Illuminated Gospel Coronation Project

The local community in Sprotbrough is putting together a project to commemorate the King's upcoming Coronation in May

Sprotbrough is doing its bit to take part in history as preparations are underway for a special project to celebrate King Charles III's coronation.

The coronation itself is taking place on Saturday 6th May, when the new monarch will be presented with a Bible saying the following words: 'This is the most valuable possession this world affords. Here is Wisdom; This is the royal Law; These are the lively Oracles of God.'

It is in that spirit that the team at St Mary's Sprotbrough have developed plans for an illuminated, handwritten gospel that will be sent to Buckingham Palace in advance of the Coronation day as a gift from the people of Sprotbrough.

The Revd Canon Amanda Barraclough is Rector of St Mary's Sprotbrough and is also Dean of Women's Ministry:

"This really feels like a gospel opportunity. The plan for this was just a germ of an idea that popped into my head when I thought about how the Bible is being presented to the new monarch. We realized that presenting the whole Bible was too big a deal, so I then reduced it down to the New Testament and then reduced it down further to a gospel.

"We decided that inviting children and adults to create illuminated pages would offer something beautiful and distinctive that expresses each person's uniqueness. Handwritten and illuminated pages will be an effective way of bringing people together and celebrating the coronation."

Each A4 page will be made up of a small portion of the gospel, with the first letter of each page decorated. The rest will be carefully handwritten, with the whole contents gathered, collated and bound in a hardback cover. The front cover will read, in gold lettering, "This is the most valuable possession this world affords...These are the lively Oracles of God."

A template has been provided to ensure everyone is using the same translation of the Bible, with Luke's Gospel cut up into groups of around 200 words a page. People are being encouraged to return the pages to the Rectory at St Mary's by Easter to allow for time to collate the project.

Amanda feels the cooperation between others will help them to ask more follow up questions about the gospel itself:

"By focusing on individual pages this will help people to look at understanding where their part of the Bible fits into the bigger story in the larger context. Local schools are onboard because it helps to produce so many learning outcomes.

"My prayer is that this brings the community together and helps us believe the best for the future. It's easy to look back at the longevity of our queen, and her devotion to her faith, and think 'well that was wonderful. How can the future compete with that?'

"I think by putting the Bible at the centre we're looking forward with hope and with a firm desire that our king will follow the path his mother trod - and that will be a sign of unity for us all."

[Find out more about St Mary's here.](#)



THE
CORONATION

KING CHARLES
III
2023

Strengthening Community Spirit at East Doncaster

“We’ve got a longing to reach out to our community and we’re just going to give it a go.”

The power of prayer is underpinning community efforts in Doncaster to bring people closer together. Plans are well underway for a weekend of celebrations for King Charles III’s Coronation at The Church of the Good Shepherd, Kirk Sandall and Edenthorpe and The Church of St Peter and St Paul in Barnby.

Building off the local events they put on for the Platinum Jubilee last year, The Church of the Good Shepherd is partnering with another local church to hold a community day on Sunday 7th May, sandwiched in between the Coronation itself and the May Bank Holiday.

Revd Tom Brown says the choice of day was deliberate:

“Lots of things will be going on during the Saturday and the Monday, so we thought the Sunday would be a good choice for trying to bring people together. Around 350 people came to the Platinum Jubilee event so we thought we’d carry on that momentum.

“It’s a great opportunity because we’re talking about a king, but we’d also love people to know about and celebrate an even greater King who we can have an eternity with and we’ve been sent 300 free copies of John’s gospel which we’ll be giving away. It’s partly encouraging the church family to be outward focused and thinking who we’ll be able to invite and who can we connect with. It’s also helping us to answer the question: How can we serve people well and be a presence in the local community that is known as being outward focused rather than an insider’s club?”

The community event is taking place from 2-5pm in Kirk Sandall and Edenthorpe, which has the advantage of being able to use the local school fields. Marquees will be set up along with a live band, plus two bouncy castles, a football cage, a hog roast, an ice cream van and tents for children’s activities.



They’ve connected with a local scout group to run some games whilst the local parish council are keen to tie in with the day. Similar events are being planned at Barnby Dun on the Saturday (also from 2-5pm), which provides another opportunity to connect with other groups in another parish.

Tom says they want to unite with people wherever they possibly can:

“There is a deep longing that people have for relationships and we don’t seem to have them at any depth anymore, so this seems like an open opportunity. While people might react against an

institution, they long for community and being a church family is right at the heart of who we are! We're thinking of a Coronation King theme and putting the vicar in the stocks for kids to throw stuff at, because we have five local schools and I know the kids would love to throw stuff at me (with permission)!

"We're deliberately using the occasion of the Coronation to gather people. Whether you're a royalist, republican or indifferent we're trying to give people space to come together as a community. People might just walk past not knowing what is on and will be intrigued because the church is in the heart of the community here."



We're praying for weather like this in May!

The organisers are keen to stress that beyond a charge for buying ice cream, everything from the drinks to the bouncy castle will be completely free. The focus is on being a witness, whether people want to hear about Jesus or experience something of a community culture that's being developed.

Tom says they haven't got the perfect solution, but they're determined to try whatever they can to serve others:

"We've got a longing to reach out to our community and we're just going to give it a go. If it doesn't work, that's alright! If it rains we'll find somewhere inside. We want to take every opportunity to try to love and serve people and to try and say something of the Lord Jesus; prayer underpins all of this."

"We've started praying for it already and we're praying that the Lord might use our humble efforts. My encouragement would be we've not got it sorted - we're just going to try something. I reckon every church can do that!"



Last year's celebrations were a success

Building Others Up in Leadership: Kilnhurst

St Thomas' Kilnhurst has developed Sunday evening services in an informal way to help bring younger people to faith.

Plans for a New Congregation at St Thomas' Kilnhurst are focusing on welcoming people to church services in an informal setting.

'Alive' is a monthly evening service aimed at those who would prefer a more informal church service. Taking place on a Sunday evening from 7.30pm, it supplements the existing morning service.

Ben Shires is the Assistant Curate at St Thomas' Kilnhurst, and says they want to make church more accessible for people who may find formal services off-putting or intimidating:

"It's aimed more at young adults in the 20s, 30s and 40s bracket, but anyone who'd appreciate this setup is welcome. In terms of how we approach things we scale down the amount of liturgy in the evenings compared to a Sunday morning and I don't wear a dog collar.

"We meet in the new hub in our church rather than in the main church building and are seated around tables rather than all facing the front on pews. We start off with some food, and there's a chance for people to get to know each other. Each week there are 'ice breaker' type questions linking into the theme of the evening.

"There's no lectern and we stream music from Spotify to sing along to rather than having a band playing. We try and have a mix of older songs set to new music and songs which are new to everyone. We've got a Spotify playlist that people can access via a QR code to enable people to listen to the music throughout the week. We'll have discussion time throughout the

service and it's quite interactive. We'll interview someone from the church family to hear more about what following Jesus looks like in their life.

One of the main motivations behind setting up Alive has been to organise something that young people can invite their friends to, and the planning team involved includes two people who have never been involved in church leadership prior to this service.

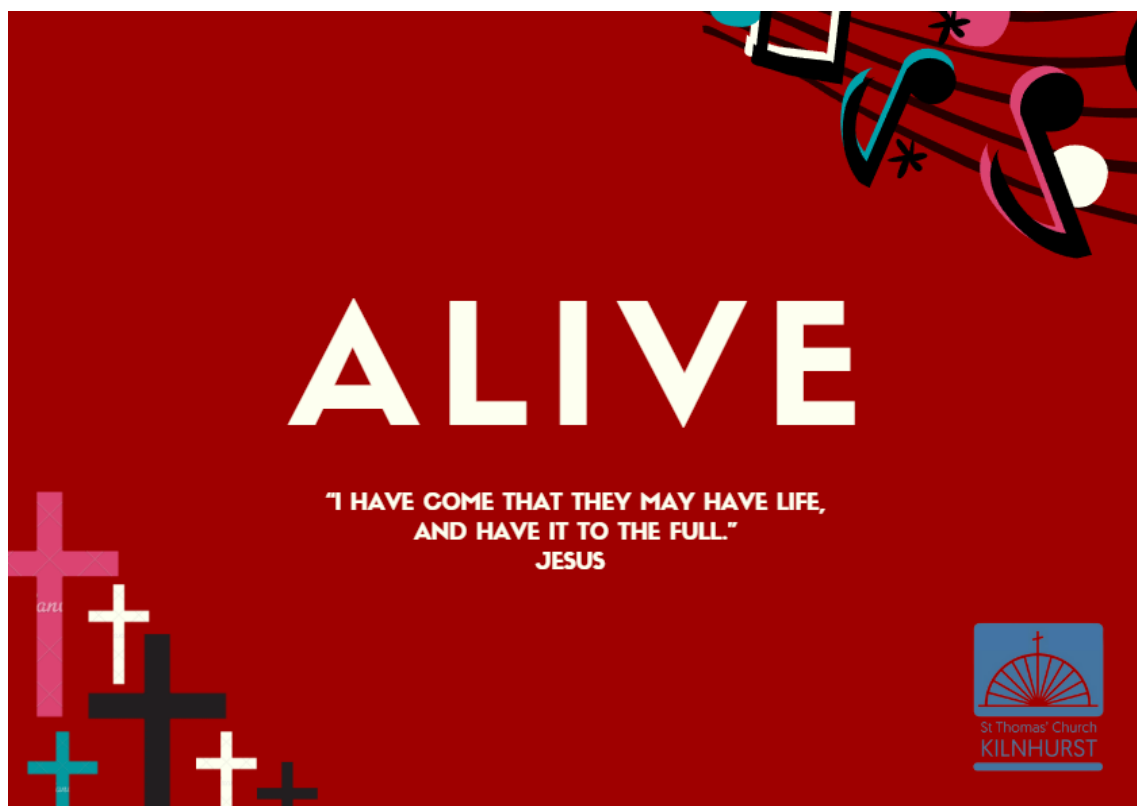
There's also a big focus on bringing in more new people to the church, with some promising signs of younger people on the fringe of St Thomas' Kilnhurst getting involved through associated youth groups.

Ben says they want to build up the church family as a way for them to express their Christian faith:

"This is a chance for those who have come to faith more recently, and perhaps are in the younger age bracket, to take ownership of something and have a part in leading and shaping a part of church life.

"Those involved can then engage with a group of people in the community who we haven't been able to get into our normal church activities. It's kind of an inward strengthening and outward focus as well."

Ben had received some training as part of his curacy about 'starting new things' with Mission Development Advisor John Marsh and at a joint chapter meeting. This coincided with a member of the St Thomas' church family approaching him



with an idea about starting something that he could use to invite people to at the school gates and on his estate.

Ben's also keen to stress that it's a collaborative approach, with services being kept simple and low-key to prevent a strain on time and resources for other people in the church. Spotify is used to save on personnel for a band in the evening, and the food served is kept easy to cook.

The early signs of Alive are positive thanks to a complementary approach, as Ben explains:

"One of our leaders led the meeting recently and did a really good job. It was his first time doing anything up front in church, so they get fresh ideas and a new way of doing thing. We also have someone on the leadership team who has been part of St Thomas' for a while and is involved in the planning of the morning services. She brings lots of wisdom and helps communicate between the two services and hold things together in that way."

Ben and the team are working towards the six criteria of a New Congregation: worship (UP), fellowship (IN), outreach (OUT), reaching new people, raising new leaders and offering the sacraments.

If you want to find out more about starting new things generally, or a New Congregation in particular, contact:

john.marsh@sheffield.anglican.org.

The Role of Church Buildings in Striving for Net Zero

Church Buildings Officer Jo Edwards offers advice on how to keep church buildings maintained, and their role in helping the diocese to achieve Net Zero



Jo Edwards

Do you like damp and windy weather? Do you feel cold when you are wet? Do you like to feel freezing, muddy water around your ankles, and cold wind around your knees? No? Not many people do! But did you know that the church buildings we look after don't like it either?

If you have been to any church building related events in the last couple of months, you may have heard Josh Hunter or myself as the Diocese of Sheffield's Church Buildings Officers talking about the importance of church maintenance.

We are currently highlighting this to our churches as a particular theme this year, as it is relevant to so many aspects of life at the moment – rising energy costs, the need for warm community spaces and working together

to reach the Church of England's Net Zero carbon emissions targets by 2030. You may wonder how these elements are related, so let me explain a little!

Good maintenance of a building can greatly affect its energy use. Just as we feel cold when we are wet and damp, so do buildings. By checking and fixing loose tiles on the roof, regularly clearing out gutters and downpipes, and checking the flow of drains and soakaways, we help the fabric of the building stay dry (by 'fabric' I mean the structure of the building, such as walls, floors, and ceilings - not just the curtains or altar cloths!).

Similarly, closing gaps under doors and around windows with curtains or draught excluders over the winter and adding soft furnishings to seats and floors can keep the building a few degrees warmer as well. By regularly servicing your boiler, getting the radiators cleared out, and putting lagging on hot pipes in cold spaces such as under floors and in cellars, we can keep our heating systems running efficiently.

All these small things help keep a building dry. If we keep the building dry it will naturally be a few degrees warmer than when it is damp. This means the heating doesn't need to be on for as long, so the costs for energy bills are lowered. Also, as less gas and electricity are used it means a reduced carbon footprint as well. A double win!

We understand that maintaining a large building such as a church can feel like a very large problem, so we have produced a Maintenance

Plan document to help break it down in to smaller sections. By reducing the tasks down to specific parts of the building, it makes it an easier job to start and simpler to keep track of. It also allows you to plan tasks throughout the year, as not everything has to be done, or can be done, at the same time.

Whilst some maintenance work will need to be carried out by a contractor (such as high-level work on the roof and gutters) some can easily be done by members of the church family. Hopefully you will find some 'quick win' jobs to tick off on your maintenance plan, and feel happy that you are also saving money and taking some initial steps on your path to Net Zero emissions.

We hope too, that you will be able to join with others in taking care of your church buildings, so they can remain at the heart of our communities, welcoming people in for many years to come. For a copy of the Maintenance plan please email: cbo@sheffield.anglican.org

For information about the Net Zero Routemap, see the Church of England Environment team pages:

www.churchofengland.org/about/church-england-environment-programme

There are also some up-coming webinars on heat pumps and heating systems:

www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/webinars-getting-net-zero-carbon#na

To fill in the Energy Footprint Tool and calculate your carbon emissions:

www.churchofengland.org/about/policy-and-thinking/our-views/environment-and-climate-change/about-our-environment/energy-footprint-tool



St Helen's Burghwallis



St James Norton

'Thy Kingdom Come': A Neglected Prayer?

Mission Development Adviser John Hibberd looks ahead to Thy Kingdom Come, an annual event that this year is taking place between 18th-28th May.



John Hibberd

When did your church last pray specifically for growth (numerical but also spiritual and missional)? Not to make you feel better. Not to bring in more givers to pay the bills. Praying for people to have a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ and to join those who are learning to a Jesus-shaped pattern for their lives. Why? Because individuals matter to God and He sent Jesus to bring them fullness of life and meaning.

In late February, I was on a Leading your Church into Growth (LyCiG) conference with people from two churches in Rotherham. One session looked at four P's that are positive factors for growth; prayer, presence, proclamation (getting the message out in various ways) and persuasion (inviting people to make the good news their own). In our groups, we put twelve counters into each of these 'pots' to reflect the relative strength of our churches in each aspect. It will probably come as no surprise to hear that 'presence' came top for everyone in the room. This is important: we are there for our communities,

accessible to varying degrees, with clear intent. Proclamation and persuasion did less well but both far outscored prayer for growth, which came bottom in every small group. Those leading the course informed us that this is a national pattern. The weakest area on every LyCiG is prayer for growth. Furthermore, they commented that we have very few written prayers for growth among our wealth of liturgical resources.

This gave me serious pause for thought. Our diocesan strategy, which is for growth, specifically makes prayer its foundation – the Renewed strand. Our diocesan prayer includes petitions for growth. In these ways, we acknowledge our dependence on God. 'Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain' (Psalm 127:1).

Thy Kingdom Come is a huge opportunity to pray specifically for the growth of the Church. This has always been its emphasis, drawing on the tradition of these 10 days of prayer down the centuries. We ask God for more of the Holy Spirit, not to give us a warm fuzzy feeling but to propel us out in mission. We implore God to pour out His Spirit on those who don't yet know Jesus Christ to open their eyes to Jesus. In so doing, we are addressing what seems to be a weak-link in the mission of the Church.

Look out for local Thy Kingdom Come events and resources this year. What could you or your church do to specifically 'pray for growth' 18-28 May? Presence, proclamation and persuasion are all important but, shocking though it may sound, they are nothing without prayer.

www.thykingdomcome.global

Introducing... Deliberately Digital

Digital Mission Development Adviser Elliot Hyliger explores the Diocese of Sheffield's new approach to digital mission.



Elliot Hyliger

Have you ever wondered why it is that people change? People change for all sorts of reasons; some reasons may appear good to us, others less so. Yet in a world that seems to be changing constantly, how do we decide when the right moments are to embrace change and the upheaval and disorientation that often follow?

John Lewis & Partners is well known for employing excellent storytelling in their Christmas advertisements. Over the Christmas of 2022 the retailer introduced us to “a big-hearted man who takes up a certain new hobby a little later in life...”

The advert centres around the effort it takes for the gentleman in question to learn how to

skateboard. “Although he struggles initially, he never gives up – despite the bumps and scrapes. And, after a few weeks, he begins to get the hang of it. But then, with a ring of the doorbell, it becomes clear what – or who – all his efforts have been for.”

The door opens to reveal his new foster daughter, nervously clutching her own skateboard. Her attention is immediately caught by the well-worn skateboard just inside the door way. She takes a shallow sigh of relief as she recognises a shared passion and the conversation – and the relationship – begins.

In preparation for the introduction, the new foster father embraced the upheaval of significant change. He changed because his new daughter could only receive the message of his love and welcome when it was embodied in a way she could grasp. He changed because he loved. He was a deliberate skater!

And herein lies the unlikely yet important lesson from Britain's largest department store chain; we don't change simply because the world around us is changing – that is a recipe for exhaustion. We change because we love.

Ultimately, our greatest reason for change is that God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Yet God's love contains within it the power for all kinds of change and He has sent His people to the world as witnesses to that love, that some might grasp his message.

NEWS

Our God-given purpose as witnesses doesn't ever change but if our context does – which it has – the expression of that purpose must also change.

As digital technology continues to become integrated into our daily lives, our purpose – unchanging as it is – will be expressed in increasingly digital ways. We change because we love. And in that sense, we become 'deliberately digital'.

That is the call of Deliberately Digital, the Diocese's new approach to digital mission. Our world has changed. Our context for mission is increasingly permeated by digital technology including websites, social media and search engines. Yet our purpose and mission continues. The mission of God in our digital age means that,

because we love, we will inevitably change, so that the message of God's incredible love in Jesus Christ is embodied in ways that can be grasped.

The call of the Deliberately Digital approach is for the Diocese of Sheffield to recognise the change in our culture, embrace certain continuities and develop a hybrid culture, all for the sake of love. All that we might be more effective in making disciples and in seeking to transform our society and God's world.

If you'd like to find out more about Deliberately Digital get in touch with Elliot Hyliger, the Diocese of Sheffield's Digital Mission Development Advisor:

elliott.hyliger@sheffield.anglican.org

Generosity Leads to Revitalisation in Sheffield

A fruitful partnership between All Saints in Ecclesall and St Gabriel's in Greystones has led to revitalisation.

The work of a church graft is being celebrated at All Saints Ecclesall and St Gabriel's Greystones in Sheffield as part of a fruitful mission area.

The project involved mutual support of resources and people between the two churches and has been ongoing for nearly 6 years.

The graft was accelerated when Alistair Stevenson moved from All Saints (where he was Associate Vicar) to St Gabriel's to be licensed as their Priest-in-charge in November 2018. Five years ago the PCC's of both churches agreed a joint missional statement:

The re-creation of a vibrant, missional and self-sustaining multi-generational St Gabriel's church family with 100+ adults and 30+ children. A renewed and independent church which is

capable of fully financing its own incumbent and supporting its own pattern of ministry within six years.

Alistair is now also an Oversight Minister along with the Vicar of All Saints Mark Brown. St Gabriel's initially had a regular Sunday attendance of around 30 adults and 3 children along with a monthly All Age Service where a few other families would join sporadically.

Alistair says one of the key things was to change the narrative around releasing resources, people and finances to supporting another church:

“At the very heart of All Saints is a church that wants to give, resource and support other churches. When we first began the mission partnership between the two churches our

shared vision was of a missional and self-sustaining church family with a growing congregation. All the signs point to this vision becoming a reality.

“We currently have about 60+ adults and 15+ children regularly attending Sunday worship (onsite) for services at 10am and 11.30am, as well as regular attendees on Zoom and those who access our online service.

“In response to the growing needs of the pandemic we launched our Bless Greystones initiative and it’s been really exciting over the last few years to see how we’ve been able to reach out into our community engaging with the local primary school, businesses, The Greystones pub, the GP surgery amongst others. Over the last year we launched five new home groups which are now growing and thriving.

“We have a flourishing weekly toddler group, a new youth group plus a new Sunday evening gathering called ‘At the Table’, which is overseen by our ordinand. ‘At The Table’ is based around a meal and is particularly for those who for whatever reason struggle with normal patterns of Sunday morning worship.”

A key part of this growing project has been the goodwill between the two churches and everyone involved, but also some changes to the

patterns of worship. With the pandemic bringing about alterations to how people attended church and took part, new approaches had to be tried out.

Despite this upheaval, Alistair says the overall response from the congregation has been positive. He adds that it’s important for the parish to show something as ambitious as this can be done:

“The history of St Gabriel’s has always had strong links with All Saints, but what’s really encouraging in 2023 is that the role of Vicar is now stable moving forward. We are so grateful for the generosity of All Saints which has now enabled us to become self-sustaining through our increased Common Fund contribution.

“So often it seems like the narrative is that churches are declining and closing, but by God’s will that hasn’t been the case here. It’s been wonderful to be a part of a church where we have seen growth and huge generosity within the congregation.

“God has a lot more to do with the partnership and it feels like the journey is just beginning. We hope this and other stories across the diocese might be an example for all types of churches.”



St Gabriel's Greystones



All Saints Ecclesall

Life After a Church Graft: Christ Church Endcliffe

Minister Ed Pennington says they've seen new growth in Endcliffe.

Imagine a church receives a graft team who join from another church to help them to revitalise, and to reach out to the community in new ways. What would it be like? We might imagine there will be difficulties on the way, but also lots of exciting stories of new ways in which God is at work, and lots of encouragements.

But what about the church that sent the graft team? All that's happened there is that a group of committed church members have left – all in the same week! What would that be like?

This has been the story at Christ Church Endcliffe (CCE) in Sheffield over the past months. Back in July a team of 26 adults and children left CCE to join All Saints' Totley as Ben Tanner, who had been curate at CCE, became the new vicar at Totley.

Ed Pennington, minister at CCE says "There's a lot that's hard about sending out a graft team. Some of the team had been part of the church family since we were planted in 2009. There were deep relationships, and plenty of tears shed at the goodbye service when we commissioned them."

There are practical costs too. The team that moved to Totley included some core children's ministry team members – at a time when CCE felt very stretched by the size of their Sunday children's ministry. The team also transferred their financial giving to Totley – a great blessing to Totley, but leaving a £18,000 hole in next year's budget for CCE.

So what was it like for CCE after the graft? Ed says "The team left in July, and it felt a bit like

we limped through to the summer holidays. But from the autumn we've been greatly blessed. For a start there's the encouragement of hearing the good news stories from Totley – a church which we feel we are now in close partnership with. But also, we've seen new people join CCE too – that might partly be because it's attractive to join a church which is outward looking and ready to be sacrificial in sending people out, and it might just partly be that God is kind and He knew we needed encouragement! We're now bigger in number than we were before the graft team left, and planning for what we might do next."

The church has also seen new people willing and ready to serve in their children's ministry, and the responses to their November 'Partnership Sunday' has seen the places on their different Sunday teams filled again.

So what would their advice be to a church considering whether or not they could send a graft team?

"Go for it!" Ed says. "Be realistic about the cost and the difficulties – they are real. But do it anyway because it's a good thing to do and your sacrifice might be a real blessing to another church. But also, be ready for what God will do next – there's no promise that He will match our every loss with new life. But He is good, and loves to give good gifts to His children. So pray, and then watch as He gets to work."

The Surprising Benefits on the Journey to a New Website

Richard Heard, Stella McHugh and Phill Jackson from St Francis Church share their excitement over producing a more relatable website for the local community.

St Francis Church in Doncaster has been on a journey to develop a new website and says the results have led to a positive reaction. Launched in December 2022, the new platform is split into three main sections: worship, community and exploring faith.

The worship section gives details and photos from the main 10am service, online services and growth groups. The community section includes information and contact details about all the activities that are organised and hosted as well as information about the different groups that regularly hire the facilities. The exploring faith section also includes information about Alpha, faith topics and links to find out more.

Vicar Richard Heard says the revamp was a long time coming:

“We wanted to do a new website for probably about five years and various people had said they would do it for us in their own spare time. However, it never happened so we eventually bit the bullet and sought to get it done.

“The original website wasn’t designed for mobile phones and looked absolutely tiny on handheld devices. There were whole sections of the website that we couldn’t update like magazines. The last magazine on there was three or four years out of date.”

Treasurer Phill Jackson agrees and says the old website couldn’t keep up with the kind of changes and updates they wanted to make: “I think our old website was fine when it was

first created, but we’d let it drift and ended up with so many different things on the website. It was very cluttered and some things were in the wrong place.

“We’d been adding stuff to it despite the difficulties, and the structure was completely shot. I think that was one of the drivers for us; the platform we were using was out of date and the actual content for that was becoming very cluttered. It didn’t provide the image we were looking for.”

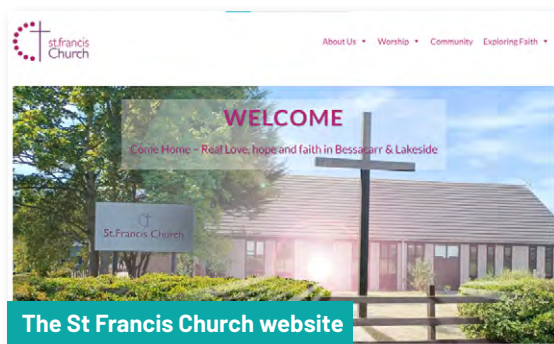
Stella McHugh is the Curate at St Francis and emphasised during the planning process the importance of having a website that is relatable to the community they serve.

She adds that improving that relatability is vital for different groups:

“It’s a place where people decide whether they can see themselves belonging to that community. Every aspect of its visuals and its navigation are all saying something to us now, because we don’t realize we’re kind of intuitively critiquing an organization or a group, even though we might not want to admit that we are doing that unconsciously.

“We are making some decisions and we’re taking information, so it matters how information is presented.”

Digital Mission Development Advisor Elliot Hylliger met with the team to discuss digital approaches, and was able to offer support on the



development of the website.

Richard says this extended beyond just offering advice, as he offered a clarity of focus:

“Elliot took us back right to the beginning and got us to really focus on what is truly most important. He asked ‘what’s the message you really want to get across in the website?’ And that was really helpful. It was a longer process than we imagined, but it was so helpful going back to basics.”

Stella agrees and says the help offered by Elliot helped the church to reflect on their identity:

“His heart for Christ just shines out in his work, and he was a delight to be around. He was encouraging with us and gentle in helping us to see that we needed to make some decisions about who we were in some ways, because we could communicate more clearly.

“This wasn’t just a task, it was a piece of work that needed a lot of imagination in terms of committing to who we are as a church.”

Phill notes that lots of people have been very complimentary about the new site since its launch. More enquiries have come through the website with navigation made easier.

In particular, the filtering system has been improved with each enquiry more closely linked to which topic is needed. His advice to other churches revamping their websites is to be clear about budgets as a practical aspect:

“A good brief is needed. Elliot prepared for us an absolutely first class, excellent brief based on various discussions we’d had. He pulled random discussions into a very concise document, and

the agency we ended up going with said it was one of the best briefs they’d ever received from a client.

“Nowadays people’s proposals tend to be very brief, but this was a very comprehensive document with all of our values and aspirations incorporated.”

Richard recommends taking time to put together an outline that each individual can get onboard with, saying that getting it right is better than rushing through a process:

“Be clear about what you want to say through your website and take time to develop a clear focus and structure. When you put the time into the planning and the preparation it’s worth it when you see the final result. I think if we’d have rushed it, we’d have got something quite generic and it wouldn’t have suited what we needed.”

Stella says people shouldn’t be put off by the challenge of designing something new:

“Go for it. Don’t hold back. Stay disciplined to the vision that you’ve been supported to create because I think that’s the point of the process. We had an awareness of each of the strengths and gifts of where each of us were going to be during the planning.

“You have to have some awareness of how you’re going to work together.”

You can see the new website for yourself [here](#).

If you’ve recognised that your church website isn’t serving its purpose and would like to explore developing a new one, please get in touch with Elliot for an informal chat:

elliott.hyliger@sheffield.anglican.org

Building Foundations Day: Building up Focal Ministers

Programmes and Pathways Assistant Rachael Williams looks back on an encouraging team day focused on the spiritual side of life.

On Saturday 4th February both the Focal Ministry and Lights for Christ teams ran a day based on the book 'Seven Sacred Spaces' by George Lings. The morning started off well with 24 authorised Focal Ministers from across the diocese being welcomed with hot drinks and croissants, before being introduced to the day by Director of Focal Ministry Sally Myers and Lights for Christ Enabler Hannah Sandoval. Hannah took the lead with explaining the Seven Sacred Spaces model and planned activities throughout the day.

The events started with a free flow time of Scriptorium (place of learning) and Garden (place of work). The Focal Ministers were able to explore Church House's resource centre, take books home with them, colour in pictures by Mary Fleeson (Lindisfarne Scriptorium) or do practical work picking up litter outside the building. We went on to explore more about Cloister (place of connection, linking to others) by going out and prayer walking around Rotherham centre, with others taking part in a virtual prayer walk Hannah filmed or using finger labyrinths as they prayed.

As midday approached we held a small Chapel service outside in the carpark next to the river, which felt like a deeply spiritual moment as Hannah led us through a short service of Celtic prayer. This led straight into twenty minutes of silence and sitting on our own in spaces chosen to reflect being in a traditional monastery Cell (place of a private meeting, with God and inner self).

As the day drew to a close we went into a time

of Chapter (place of decision making), where the Focal Ministers were able to reflect on the day. We had some great feedback from people realising the importance of taking time out to focus on the more spiritual side of life rather than the usual worldly things we so often are drawn to think about. Many suggested more monastic spaces that could link into our daily lives and shared how the day was an encouragement whilst taking new ideas away for upcoming events in their own churches and mission areas.

The day ended with Refectory (place of eating together), a buffet lunch and time for conversations. There was a great joy in the room and many connecting with people that are Focal Ministers in different areas of the diocese.

As the Programmes and Pathways Assistant it was great for me to be able to meet some of our Focal Ministers face to face, hear more about their ministries and get to know them on a more personal level. I look forward to helping run more of these learning events for Focal Ministers in the future.



More learning events are planned

A Week in the Life of the Centenary Project

Sarah Beardsmore shares below what a typical week looks like for the Centenary Project Manager.



Sarah Beardsmore

No two weeks are the same at the Centenary Project and the central team are always kept busy mentoring our workers, meeting with worker's line managers, exploring new Centenary Project Worker (CPW) roles with parishes and mission areas and visiting our workers to support them with their groups and activities.

Monday

Monday mornings always start with the Church House briefings, a chance for all the Diocesan staff to hear any important news and share updates and prayer requests with one another. Then I usually spend the morning catching up on admin from the weekend – the Centenary Project is active 7 days a week so there's usually an enquiry or two to look after.

On Monday afternoon I had the joy of visiting Kimberworth Community Primary School with Elliott, Rotherham Minster CPW. The sessions are music-based and Elliott has been working hard teaching the children lots of songs ready for a concert in the Minster.



CPW Elliott Walker

Tuesday

On Tuesday, I usually join a prayer meeting on Zoom with people from across the Church of England to pray into the Church's vision to double the number of children and young active disciples in the Church of England by 2030. The Centenary Project is already doing lots to see that vision come alive in our Diocese.

In the afternoon, I popped along to support our new worker, Laura in Heeley, run her after-school club. At the moment they are focussing on the 'I am' statements and this week it was 'I am the light of the world'. The children loved the craft, decorating CDs and attaching candles.



Crafts at Heeley

Wednesday

On Wednesday I met with the Doncaster Youth Leaders Hub at their monthly breakfast meeting. This time they were gathering at Powerhouse Christ Church to plan the next Doncaster Hub event. The Centenary Project Youth Hubs run events for church-based youth groups of any denomination to come together and be part of something much bigger than they could manage on their own.

I also visited a Church in School led by CPW Kirsty at Trinity Croft School in Dalton. This is a really important ministry, offering families in Dalton a weekly Messy Church. I enjoyed meeting



Hub breakfast

the children and their families and listening to them speaking so confidently about their faith.

Thursday

Thursdays are always spent in Church House meeting with the central CP team. It's a chance to touch base on key issues from across the project, develop plans for upcoming events and, most importantly, pray together for our workers and their contexts across the Diocese.

Friday

On Fridays I usually work from home. It's a chance to catch up on any outstanding admin and prepare reports due for next week's meetings. This week I also visited an Oversight Minister to begin thinking about what a Centenary Project Worker role might look like in their context.

By the weekend I am always ready for a break; to enjoy some time with my family and recharge ready for another busy week. The Centenary Project is full of activity and life and I am blessed to be a part of it.

Find out more about the Centenary Project [here](https://www.sheffield.anglican.org).

Contact






**THE DIOCESE
OF SHEFFIELD**

Renewed | Released | Rejuvenated

Church House
95-99 Effingham Street
Rotherham S65 1BL

01709 309100
reception@sheffield.anglican.org

 **@DioceseofSheff**
 **@dioceseofsheffield**
 **@dioceseofsheffield**



www.sheffield.anglican.org