

PEAK PILGRIMAGE 2024 • HISTORIC HEAT HACKS

network

ISSUE 24 / SPRING 2024

**HOPE
WEEKEND**

**CHURCH
EXPLORERS WEEK**

**A NET ZERO ACTION
PLAN FOR THE DIOCESE**

FROM THE EDITORS



BEN FEARN

Communications Officer



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Welcome to the Spring edition of Network magazine!

As you're reading this we have come through a busy Lent and Easter period. We hope you've had a good Easter! This time of year is a wonderful opportunity to reflect upon the months ahead. Christians commemorating the death and resurrection of Jesus don't stop at Easter Sunday; they look ahead with hopeful anticipation whilst striving for spiritual growth.

Here in the Diocese of Sheffield there have been lots of stories of churches and individuals finding new ways to reinvigorate their places of worship. You can read about some of them in this edition of Network. 2024 is still young, but already this year we've celebrated youth ministry at Breathe Deep, personal testimony and public witness at the Bishop's Annual Lecture, reflective time with our Tree of Life Lent course and retreats at the Seven Sacred Spaces Day.

We also welcome back Bishop Pete from his sabbatical, which began on Boxing Day 2023 and ended on Palm Sunday 2024. We look forward to his returning leadership and thank Bishop Sophie for her sterling work as Acting Bishop of Sheffield. It's great having them both back in the Diocese!

Nearly a year has passed since the rebrand of the main Diocese website and we've been thrilled with the look of it. However, as a Communications and Learning Team we're determined not to be complacent! We're encouraging people to give honest and constructive feedback on what they like about the website and what user experiences could be improved. We have more details enclosed in this edition on how to give your thoughts, but don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions: communications@sheffield.anglican.org

This magazine is for everyone; of all beliefs and none. Enjoy!

*Ben Fearn and Kellianne Montgomery
Communications and Learning team*

Credit to Chris Ellis for the cover photo.

WELCOME

Welcome to the Spring issue of Network,

I am now in my tenth year working for the Diocese of Sheffield. Each year has brought new challenges, ups and downs, moments of joy and laughter, the odd moment of despair! When I look back on highlights from my ten years, they all involve people. Our Diocese is served by truly amazing people, both in our parishes and in the central team. I am proud to be a part of our diocesan community, working with wonderful people to change God's world for the better. All working in different roles with different skills, but all with a collective vision.



In this issue of Network, you can read about some of these people and stories. We have curated a diverse array of articles that reflect the richness and diversity of our diocese. We mark 30 years of women's ordinations with a special event in June (p6). Amanda Barraclough writes about the richness of ministry that ordained women bring to the Church of England. With Easter now just behind us, we look to Ascension and Pentecost and the global prayer initiative known as Thy Kingdom Come (p9). The simple message at the heart of this is to pray for our friends, family and work colleagues to open their hearts to Jesus and explore the Christian faith. And of course, I wouldn't be your Diocesan comms lead if I didn't flag the article on the Diocesan website (p25)! Launched one year ago now, we have been delighted in how it has been serving churches and individuals. We never want to rest though and strive to make it better – so please consider giving us some feedback to help with future developments.

As we continue to journey together as a diocese, let us remain committed to love, compassion and kindness. May the pages of Network serve as a catalyst for conversation, reflection, and action, inspiring us all to live out our faith with courage and conviction.

Thank you for your continued support, hard work and commitment in the life of our diocese.

With every blessing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LJ Buxton'.

LJ Buxton

Deputy Diocesan Secretary (Safeguarding, Comms, HR)

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30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN



The first ordination of women as priests in the Diocese of Sheffield (*credit to The Star*)

As my eyes scroll down the list of those women who were ordained in Sheffield Cathedral in March 1994, I give thanks. Some I never met, others are familiar faces, somewhat changed from their 1994 selves. But then, I've aged too! One of them has a special place in my own vocational journey, and my eyes linger a little longer. Dorothy Craig-Wilde – Dhoe. Different people will have a different stand out names. There were 25 of them, after all. Courageous, faithful, intrepid women who stepped into a calling God had placed on their lives. Women who paved the way for others to follow.

I probably knew Dhoe before she was ordained, in the heady days of Anglican

Renewal Ministries conferences, where I, alongside others from my local church, led worship in the 1980s. She and Peter later relocated to within a few miles of us in Wakefield Diocese (as was), and seeing her faithful ministry in a church adjusting to the presence of women at the altar was inspiring. The Spirit was stirring something within me. Doors of possibility were opening in my mind. It took a vacancy in my parish to push them further open. Visiting clergy offering the sacrament to us, whilst I, bearing the chalice, felt I knew the lives, the aches, the longings of those receiving, in a way a visiting priest could not. Something stirred again, and before I knew it I was sat in the

living room of another faithful woman of God, the then DDO, Felicity Lawson. I had imagined it a call to a self-supporting role in my home church. After all, I had young children. Until her question, "Have you ever considered stipendiary ministry?" set off a burst of fireworks in my being which felt unmistakably to be God at work. The rest, as they say, is history.

Dhoe became my Spiritual Director, and was the first to encourage me, in training, to consider researching motherhood and ordained ministry as my Master's thesis. That became a profound experience which gave me confidence to be who I was in ministry. I learnt to inhabit the space of my vocation with an authenticity and conviction that God could use me with all my vulnerabilities, and limitations. My sense of rootedness in my calling is in some measure because of Dhoe.

It would be some years later that ministry brought me to Sheffield Diocese, and to reconnect with Dhoe. Seeing her coping with such contentedness and patience with the decline of Peter and then facing her own health issues and terminal diagnosis was humbling. Her utter trust in

God and his good purposes was a silent but enduring witness which has left its mark on me.

I still have an e-mail from Dhoe which I will not delete, sent when she heard of my appointment as Dean of Women's Ministry in 2018. By then frail and aware time was limited, she writes: We are blessed with some very gifted women clergy in this diocese, and I'm glad to have played a small part in encouraging some of you.

I'm delighted that your daughter and daughter-in-law will minister in a church where they may one day be called to be Bishop.

Dhoe was one of the first 25 women ordained priest in Sheffield. Each of them has impacted lives for good. How right it is that we mark with thanksgiving their courageous and inspiring faith. I hope you can join us to do this on Saturday 8th June at 4pm in the Cathedral.

Reflections from Revd Canon Amanda Barraclough, Dean of Women's Ministry

ONE YEAR ON: ST THOMAS CROOKES AND CHRIST CHURCH STANNINGTON

A recent church graft is bearing fruit in Sheffield

"There's been a huge amount of grace and graciousness"

The team behind a Sheffield church graft say the fellowship forged during the process has helped to value different gifts in the church community. In April 2023 a group led by Revd Nick Lattimer went from St Thomas Crookes to Christ Church Stannington following previous discussions between the two churches.

There were several factors that led to the decision to undertake a graft. STC had begun responding to God's call on them to engage more in church planting and

grafting, having sent a team led by Gareth Ingle to Fir Vale in 2022. At the same time, a group from STC living in Stannington had also been praying about possibilities for partnership for several years.

When a vacancy arose for the role of Vicar in Stannington, AATE (Associate Archdeacon Transition Enabler) Ian Parkinson got to work with his vision and skills in facilitating a discernment process about God's call on STC and Christ Church. With a ready-made graft group prepared to make the move, Nick (who moved from Leeds in January 2023

to become Priest in Charge at Stannington and Oversight Minister of the newly-formed mission area of Stannington and Crookes) set to work on understanding more about the group from STC.

He says:

“Rather than talking about it in terms of a team coming to join the church, we just talked about the merging of those two groups really. It’s the idea that everyone has something to contribute here. In terms of identifying people, really the team was already formed before I joined, which was helpful because I think it had that clarity from day one.

“They had that rootedness in the community which I think helped a lot as well.”

Recent grafts within the Diocese of Sheffield have been positive examples of cooperation between different congregations and groups of people. Rather than being seen as a ‘takeover’ or a method of ‘doing things our way’, the bringing together of a mix of groups has helped to bring new perspectives whilst celebrating what has gone before.

St Thomas Crookes will also be sending a graft team to St John’s Park later this year, with Revd Luke Graham taking up the post of Curate in Charge in June. The potential to start new things and develop fresh ideas has been a key driver of all of these grafts, as Nick explains:

“I’ve been really grateful to God for how it’s gone. It’s not been without challenges and there have been a lot of new things for everyone on all sides to get used to, but there’s a huge amount of grace and graciousness.

“There’s a real desire to get to know each other and a real desire to set aside our own agendas and to join in with what God’s doing. We want to appreciate what

is different and valuable in each other.”

New mid-week groups have started up over the last year in Stannington, along with the first children’s and youth groups for a number of years at the church. In addition, there have been more opportunities to link up with the local schools thanks to increased capacity, and more social and missional spaces to invite people to.

Nick highlights the mentality of ‘bulldozing over heritage’ as one of the misconceptions about church grafts, saying:

“There is change, but actually you hope in the way it’s done there’ll be some mutual listening and learning going on, and a valuing of what’s come before and building on that rather than setting aside. I’m sure we’ve not done that perfectly, but we’ve tried to learn about the treasures that are in each other.

“I think by and large, the apprehensions we’ve had have been assuaged by the reality of how things have gone. There are challenges, but I think on all sides there’s been a sense that this is right because of what we can do together being far greater than what we could have done separately.

“Moving forward we want to establish the foundations a bit better and go deeper in terms of some logistical things, but also in terms of prayer and discipleship, investing in our groups and investing in our kids and youth. Do we need to think about a new service at some point; a new congregation? Those are some hopes that we can deepen the foundations that we’ve begun to build.”

PRAYER ACROSS THE DIOCESE: GOING... AND GATHERING

Between Ascension Day and Pentecost, we will again walk in the way of Jesus' followers down the centuries by embracing the challenge to focus on praying for the coming of God's kingdom. This will involve two diocesan events to gather in worship and prayer, following quite different traditions. But a strong focus this year will be on praying within each deanery, both in our churches but also outside in the communities we serve.

GOING: DEANERY PRAYER PILGRIMAGES

Prayer for mission and evangelism has been at the heart of Thy Kingdom Come in its nine-year history, whether it is 'praying for five' or asking God to anoint us afresh with the Holy Spirit as witnesses of the gospel. This year, we are planning to do this in each of our 12 deaneries with an eye to the fact that the bishops' deanery visits later in the year are intended to be evangelistic. What better way to prepare for this than by praying and to do so by taking our prayers outside of our buildings. So, how will this work:

- A prayer pilgrimage connecting two or three places in each deanery
- These will be short (a morning, afternoon or evening) to make it easier to join in
- Prior to the event, the Area Dean will invite people from all churches to participate and will seek prayer requests too, so that we can pray for the mission of the whole deanery
- Those who want to walk can make the pilgrimage physically
- Those who cannot walk far can join in prayers at one or more venues, which is actually the most important part of each event
- Host churches will offer prayers in their tradition, enriching the experience for everyone
- Full information about all events will be on our website in early May

Events are at a fairly early stage of planning but here is a glimpse of the variety on offer:

- Laughton Deanery: an evening prayer picnic near Roche Abbey, walking to / from Maltby. Be imaginative in using non-church venues as part of these events.
- Doncaster Deanery: a circuit of St Francis, St Hugh & St Wilfrid with both prayer stations and an opportunity to pray using the labyrinth at St Wilfrid.
- Rotherham Deanery: a launch for Thy Kingdom Come in a joint Ascension Day service at the Minster & then a 'Whit walk' to a picnic & praise event over lunch at Pentecost.
- Adwick Deanery: another prayer picnic, this time in the grounds of Cusworth Hall.
- Snaith & Hatfield Deanery: two pilgrimage walks converging for a shared tea & prayer stations. Each walk will stop to pray at significant places along their routes

(sports clubs, hospital, school, the port, etc.) Local knowledge enriches such an event.

- Hallam Deanery: we hope to honour on-going places of prayer like the House of Prayer (at the Vine) and the Prayer Shed (at St Thomas) by connecting with them.



Roche Abbey



Cusworth circular

There might also be a longer pilgrimage on offer across the diocese (to be confirmed).



Rotherham Minster gardens

GATHERING: NOT JUST A BEACON EVENT

So far, we are working towards two central events:

Sun 12 May 4pm Sheffield Cathedral Evensong for Thy Kingdom Come

We are gathering people together for this special service to mark Thy Kingdom Come, particularly those who appreciate prayer and worship in the choral tradition.

Sun 19 May 6:30pm Beacon Event at St John's Owlerton

Contemporary worship and Bishop Sophie as preacher. The first meeting to discuss this event will take place after the publication date for Network.

Details for this and the Evensong event will follow but put the dates in your diaries.

RESOURCES

We will put links to all resources in the prayer section of our website (<https://sheffdio.org/tkc>). This will include:

- Local resources. Prayers & practical information for the deanery prayer pilgrimages
- Praying with the Olympics. A resource from Wath Deanery to give fresh inspiration to our prayers in this Olympic year
- National TKC resources. Once again, they have good written resources (many of which are free), including a Novena and a journal. They have an art resource this year ('visio divina') for those who respond better to images than to words. There are videos, all with BSL signing, braille resources, and specific material for children and young people.

If you need support or want to discuss possible prayer events during Thy Kingdom Come, please contact: john.hibberd@sheffield.anglican.org.



HOPE WEEKEND

YOUNG FAITH IN ACTION

So, what made me, a youth worker from a village on the edge of Doncaster, step up to lead HOPE Weekend? I guess it would have to be the potential for seeing our youth take their faith from something they've heard about in our groups, seen others doing in church, and maybe thought about a lot (or not in some cases!) and putting it into action. There's no sitting on the side lines during HOPE Weekend – everyone has to get involved, and in doing so they become God's hands and feet in their local community.

After our successful return with HOPE Doncaster last year, we are now excited to open this up to groups across South Yorkshire and the East Riding. HOPE Doncaster was a transformational weekend for my group last year (the Hatfield Heroes!) in terms of relationship building within the group and with the local community, but also in terms of their confidence and faith. There's something really special about spending a whole weekend with other young Christians and showing the outside world what you are really like.

Last year we had over 40 young people from different youth groups hearing about a God who cares for this world, and praying for our world and community at our Friday launch night. Then they went out and put that into action on the Saturday, handing out cards to those they saw to tell them what they were up to. We finished on Sunday with them sharing in our church service about the day and what they'd been up to. This year HOPE Weekend promises to be even better, as these young people are now starting to take ownership of the weekend even more. Ideas are coming flying in from groups who took part last year, and we really want

you to be a part of it! Even if you only have one or two young people at your church, you can still get involved.

Whilst we'd love every group to participate in the whole weekend, if travel or timings are an issue, then you can choose to participate in a way that suits your group:

FRIDAY NIGHT

Come for food and to be fired up and inspired for the weekend ahead! Think get-to-know-you games, prayer activities, an inspiring talk and worship together. Not forgetting the all-important group photo.....

SATURDAY DAY

Groups gather in their own communities to take part in social action projects that their young people have decided on. From litter picks to community car washes, baking for care homes and DIY – the sky is the limit!

SATURDAY NIGHT

Join back together with other groups at GO BOUNCE! Or celebrate in your own location, sharing feedback and stories from the day you've had.

SUNDAY

Share your experience in your home church at your services. Empower the young people to share what God has been doing through them.

This year we are really grasping hold of our

new tag line “YOUNG FAITH IN ACTION” – because this is about them taking ownership of their faith (however big or small it is) and taking steps to show it outwardly. We have also been inspired by the bible verse 1 Timothy 4:12 where Paul encourages Timothy, a young believer, to be an example in the way he lives and loves.

Contact me (Rachel Ridler – Doncaster Youth Hub Co-ordinator) at hubs@centenaryproject.org.uk to sign your group up or to have an informal chat about how they could take part. More details are on the website including a full leaders pack, and sign up for young people will open after Easter. Don't take my word for it though – take a read of these stories from leaders and young people who took part last year.

YOUTH GROUP AT ST PAUL'S CHURCH IN DONCASTER - PART OF RESURRECTION DONCASTER



The youth group in St Paul's Church in Doncaster

We decided to take part in HOPE Doncaster last year as we thought it sounded like an amazing way in which we could be God's hands and feet in our local community by offering free car washes and doing a litter pick on our estate. The biggest highlight of the weekend for us was being able to bless our community and shout the name of

Jesus! We would really recommend any other church-based youth groups to get involved this year with the HOPE Weekend as it really boosted our faith and walk with Jesus and was a great way to connect with the people who live close by. We can't wait to get involved again this year.

AIMEE RODDAM, REPRESENTING THE 7TH DONCASTER BOYS BRIGADE AND GIRLS ASSOCIATION



The 7th Doncaster Boys and Girls

Our young people love the Youth hub nights and really look forward to them. Hope Doncaster was an extension of that and they were keen to spend more time with the friends they had made through the youth hub nights.

The biggest highlight for me was Councillors Glyn Jones and Gemma Cobby popping in to our Social action projects and talking with the young people. It was great for the local representatives to see Young people passionate about Social Action. If I asked the young people though they'd probably say inflatables and Pizza!

We helped to tidy up our church garden and I think from that they got a sense of accomplishment and pride in their work-as well as a nettle free football game!

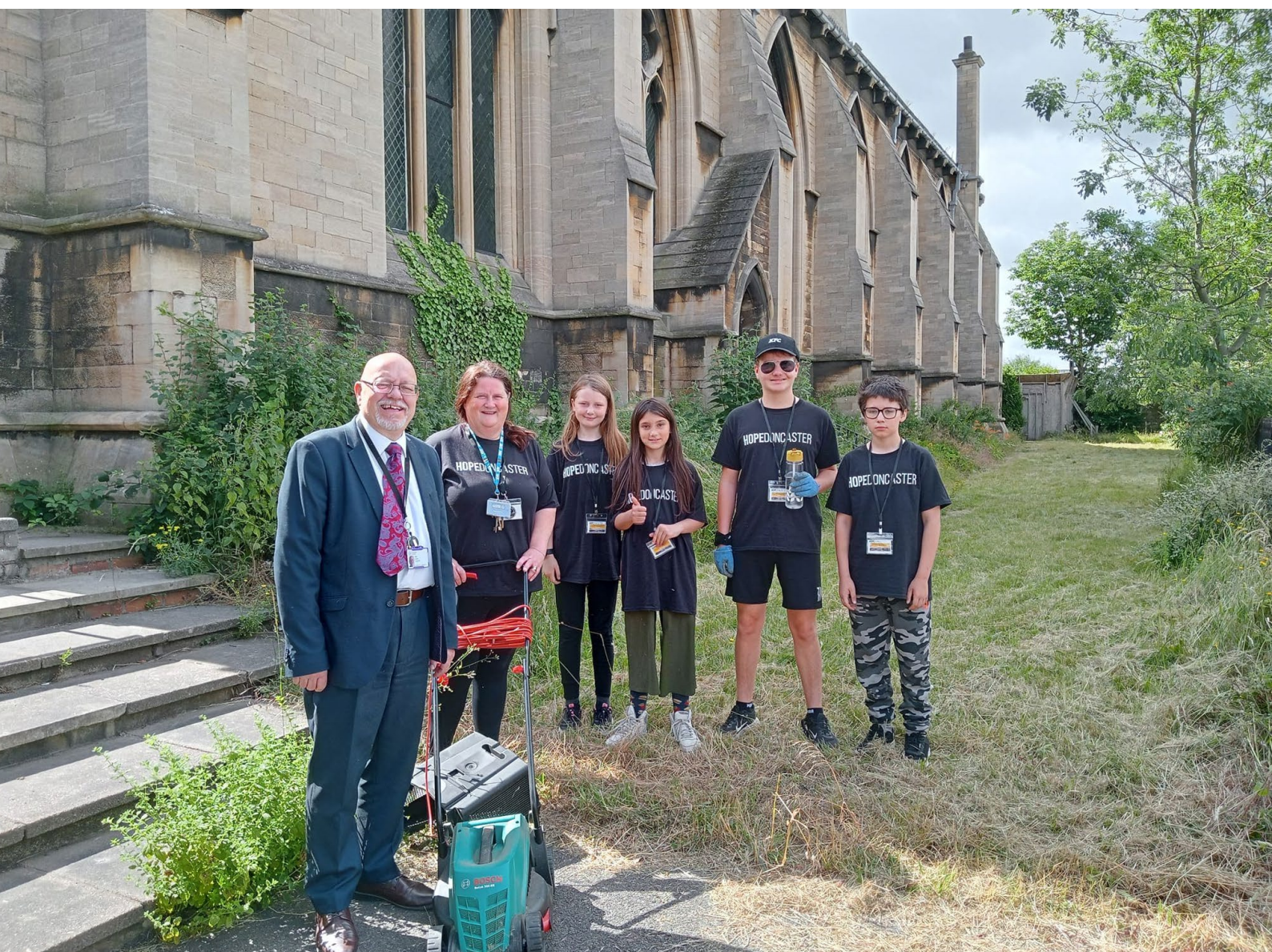
Getting young people involved in Social action is great for their Mental health but also helps them to develop skills that will serve them in later life. The faith and

fellowship side of the weekend is brilliant. It was wonderful for my small youth group to see they are part of a bigger picture!

I'm looking forward to seeing what Social action project my young people come up with this year! and we're definitely excited for Go bounce!

THE HATFIELD HEROES GROUP

We are the Hatfield Heroes and we decided to take part in HOPE Doncaster last year to help our community, do social action projects and because it sounded fun! We really enjoy spending time together as a group (and also eating pizza!) so this was a chance to do that for a whole weekend. Our highlight of the weekend was the celebration event on Saturday evening where we got to go on inflatables and eat dominoes pizza (can you sense the pizza theme here....). We would recommend taking part in HOPE Weekend this year to other young people because it was lots of fun and a chance to help your community. There's also really good pizza!



HISTORIC HEAT HACKS

The Historic Heat Hacks project is supporting up to 100 churches on their path to Net Zero and it's not too late to get your church involved too!

Local company, Cheribim is collaborating with the Diocese of Sheffield to provide 100 historic churches with temperature and humidity sensors completely free of charge.

The project is supporting churches on their path to Net Zero by providing near real-time environmental readings to all participants, helping congregations understand their building's thermal performance better. All of this gives churches the freedom to optimise their heating patterns and to investigate the suitability of trialling low carbon interventions to tackle sources of discomfort.

Whether your church's Net Zero plan is well underway or even if you don't know where to begin on the path, Cheribim are here to support you with steps to get you moving.

NEARLY 80 CHURCHES NOW HAVE CHERIBIM SENSORS EQUIPPED

Cheribim have been all over the Diocese in the last few months. From St Matthew's Carver Street in Sheffield city centre to the more remote churches in the Snaith and Hatfield deanery, no matter where you are in the Diocese you don't need to go far to find a church that's involved in the Historic Heat Hacks project.

The project is working with a wide variety of churches across the Diocese from ancient Saxon churches to early 20th century buildings. It is specifically investigating historic churches, so to qualify your building must be solid wall and typically be built no later than 1919.

A recent Historic Heat Hacks workshop



The success of the rollout has been a credit to the availability and willingness of so many church members that the Cheribim team have met, always greeting visitors with a warming cuppa on a cold December morning! This has kept the Cheribim wheels turning while installing in 78 churches.

A CHANCE TO TALK ABOUT YOUR CHURCH

Once an appointment has been agreed, a member of the team will visit your church and demonstrate the materials being placed. This will consist of at least two indoor sensors, one outdoor sensor, and a connectivity device.

If your church doesn't have wifi you can still participate! Cheribim can provide connectivity solutions for every kind of building.

You also don't need a faculty as the equipment doesn't require any special fixtures or fittings. The indoor sensors can simply be placed down anywhere in the church, or fixed using their own adhesive. The outdoor sensors are typically secured using cable ties to the north face of the building.

Cheribim will chat with you about how the building is used, your heating patterns, and any other useful information that will provide context to the environmental readings. This is an opportunity to share what makes your building so special, its history, its people and what you're currently doing to serve your congregation.

The whole process can be completed in less than an hour and Cheribim will always cater to your schedule.

COLLABORATION WITH CHURCHES

It's not just sensor installations either: January saw two Historic Heat Hacks workshops led by buildings physicist Dr Robyn Pender and Cheribim's Amy Graham. The workshops were held in St Lawrence, Hatfield and St Mary, Catcliffe and were attended by 40 people from 25 different churches. The workshops looked at climate change in a church context, the concept of comfort in historic buildings, and got everyone up

on their feet to create collages and identify Historic Heat Hacks at each venue. Keep your eyes peeled for the next instalment of these workshops in the summer if you want to get involved.

You can also access ongoing support from Cheribim by signing up to their mailing list or joining a growing community online on a private Facebook group where you can share ideas with other participants. Cheribim also regularly post on their Facebook and LinkedIn profiles with more information about the project, the company, and even maintenance tips!

TIME IS RUNNING OUT TO GET INVOLVED

There are only 22 spaces left on the project so be sure to sign up or get in touch as soon as you can to get free environmental monitoring sensors for your church!

Just sign up by filling in an expression of interest form on Cheribim's website here: cheribimapp.com/participate

Alternatively, if you'd like a bit more information about the project before signing up you can contact Cheribim's dedicated Project Officer, Jack at jack@cheribimapp.com or on 07945 193247.



The Cheribim team

MISSION ACTION PLANNING IN CANTLEY

Father Andrew Howard has recently taken responsibility for Saint Hugh's New Cantley alongside Saint Wilfrid's Cantley, and the parish is already seeing new signs of life.

HOW DID YOUR NEW ROLE FIRST COME ABOUT?

Father Jeffrey Stokoe had retired as the Vicar of Saint Hugh's New Cantley, which is a neighbouring parish to Saint Hugh's. Geographically and theologically it's close, so it made perfect sense. It was no great surprise when the Archdeacon (Javaid Iqbal) got in touch and suggested this position.

Jeff and I overlapped at college for one year together so we already knew each other, so when I came here that friendship was already in place.

TELL US ABOUT WHAT THE TWO PARISHES HAVE BEEN DOING TOGETHER

Joint events had been growing over the years because of Jeff and I working together on things like Lent courses and pilgrimages. The two parishes are really starting to knit together. We've been supporting each other's fundraising events, plus there are two members of each PCC who go to the other PCC.

The main themes that emerged from a Mission Action Planning meeting held late last year was that we needed to look more closely at developing a ministry of welcome there, especially to young people.

HOW SIGNIFICANT HAS THE BUILDING ITSELF BEEN IN PLANNING?

Whatever we can do in the parish flows from the building. Inside, it's a very special building and it has a beauty to it, but from the outside it looks derelict. The whole thing needs complete restoration and renewal. We're trying to raise funds and have applied for grants, plus some of the Diocese's Church Buildings Officers have come down to take a look.

Once the building looks more welcoming



and open, then the rest will flow from that. I will not rest until it's done because I feel for the folk involved; they love that church. From the outside it looks unloved, but that isn't the case. This is a top priority that really needs attention.

HOW IMPORTANT CAN MISSION ACTION PLANS BE TO CHURCHES?

It's something we're looking to focus on and strengthen. It's going to take us into the future and looking at not only the distinct identity that each parish has, but also how we can be even more joined together across the joint benefice, because it makes sense to do that.

We're still unified but each parish has its own nature, character and identity. Those characteristics are maintained because it's a joint benefice. I pray that both parishes continue to thrive and flourish. One of the top priorities of course is the building, because we can do so much more with it. I pray for both congregations to grow, flourish and be even more open to the local community.

WHERE'S THE BEST PLACE TO FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?

You can get in touch with me if you have any questions. My details are:

Fr. Andrew Howard M.A., SSC
Vicar, S. Wilfrid's, Cantley and S. Hugh's, New Cantley.
(01302) 285316
07740 932758



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN TICKHILL

Chaplain of St Mary's Primary School Tickhill, Jenny Hosker, shares how children are leading worship sessions and acting out Bible stories.

CHILDREN LEAD COLLECTIVE WORSHIP HERE IN TICKHILL

The church was asked to lead an act of worship in the church school each week. It became clear that the children wanted to take part in delivering the worship and now they lead and deliver the worship themselves. One of my aims is to increase the children's biblical literacy. Our Priest-in-Charge, Canon Paul Richardson, suggested using 'Open the Book' materials. We're working through all the stories of the Old and New Testament, and the hope is that by repeating that cycle they will be familiar with key Bible stories and the overall structure of the Bible by the time they leave school. I hope that they will see how the Bible tells a continuous story that leads to Jesus Christ.

Each week the children play parts in a Bible story, and act as narrators. We rehearse on a Monday for the Wednesday Worship.

THERE'S AN ENORMOUS DEMAND TO TAKE PART

I get asked all the time, "please, can I be in Wednesday worship?" I try and get as many children involved as I can. We have half an hour on Monday to prepare, but I ask them to take their scripts home to practice as well. It keeps on evolving. Recently I introduced Psalms at the start

of the sessions, using The Message Bible to show how the Psalms reflect all aspects of life. Beyond this, the group came to me to say there were social topics they wanted to cover as well.

Now we intersperse every half term with a social topic. Recently they've done a presentation on modern day slavery in the UK. In addition, each week we sing the Lord's Prayer at the end of worship. The children are building a good, solid understanding of what the Lord's Prayer is and what it's about. I just facilitate the sessions; they're led so well by the children.

THE SIGNS ARE REALLY ENCOURAGING FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

I think the more they do, the more they understand, and the more they become part of things. I didn't want the children to just be receiving messages, but by delivering collective worship they're having a sense of ownership around the messages as well.

We finished our selection of the Old Testament before Christmas and are making our way through the New Testament this year. I didn't want to do the story of Christmas because it's already familiar to them, so we've looked at the boyhood of Jesus and in spring term we will learn about His healing and preaching ministry. We'll keep on going,

and once we've finished with Revelation, we'll go back to Genesis. We'll keep on going through it because it's always different every time you deliver it.

THE REACTION HAS BEEN BRILLIANT

Collective worship is something the children get really excited about and they do absolutely love it. In my role as school chaplain, I'm at St Mary's School every day, and I always have children coming up to me asking to take part.

For the kids who are shy I always reassure them and encourage them to take part. I don't just want to include children who are confident at acting and presenting, as I believe giving everyone a platform can help to boost confidence.

We recently decided to do a children's Eucharist every term. We've written the liturgy for that and it's pretty much the children leading the whole of it. It's amazing to see children at the school responding so positively to collective worship and thinking of creative ways to talk about the gospel.

Each half term has a new topic



PEAK PILGRIMAGE 2024

Revd Cliff Kay shares his excitement about the upcoming Peak Pilgrimage walks – and his hopes for new fellowship.

Revd Cliff Kay



PICKING UP WHERE I LEFT OFF

Taking up the post as oversight minister for the parishes of Gleadless and Frecheville has placed me on the doorstep of the peak district. The move means that places I walked regularly twenty five years ago are now back within reach. That I live within thirty minutes of Hathersage is a real treat! I came to Sheffield from the Diocese of Lincoln, where having struck up a good friendship with a farmer from one of the churches, we began monthly walks in the Yorkshire Wolds – I do miss those Red Kites! When it was announced that I would be leaving my post on the Isle of Axholme, Richard, my farming friend, asked ‘can we still meet to walk?’ and we do, walking monthly in the peak district and areas of Sheffield.

It was my ministry colleague, Claire Welch, who first told me about the diocesan ‘Peak Pilgrimage’ walks and I

was delighted to hear that spaces were available this year, and that the dates worked for me. It will be a highlight of the year to spend time with, and get to know, people from other areas of the Diocese on a few Saturdays in the Peak District, ably guided by John Hibberd.

WALK TO TALK

Finding time to walk and talk in the busyness of contemporary life might seem a luxury, whereas I suspect it is an untapped means of developing new friendships, improving our fitness and well-being and deepening our bond of Christian discipleship and connectivity with one another across the diocese. It can often go un-noticed, given we ‘read’ rather than ‘see’ the bible, how much walking and talking was a part of the ministry of Jesus.

THE CHOSEN

The place of walking and talking and eating together, became all the more apparent to me when I introduced sessions of The Chosen (a mini-series about the life and ministry of Jesus) to my churches in the Lincoln diocese. In The Chosen, in seasons 1 & 2, there is a lot of walking, talking and eating! The series itself was an immense benefit to church members who were not that focussed on reading. The dynamic of the bible narrative being presented visually gave them a 360 degree perspective of the biblical story and actually acted as a catalyst to encourage them to read the bible, because they now sensed what it looked like.

Over the summer weeks of last year, I invited the Gleadless-Frecheville churches to take opportunity to come to the vicarage and watch the first series of The Chosen. We had a similar response of it enabling people to see the narrative and also to appreciate how beneficial it was for people to watch the series with others and talk about their reactions and ask questions, rather than watch alone at home. I am very much looking forward to walking, talking, eating and fellowship, with my fellow pilgrims on the peak pilgrimage.

TRY LEFT FIELD

For a number of years, I have tried to include something new, different, even

left field, as part of my training, development and experience each year. In some respects, this peak pilgrimage fits those criteria, certainly learning what it will mean as a 'pilgrimage'. I am hoping that it might be the spur for similar walks in the coming years.

Cliff Kay – Oversight Minister for Gleadless and Frecheville (Christ Church, St Peter's and St Cyprian's)

For more information on Peak Pilgrimages, or if you'd be interested in taking part in one, contact:

john.hibberd@sheffield.anglican.org

HELPING WITH THE COST OF LIVING IN OUGHTIBRIDGE

One year on, an initiative from Oughtibridge Parish Church has been continuing to meet the needs of the local community.

A scheme aimed at helping people struggling with the cost of living crisis is continuing to make an impact, one year on from its launch.

The 'Bless the Parish' initiative started in February 2023, involving members of the church being invited to give to a fund that would be organised into lots of £25 and loaded onto supermarket gift cards.

Thanks to a strong partnership between the church and local school, help was offered in identifying the families who would most benefit from the cards. More than £8,000 has been raised, enabling the initiative to give one gift card to every family in the local primary schools on free school meals.

Vicar Chris Tufnell says the partnership with local schools has helped to meet a growing need for help:

"We were getting to the point where the school were semi-regularly contacting to me to ask if the church can support families in this time of need. We decided we wanted to do something more and look at giving more generously with quick responses to meet where the need is.

"Before the Summer and Christmas holidays, we gave a card to every family that had a child on free school meals at both the Oughtibridge Primary and Wharncliffe Side Schools (which are both in our parish).

"It's vital we can do this, because during these holidays those children aren't receiving free school meals. This seemed an obvious way to begin to be able to help people."

The fund continues to support families on an ad hoc basis and has generated opportunities to further support and help in the community. Greetings cards from the church have also been printed for recipient families, with a message recognising the struggles of the cost of living crisis and the offer of help.

Some families are being served on a repeated basis due to the need for help, but Chris says the fund hasn't been depleted one year on from its launch. He

adds that they'll continue to do what they can to help others:

"We've never not been able to help a family that is in need and has asked as a result of that, which is fantastic. This is part of what we believe God calls Christians to do, but we believe people's greatest need is to know Jesus.

"We want to create pathways so that, as has happened to us recently, if someone who we've given vouchers to wants to meet with us to discuss faith – they can do. However, if we never hear from someone we're still very happy to have been able to help them in that time of need."



People in need can keep in touch with the Oughtibridge team

CHURCH EXPLORERS WEEK

Church Buildings Officer Chris Ellis shares more on an exciting new campaign taking place in the Diocese of Sheffield.

2024 looks to be an exciting year of opportunity and we are blessed to have many regional and nationwide schemes to be part of, to further bring our churches to life for a wide audience. Yorkshire Churches Day alongside Heritage Open Days allows us to showcase our history and promote our heritage. Love Your Burial Ground Week gives us a chance to appreciate the outdoor spaces in our care, whilst in January the National Treasures Day allows us to share our special buildings and collections via social media to a potential worldwide audience. These opportunities are just a few we can get involved to contribute to a lively and vibrant church calendar.

Half term week of 25th May – 2nd June will see a new initiative launched within the Diocese of Sheffield. Church Explorers Week is a fun new platform providing us with an opportunity to open our doors, offer a warm welcome, and encourage people to cross the threshold.

The exploring during this week is perhaps two-fold. We aim, through a series of open days, to welcome new people to visit and enjoy our cherished places and discover what we have to offer. This includes our unrivalled heritage and our wonderful church yards. It is also an opportunity for ourselves to think about the creative use of our churches, to learn from each, and to shout about many of the good projects we already do.

Churches are undeniably special and places of intrigue. Unlocking and releasing their potential and their diverse appeal is in all our interests. Encouraging

people to connect with our vibrant ongoing heritage forms part of our stewardship and ability to grow appreciation for it; allowing us to protect and sustain it. In return, this allows for a very real opportunity to welcome new people, build new relationships and offer a genuine welcome for all.

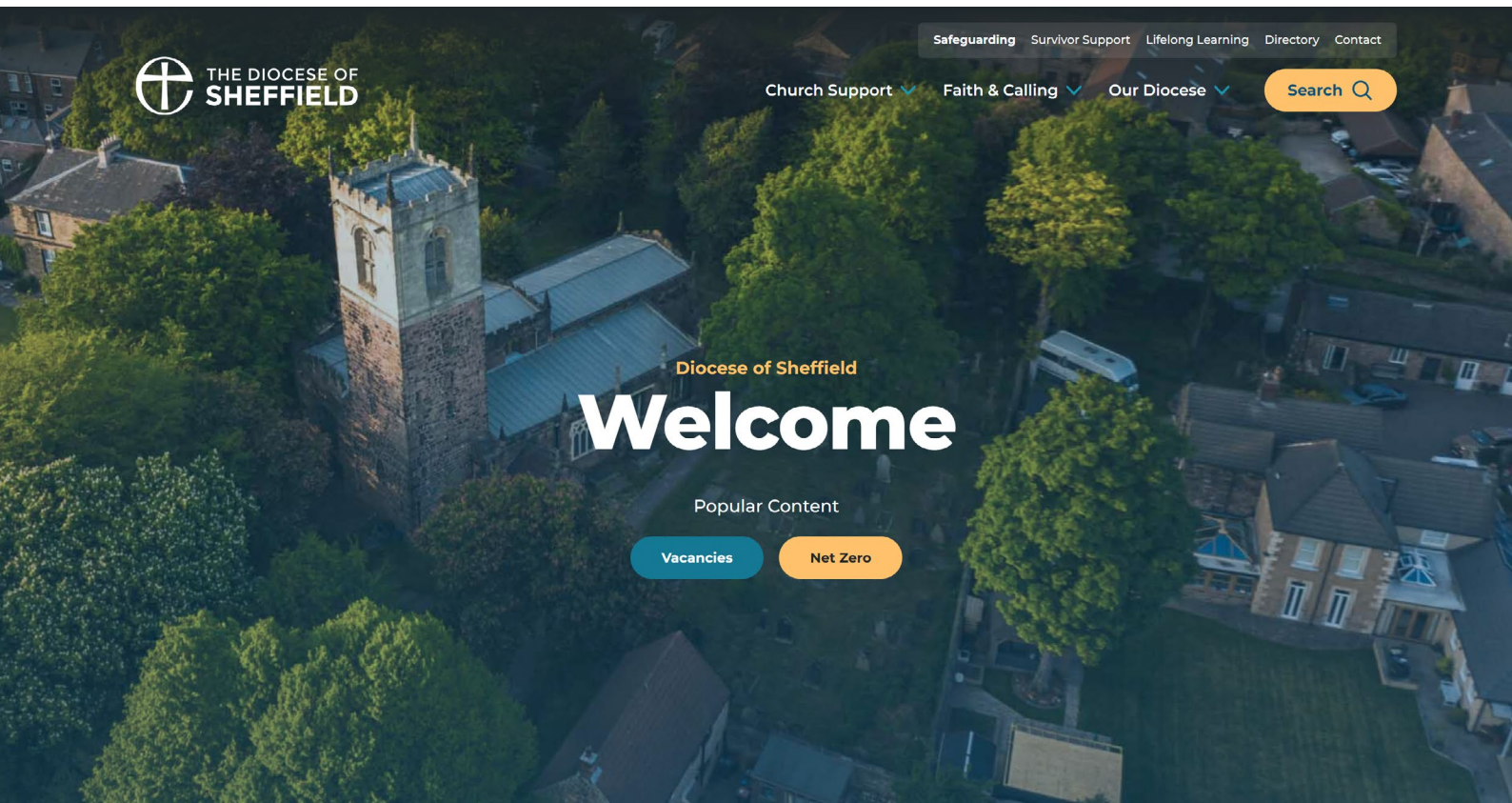
Today, our cathedrals and minsters form some of the most visited attractions in the country and are well adept at harnessing the potential of visitor footfall. Yet, our parish churches too have much to offer, see and explore and Churches Explorer's Week seeks to further our ability to do just this.

Participation for the event will be via sign up form. Churches will have the opportunity to host a fun family trail, a heritage guided tour or display, a show-around, a multi-church walk or simply an open door and a cup of tea if this is what suits. In fact, all ideas are welcome! Furthermore, if you would like to discuss your ideas, your Mission Area Support Team are happy to provide help and support.

If you would like more information or to sign up for Church Explorers Week, you can find it at sheffdio.org/CEW.

DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD WEBSITE

WE WANT YOUR VIEWS



It's been a year since we launched our brand-new website, with a key priority of ours to make it easier for people in parishes to use the site and access resources to support mission.

During the process we hosted various user testing sessions with clergy and lay people, listening closely to people's questions covering multiple groups within the diocese.

Part of the improvements including enhancing the look and layout of each page of the website, with the search option improved to enable easier access to key information. The refresh includes more personalised sections and a simplified way of contacting the relevant person or department for each query.

Navigation has been redesigned and news and events across the diocese have been presented in a more accessible way.

However, we're always looking to improve! For the next stage of our web development process we want to ask for your views on how you're finding the website, what you like about it and what you think could be improved.

You can fill in the feedback form here:

<https://sheffdio.org/HaveYourSay>

The deadline for submissions is the end of April 2024. Look out for our new directory as well, which is now live!

MESSY CHURCH THRIVING IN WATH AND BRAMPTON BIERLOW

New families are connecting with church through monthly services of Messy Church in Wath and Brampton Bierlow, led by Centenary Project Worker Rachel Parker and her teams of volunteers.



Rachel leading Messy Church

It's a wet and chilly Saturday afternoon, but the parish hall in Brampton Bierlow is alive with activity. On arrival at the hall, families are greeted by a welcomer and then shown into the hall. Refreshments are available and a member of the team explains that we can work our way around the activities.

At each activity station, there's a member of the Messy Church team, easily identifiable by their Messy Church apron. The activities each have a card explaining the activity and a thought connected to today's Bible story. The volunteers are ready to explore the story whilst we craft. There are around 40 people in the hall, Rachel said that it was a bit quieter today as it's half term.

Part way through the session, the crafts are cleared away and Rachel gathers everyone to share today's story. The children take part in telling the story and lead the prayers, then everyone joins in with a song. Both the children and adults enjoy doing the actions. Messy Church finishes with a simple meal together.

Messy Church is an all-age fresh expression of church reaching families across the world. In Wath and Brampton it's not only been a great way to connect to families, but has also helped grow the wider church family. Lots of the Messy Church families are now attending the All Age service in church, which has recently been reshaped as a Messy Breakfast service. Older children from Messy Church are also part of the youth group.

The Messy Church in Brampton Bierlow is very similar to one that happened earlier in the week at All Saints Wath. Rachel has another volunteer team there, but both teams support each other and help out where needed.

Rachel says "we endeavour to make this

experience of church for many non-church families not just positive but the 'very best' experience of church and the Good News that Jesus has to offer". Messy Church is having a really positive impact on the church and community in Wath and Brampton.

Rachel's tips for starting your own Messy Church:

1. PRAY

Before thinking about setting up your Messy Church, pray for the families and children who attend, pray during planning meetings and pray on the day during the setting up time. This is also a good opportunity to encourage those who find praying a challenge to do so in a supportive way.

2. DEVELOP YOUR VOLUNTEERS

Have a core team that can take responsibility for a craft table on the day and a person who plans the food. Share out the tasks and ensure the plan for the day is sent out in advance so the team knows exactly what their responsibilities are. Nurture and disciple your volunteers and ensure they have had the opportunity to read and understand the message that is being shared. We have a regular planning meeting to bring the team together and utilise the skills within the group.

3. ADVERTISE

Promote your Messy Church events through the local schools, social media, large banners and sending a quick text message or email to your contact families. We have flyers printed ready to give out to the families at the end of each session to advertise forthcoming events.

4. PLAN AHEAD

Messy Church dates and planning meeting dates are usually sent out in

advance every six months. Prior to the planning meeting, the team are emailed the theme and some craft ideas and are asked to think about and share any of their own ideas. We also have a Craft prep evening with Fizz and nibbles! This is a great way to get all the cutting out and preparation done in advance, socialise and grow the team.

5. HAVE A CLEAR FOCUS

The aim is to share Jesus with our community in a fun, relaxed, accessible and family friendly environment. Each craft table has an invitation to 'Come and make ...' along with an explanation or questions linked to our bible story. Our worship session includes action songs, an interactive bible story and prayers. Before our meal time prayer or a grace is read out by one of the families.

More information about Messy Church can be found on their website:

www.messychurch.brf.org.uk



Freddie at Messy Church

BEING PART OF THE PRAYER COMMUNITY

Julie Sandoval from the 2025 Prayer Community shares more on the Renewed part of the Diocesan strategy.



Every weekday morning at 7.30am a group gets together to pray for the Diocese, the world and heartfelt concerns closer to home; in their churches, parishes, and in their own lives and families, and the concerns of their friends. The group, which is small in number, but growing, prays virtually together on Facebook within the RENEWED 2025 section. Being small in number has never worried me because Jesus said “where two or three are gathered in my name there I am”. For me, that’s enough. This FB group is one facet of being part of the prayer community.

For those who don’t ‘do’ Facebook (which nowadays seems to be those much younger than me!) there are other ways to be part of the prayer community;

you can sign up to receive a weekly email, which contains the prayer reflections for the week. The prayer reflections are three inspirational short pieces written by a mixture of ordained and lay people who love prayer and love to pray. These also appear on Facebook on Wednesdays, Fridays and Mondays.

The prayer community in its current shape began shortly after Bishop Pete’s arrival in the Diocese; you may remember one of the first things he did was to walk across the Diocese praying. The prayer community is essentially for those who have committed themselves to praying daily for the Diocese of Sheffield; for God to bless the Diocese of Sheffield. It’s suggested that you read one verse of scripture per day, pray the Diocesan prayer and say the Lord’s prayer daily,

easy peasy! It is planned to continue until 2025 and I suspect it will continue much longer, because God has got hold of those who are involved and they have got hold of God, a bit like Jacob, who wouldn't let God go until he blessed him (Genesis 32).

Prayer requests and suggestions are put together by John Hibberd to create the Diocesan prayer calendar and are included in our daily prayers; this can be found on the Diocesan website under the renewed section.

I just want to give a shout out to John Hibberd who instigates a lot of the things that happen in the prayer community. John, amongst other things, also ran a brilliant prayer course in the past, and he organises some of the prayer events scattered around the Diocese. These events happen at various points in the calendar (usually in a particular mission area), often organised locally with the help and encouragement of John and sometimes attended by the bishops, senior clergy or someone from the central team.

The next big event on the horizon is the ten days of prayer, aka Thy Kingdom Come, this is an international event which begins on 9th May (Ascension Day) and runs until Sunday 19th of May (Pentecost). The annual ten days of prayer is to help us recall the time when the disciples obeyed Jesus after he physically left them (on a cloud) and told them to wait until they received the Holy Spirit. In that waiting time, they met together and 'devoted themselves to prayer' (Acts 1). We are all familiar with the outcome of their obedience - if you're not, just read Acts 2.

Years ago my husband, who's a Reader, preached about prayer on Pentecost Sunday, at the end of ten days of prayer during which we'd opened the church up daily for people to come to pray. I felt really called to begin a weekly prayer

group which is still going strong today. Prayer has really made a difference to us and to our community. Prayer doesn't know any boundaries you can travel to the other side of the globe in your prayers. You can pray for the overwhelming concerns of the world, with others who feel like you. You and God together can change the shape of things, you can bless others, upholding them in your prayers. You can be prayed for, an invaluable consequence of being part of a prayer community. Prayer is timeless and ageless too; back when the church was but a baby the saints prayed (they prayed a lot). God takes notice of prayers regardless of your age or qualifications. He hears prayers uttered by children as well as the bishop, he hears prayers said by those who feel empty and far off as well as the ladies of the mother's union. Praying is one of the most important things you can do. Praying for someone is one of the best gifts you can give them.

My hope would be that prayer groups in whatever shape or form, virtual; or 'in person' would pop up all over the diocese. It'll be chaotic peace.

Don't forget to let John know if you've begun a prayer group or want to be part of the prayer community - you'll be very welcome. Get involved; why wouldn't you?

A NET ZERO ACTION PLAN FOR THE DIOCESE

November saw a significant step for the Diocese's Environmental Programme with the endorsement by the Diocesan Synod of a Net Zero Carbon Action Plan.



Keynote speaker Julian Atkins

General Synod voted in February 2020 for the whole of the Church of England to achieve net zero carbon by 2030. In 2022 the CofE published a national Routemap for reaching Net Zero carbon emissions. Since then national funding has allowed the Environmental Projects Team in the Diocese of Sheffield to build capacity through recruitment of a Net Zero Carbon Project Officer with a remit of producing an action plan to implement the National Routemap locally.

The recently endorsed plan is for churches, schools and clergy housing in the Diocese, plus Diocesan Church House. It sets out a blueprint to provide properties, schools and churches with comfortable bright and energy efficient buildings powered by renewable energy wherever possible and with lower energy costs. The plan details the milestones and timescales required for the Diocese to reach Net Zero by 2030.

Implementation will be a project involving teams across the Diocese and will be overseen by the Diocesan Net Zero Steering Group, chaired by Bishop Sophie.

The next step for churches is to produce their own action plans for their church buildings. We recognise that for some this may sound like a challenging task but support is available from the Diocese. Plans do not have to be complicated- a lot can be achieved through small steps,

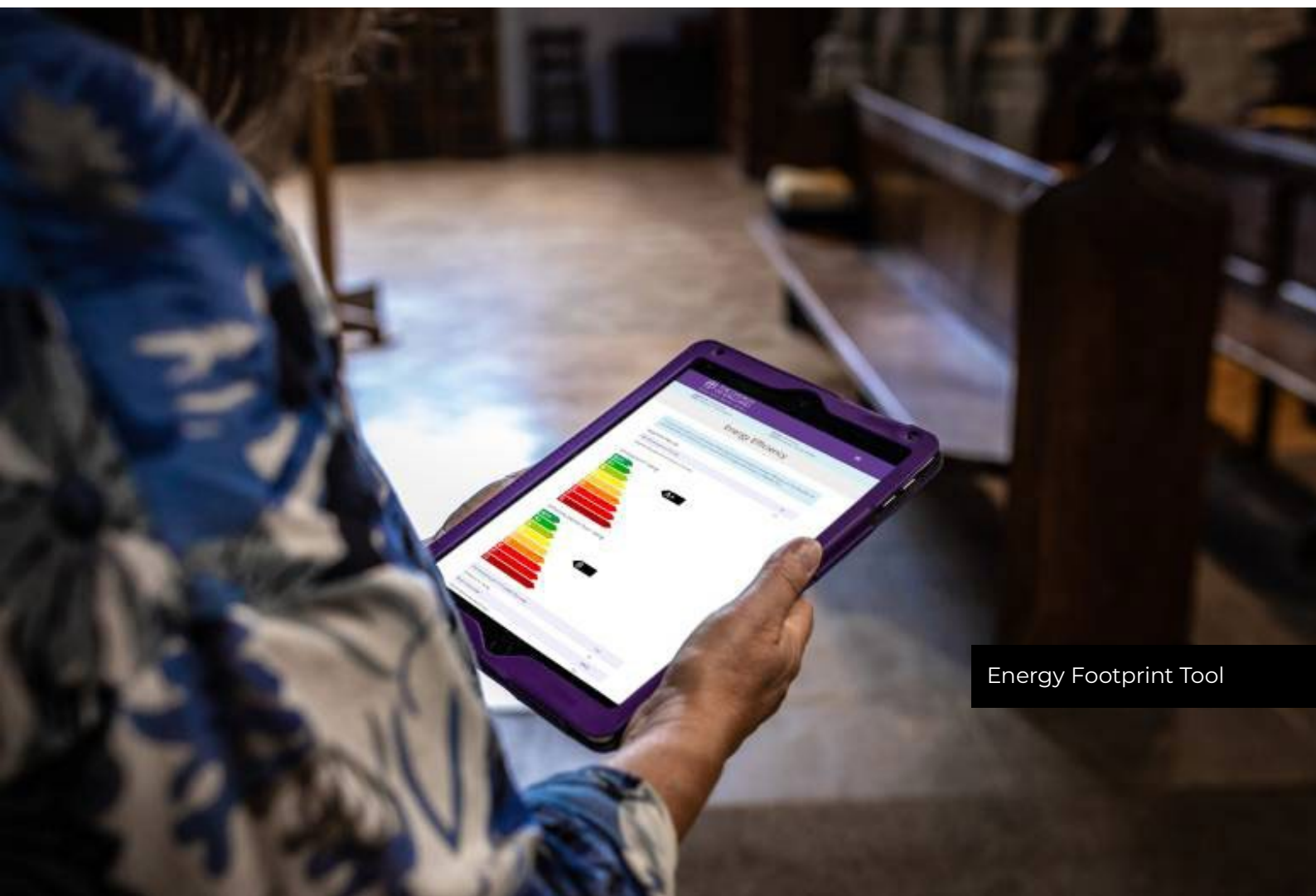
for example effective building maintenance, draught-proofing and use of green energy supply tariffs. The key is to have a plan to decarbonise that includes heating and lighting systems, avoids their sudden failure and smooths the path to Net Zero.

Clergy and church teams with responsibility for buildings and energy use are invited to the Mission Area Support and Net Zero Conference on 17th April at the Wilson Carlile Centre in Sheffield. This is a one-day event focussing on church buildings and clergy housing that aims to equip churches to put together action plans and provide vital information on building maintenance, funding and clergy housing. The Environmental Projects, Buildings, Giving & Generosity and Clergy Housing Teams from the Diocese will be leading workshops, and we are delighted to announce that Julian Atkins, Net Zero Programme Director at the Church of England, will be the keynote speaker.

One of the ways in which progress towards Net Zero will be measured is via the Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) which is completed via the parish returns system. Churches complete the EFT to measure their own Carbon Footprint and to provide data to both the Diocese and National Church. A revised version of the EFT has been launched- there are resources to help churches complete this which the Environmental Projects Team can supply.

The Net Zero Carbon Action Plan is part of a growing programme of work in the Diocese to answer our call to care for God's Earth. The Environmental Projects Team are here to support Churches in taking positive action, please ask us for advice and support. The first point of contact for the team is Sally on:

environment.admin@sheffield.anglican.org.



Energy Footprint Tool

*“The Diocese of Sheffield
is called to grow a
sustainable network
of Christ-like, lively
and diverse Christian
communities in every
place which are
effective in making
disciples and in seeking
to transform our society
and God’s world.”*



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