

 Diocese of Carlisle

archdeacons' visitation news

Welcome

Welcome to this edition of Archdeacons' Visitation News

First, we need to say a huge thank you to all Churchwardens, for all your ministry – for the work you do is ministry!

Second, we need to say an equally huge thank you to all those who support you in your roles. Family, friends, others at church... thank you to all of them too.

Third, we need to say another thank you to Ecclesiastical Insurance for the 2023 edition of Archdeacons' Visitation News – and for all their support of churches. They look after us when things go wrong, they are there to offer advice and help to prevent things going wrong, and they support the Church with generous grants to each Diocese – they are (probably?!) the best insurers in the world!

Since the 2022 Archdeacons' News, Lee Townend has left the Diocese, so Stewart and Richard (still job-sharing) and Vernon are covering the three Archdeaconries. We are not sure what the future holds for the configuration of Archdeaconries in the Diocese, but are planning to apply in the autumn to the Church Commissioners for grant funding for a third time-limited Archdeacon post...

Finally, can we remind you about Churchwarden training:

7pm: Tues 12 Sept and Wed 20 Sept: hybrid (Zoom or in-person at Church House)

Thank you again – may God bless you, and may you be a blessing to others.



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Being a Bishop in Cumbria

It is quite hard to believe that for the last 21 years someone has actually paid me to drive around one of the most beautiful counties in England; meet some of the loveliest people on the planet, and be given innumerable opportunities to share the Gospel and hear how God has been at work in so many people and places. It has been the greatest privilege and joy of my life (after my marriage of course – Alison might read this!) and my first, abiding reflection is one of profound gratitude. We used to say that this is 'probably the best Diocese in which to live and work' – and, having served in four and visited most, I still think that wasn't mere hyperbole. I love Cumbria. I love its people, and I love God's Church here, and always will.

During those years we have together experienced the 'Health Churches Exercise'; 'From Survival to Revival'; Growing Disciples (remember the 'Green Book'?) and 'God for All': four 'initiatives' but one core vision which is rooted in discipleship. All of us are committed to deepening our own relationship with Jesus – and helping others to discover for themselves the meaning, purpose and peace which only He can provide. It has been a delight for me to pursue that end, not only with a succession of exceptional Anglican colleagues (in BLT, Church House and across the Diocese) but also of course with our ecumenical brothers and sisters, and the development of Mission Communities has been really exciting as well as deeply challenging.

Not that this has all been plain sailing. 2023 is not an easy time for Christians in the West and those of us who are passionate about growth look at declining numbers (country-wide) and diminishing finances with some alarm. Diocesan Bishops also have to juggle the demands of the National Church with those of the Diocese, and I have been no exception.

But those wider responsibilities have given the mission here a broader perspective, as too does the remarkable spiritual history of this wonderful county. So I find great comfort and re-assurance in the conviction that, whatever may be happening around us, God is the same: yesterday, today and forever – and that our times are in his hands and always will be. Soli Deo Gloria.

James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle

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 **ecclesiastical**

Churchwardens as leaders of mission



It is well known that the Churchwardens have spiritual, as well as legal and practical responsibilities, but when we think of 'leaders in mission' perhaps you naturally think of other folk, e.g. parish clergy or licensed pioneers. But a great deal of what Churchwardens have responsibility for has mission at its heart.

If you've ever been involved with a building project, you'll know how much time is spent thinking about how church connects with community and tells the story of faith through its stones. Likewise, you'll have had many of the vicar's bright ideas run past you, because of the position you hold.

Churchwardens have a vital role in mission, whether through the Church fabric that is vested in them, or in their role of being 'foremost in representing the laity'. Churchwardens are key stewards of the Kingdom, ensuring that God's holy gifts serve God's holy people, keeping our vocation as church as the aim of all that we do: namely the great work by which Christ reconciles all things to himself (Colossians 1.20).

Whether it's because you've felt called to it, or simply left to get on with it, it's been heartening to see, as Mission Communities have developed, Churchwardens increasingly grow in their missional leadership and we're delighted to bring you two inspiring stories from daily life in our Cumbrian churches. We hope they might encourage you and help you to see the significance of your service as leaders of mission.

Stewart Fyfe

Archdeacon of West Cumberland

Churchwardens and staves



Churchwardens as leaders of mission



Finding ourselves in an indefinite period of 'vacancy' when our vicar was called to pastures new was initially very daunting. We (the Churchwardens, our Deanery Pioneer Ministers, and other young church families and volunteers) were keen to ensure that Messy Church continued during the vacancy.

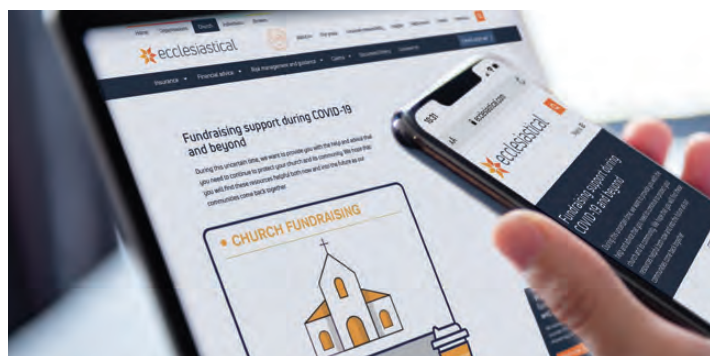
A meeting was called, and after clearing a few hurdles of safeguarding and DBS issues, we planned our first event. With all of us very busy with jobs and parenting, we soon moved to a WhatsApp group for our planning – this has worked incredibly well, with everyone able to contribute quickly and easily, at any time of day. We use the WhatsApp group to share ideas for the theme, the activities, the songs, and other practical issues.

The internet holds a vast array of ideas and resources for crafts and activities, and we have played to the diverse strengths and skills of each team member – one of us organising the music, another excelling at food-based activities, and others presenting a Bible story, and running the craft activities. We advertise our Messy Church via Facebook, and also through the primary school by emailing the flyer to every family.

Whilst survival through the vacancy was our initial aim, we are now thriving and growing in all senses, with new families coming through the door and enjoying what we share.

Hannah Ellerton

Churchwarden, Morland



Fundraising hub to support your church

Fundraising has always been vital for churches, from the traditional, well-loved flower festivals and cake sales to the world of digital fundraising opportunities that the internet has opened up. But it can be daunting to know where to start, so Ecclesiastical's easy-to-use online fundraising hub is here to help with great ideas and simple advice.

Drawing on the advice of experts and our own 135 years' experience in working with churches, we've pulled together a range of top tips to help you boost existing income streams and develop new ones. There's help with researching sources of funding and writing professional grant applications that can make all the difference to the answer you receive. There are great video webinars with fundraising specialists offering their insights into key fundraising issues.

Other guidance includes fundraising in less affluent areas, fundraising in rural parishes, how to build a fundraising team and more to keep your congregation and the wider community informed and engaged.

There are plenty of useful resources and handy templates for all types of churches on our Church Fundraising Hub at www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising

Nominate your church for a chance to win



The Movement for Good giving programme is back with awards of £1,000 to give to charities helping those in need. Ecclesiastical is proudly part of the Benefact Group, and together they are giving away over **£1 million** to charities in the 2023 Movement for Good Awards.

£1,000 draws are now open for nominations

- You can nominate your favourite charity or church at any time for the £1,000 draw.
- It's one nomination per charity, per person, so if you have more than one favourite, get them in the running today!
- There are three £1,000 draws this year giving away between £120,000 and £150,000 in each.
- Once you've nominated, share your nomination and get your network to support too.

Get nominating and find out more at www.movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical

Did you know?

In 2022, 15 churches each won a £1,000 grant.

There were thousands of nominations for these churches. The more nominations received, the greater their chance of winning.



Contains promotional material

Rebuilding the historic Church of the Ascension in Salford

In February 2017, a fire broke out at the Grade-II listed Church of the Ascension in Lower Broughton, Salford, Greater Manchester. Six crews from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service battled for hours to contain the blaze, which ultimately devastated the building.



Many members of the local community gathered outside the church building to survey the damage, some reduced to tears. Much used and loved by young and old, the building plays an important role in both spiritual and social terms as an inclusive community space accessible to all. The church had recently undergone a £250,000 restoration project which people in the community had helped to fund.

Immediately following the fire, Ecclesiastical carefully assembled the right team of experts to attend the site as soon as the fire service authorised it.

Repair work began in October 2018 with teams of carefully selected experts appointed to complete the works. Phase one included reinstatement of the structural elements of the building,



such as columns, roof structures and slate coverings; stone and brick repairs; stained glass window and window guard replacements; and ceiling finishes.

Phase two began in September 2021, focusing on preserving the historical features of the church. As part of the restoration, Ecclesiastical worked with customers to build in modernisations to enable them to make the space better serve the requirements of today's use.

Restoration of the building was completed by the end of September 2022.

In November 2022, the church and community came together to mark the completion of the £5m restoration project with a rededication ceremony.

Read the story in full and see more pictures at
www.ecclesiastical.com/church-of-the-ascension

// It has been a long five and a half years since the fire... we can now look forward to the future with a beautifully restored church which is fit for the 21st century. //

Shirley Kehoe, PCC Secretary at the Church of the Ascension



Take our advice – for a brighter future

Ecclesiastical is well-known as a leading insurer of churches and other heritage buildings. But many people aren't aware that we also have a stand-alone financial advice arm here to help you make the most of your money.

Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services (EFAS) provides fully independent advice on pensions, investments, life assurance and mortgages for the clergy, church community and PCCs.



You don't have to be an insurance customer to use the service – we're happy to help anyone – but we obviously have specialist knowledge of the church sector, as IFA Kieran Harper explains.

'I've been in the industry for seventeen years and with Ecclesiastical for all but two of those,' said Kieran, who's based in our Gloucester office. 'When it comes to

providing regulated financial advice to the clergy and the wider church community, that experience helps.

'Many of our customers are clergy – we understand their pension scheme, we know about the issues with living in tied accommodation such as vicarages – so when it comes to retirement planning, we're already ahead of the game. We also have a deep understanding of ethical and sustainable investing – as you would expect of a company with such strong links to the church – and this area is getting ever more popular with a lot of our customers.'

Please get in touch to find out how Kieran and his colleagues could help you.



0800 107 0190



getadvice@ecclesiastical.com



www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice

Have you signed up for Ecclesiastical's monthly e-news?



This monthly email is full of tips and information for all Ecclesiastical's church customers and anyone in your church community. Signing up is easy and, if at any time you decide you no longer want to receive it, you can click the 'unsubscribe' button at the

bottom of the email. Feel free to pass the sign-up link to anyone you think would like it.

Sign up at www.ecclesiastical.com/signup

Support for your 2024 sabbatical

Are you planning on taking a sabbatical in 2024?

Did you know that there may be support available for you through Ministry Bursary Awards? Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards provide financial support for members of the clergy taking extended study leave, and we are now accepting applications for sabbaticals taking place in 2024.

The experience of a sabbatical can be life-changing and have a long-lasting impact on your church and community.

Established in 1987, the Ecclesiastical Ministry Bursary Awards have supported over 1,400 members of the clergy to finance a wide range of extended leave projects and plans. The application window runs between April and September. Judging will take place in November 2023, with the awards made in December 2023.

If you would like to find out more about the Awards, including eligibility criteria and application details, please visit www.ecclesiastical.com/mba



Have you visited the Ecclesiastical website recently?

It's full of information to help you run your church, such as the **Made Simple Guides**, which cover these key topics:

- Church insurance made simple
- Administering your church insurance
- Building works
- Church events
- Church property
- Community outreach
- Legal expenses
- People on church premises

You will also find information about church, home, commercial and legal insurance and how to make a claim. **Explore the website at www.ecclesiastical.com/church**

Protect your home and support your church with £130 donation



As part of a financial services group that exists to give its available profits to good causes, one of the ways in which Ecclesiastical do this is through the Trust130 Home Insurance offer. For every new direct home insurance policy taken out, Ecclesiastical offer to donate £130 to an Anglican church or cathedral of the policyholder's choice.¹

Originally launched in 2017 to celebrate the 130th anniversary, Ecclesiastical has since donated more than £460,000, helping to support over 2,500 churches. A donation of £130 may not sound like much, but churches and congregations have used the donations in many creative ways to fund all sorts of things.

In the **Parish of Harpenden**, the donation will be used to support Cornelia's Coffee Shop, which is a community resource that enables them to engage with local people, offering fellowship and raising funds for charity.

It needs some new equipment – not least, a new freezer – and the donation will help in this general regard. It does great work to benefit the community and other great causes. One of our recent events at Cornelia's was to help our local Ukrainian arrivals.

Kevin Featherstone, Parish Warden

St Mary's Church, Wythall, used their donations to offer a weekly hot meal to families struggling with the increase in the cost of living.

This happens directly after school and includes activities for children and a Bible story or video. £130 will pay for meals for about 20 families, funding the food for about two weeks, which is a great boost financially, but also to the step of faith which this venture is.

Pam Miller, Treasurer

Award-winning home insurance



As well as supporting your church, when you take out a home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical you are joining the most trusted home insurance provider with the happiest customers.

Ecclesiastical continued to top the Fairer Finance league table in spring 2023 for home insurance for a record 17th consecutive time, retaining the gold ribbon status.² Ecclesiastical was also voted the best home insurance provider in the Times Money Mentor Awards in 2022.³

For more information about Trust130 and Home Insurance, visit www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

Call us for a home insurance quote on **0345 777 3322** and mention code **TRUSTPA**.

¹ Terms and conditions apply. ² www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customer-experience-ratings/home-insurance ³ www.thetimes.co.uk/money-mentor/article/times-money-mentor-awards-2022-winners



Car insurance

Our Clergy Motor Insurance is tailored specifically for the clergy and includes benefits such as business use, no admin charges and up to £500 cover for church goods in the car.¹



0345 450 9396



www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance

¹ Subject to terms and conditions.



Funeral planning

Ecclesiastical can help you make financial provision for your funeral, reducing the worry for your family and ensuring your wishes are provided for. Terms and conditions apply.



0800 055 6503



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www.funeralplans.co.uk

Calder Deanery NYC



It was Friday night and the teenagers had eaten their fill of toad-in-the-hole and chocolate cookies. We'd divided into small groups to read and reflect on the Scriptures.

'“Who touched me?” Jesus asked.'

Four 13-year-old girls descended into giggles and knowing looks.

I glanced at my co-leader and good friend, Ang. She had her patient, saintly look on.

'It means something else to us', said the most vocal of the group. 'Like if a teacher touches you, it means well, you know.' Dramatic gestures followed to help us understand.

We continued to reading from Luke's Gospel. The crowd pressed up against Jesus and the teenagers fell apart. The woman knelt trembling and I realised we were reading the Scriptures through the lens of a pornographic movie.

If like me you are repulsed, revolted by the idea that our sacred text could be read in such a way, please spare a thought and even a prayer for those of us who week in, week out seek to disciple the young, especially the unchurched. And please do pray for them. You see, after we had established that perhaps there were alternative readings of this account, one said, 'Oh so Jesus is a healer – I didn't know that', and another asked, 'Can he heal today? Is that physical healing as well as mental healing?'

And then (get your tissues ready), this group of beautiful youngsters began to share where they longed for healing in their own lives – healing for wounds made by words spoken over them that day by those who had bullied them, pushed them around, treated them like trash and told them they should kill themselves.

As Network Youth Church, we have the privilege of seeking out the youngsters who don't yet know Jesus and His love for them. We have the privilege of sharing His invitation into full and abundant life through relationship with Him. We get to pray with young people that Jesus will heal them and set them free to be all that He is calling them into. It's exhausting and upsetting at times, but we love what we do.

Later that night, when all was peaceful again, I asked Ang, my fellow-leader if she was OK, and she said that yes, she was, and that what we'd experienced together was really valuable for all of us. I do most whole-heartedly agree.

Alison Riley, NYC, Calder Minister

Furness Deanery NYC

The ministry of Furness NYC is, as you might expect from any church, hugely varied. From services and schools, food and fellowship, laughter and lament, we do it all.

I've been asked on many occasions what the secret to good youth ministry is. The answer, I think, is quite simple and is possibly the heart of all ministries.

Jesus, love, and time.

We keep Jesus at the centre, remember the reason for it all.

We love the young people as hard and as well as we can, and we show them God's love.

We commit to spending regular time with them consistently.

Of course, we want to add more to this but I believe this is at the heart of it.



There are so many stories I could tell you of joy at laser quest, escape rooms or crazy golf. More stories from regular groups developing into services. Even more from discussions that are coming out of new resources we're making. But with only a limited number of words let me tell you the joy of walking alongside someone, in this case

a teenager, who claims to have never believed in God and thinking church is stupid. For them to then ask if there is a Bible around, go and get it to read a short passage and have questions and such insightful reflections. All from building up relationships over time, them knowing they are loved and it's a safe space to ask and explore and wanting to know more. I'm sure I learn more from them than they ever could from me!

Ruth Hutchings, NYC, Furness Deanery

Changes to the Offer System



Many of you will be aware of recent changes that have been made to the 'Offer System', the mechanism through which we together fund local ministry here in the Diocese of Carlisle.

Parishes are being encouraged to set their Offers in the context of a dialogue between the local Church (as expressed through Mission Communities) and the Episcopal (i.e. the Bishop, usually represented by the Archdeacon) which addresses three key questions:

- What are the plans for mission in your Mission Community?**
- How should ministry be shaped in support of those plans?**
- How can that ministry be funded?**

As part of these conversations, the Diocese will also explore with Mission Communities the potential for entering a three-year 'Partnership Agreement'. A Partnership Agreement represents a three-year commitment between Mission Communities and the Diocese to work together in partnership, to commit to a certain level of finance and to provide local ministry in support of your mission.

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What are the benefits of the Partnership Agreement?

- Mission Communities are empowered to make local, strategic decisions around resourcing, ministry and mission.
- Mission Communities can have a high degree of certainty in their deployment for the duration of the Partnership Agreement period – no more worrying whether posts may be under threat at the next vacancy.
- The Diocese has more confidence about future levels of Ministry Offer and therefore its ability to fund local ministry.
- Resourcing and deployment decisions are taken in a spirit of partnership and with complete transparency.

Taking note of feedback we received from Mission Communities and local churches engaging in these conversations, and following a consultation process, we have taken the decision to change some of the language relating to this process:

1. 'Parish Offer' will now be called 'Ministry Offer'.

This is to avoid confusion as we increasingly think of a Mission Community Offer. We hope the continued use of the word 'Offer' will help the transition, and that 'Ministry Offer' will be largely self-explanatory.

2. 'Covenants' will now be called 'Mission and Ministry Partnership Agreements', commonly referred to as 'Partnership Agreements'.



Some Mission Communities were understandably nervous about committing to anything that could be perceived as legally or spiritually binding. We hope 'Partnership Agreement' expresses our desire to work together as members of the same body, to resource God's work here on earth.

Sophie Hodge

Diocesan Stewardship Enabler

Where can I find out more information?

Email: Sophie.hodge@carlisle-diocese.org.uk or visit: www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/finance2/ministry-offer/



Buildings strategy

Bishops James and Rob have been relaunching the God for All strategy around the diocese. It is a wide-ranging strategy but, at its heart, we are being called to use the things we have – time and energy, people, imagination and skills, money, and physical resources – to bring people to God and God to people.

For most of us, our key resource is our church buildings. In turn, our church buildings take up a lot of the time, energy and money of our committed PCC members, with much of the burden of care falling on Churchwardens.

The demands of caring for large, old buildings are so great, we don't always have the capacity to take on other more people-focussed activities that show God's love for his people and bring life to the church.

The building component of the God for All strategy aims to bring some balance to the considerable efforts of church members. Over the next year, the Archdeacons will be introducing how church groups can work together to manage their buildings.

In keeping with the innovative nature of our diocese, this will entail working at a Mission Community level – i.e. across the denominations in our own geographical area – to create a local buildings plan.

Working together means that we can create efficiencies and share the burden of management and maintenance. It also gives us the opportunity to understand the strengths and weaknesses of our fellow church groups, and the needs of the people around us. It will give us the opportunity to think strategically and imaginatively about our buildings.

Polly Evans, Buildings Strategy editor

For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 **Email:** churches@ecclesiastical.com

Facebook: Ecclesiastical **Twitter:** @churchmatters

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