



Diocese of Hereford

archdeacons' visitation news

A welcome message from Fiona and Derek



This year, we have started to emerge from what has felt like a period in the wilderness and pick up patterns of life now we are freer to meet again in larger groups.

The questions we continue to wrestle with are not going to be answered with quick fixes, but rather a prayerful, locally-led reimagining of how we live out our vocation as part of the Church in the Diocese of Hereford.

We had no idea in early 2020 how much or how fast the world would change. 2021 was a year of false starts

and 2022 began with a greater sense of hope. In this edition of Archdeacons' Visitation News, we are pleased to update our diocesan story and share some other articles to reflect the different situations that have emerged.

Reimagining how we live out our calling as a church was initially forced upon us by the need to close all our beautiful buildings for worship in late March 2020. As Archdeacons, we want to thank you for the hard work and sheer determination to keep our churches going during the pandemic.

The theme for this edition of Archdeacons' Visitation News – available digitally and in print – is looking to the future and learning from the last few years.

We are asking each Deanery to engage in a series of open, honest conversations that help us plan for the future mission of our parishes. There is no hidden agenda, just a request to engage and plan together at local level.

We hope that the stories shared in this publication might lift your spirits and remind you of all the churches across Herefordshire and south Shropshire, with our parishes in Telford & Wrekin, Worcestershire, Monmouthshire and Powys, have done, and will do, to encourage life and hope.

Thank you for all you contribute to the life of your parishes, especially for the contribution you continue to make to the costs of local ministry. Our vision, as we journey out of pandemic and face future challenges and opportunities in our diocese remains unchanged: the eternal mission of proclaiming Christ and growing disciples. Please pray for us as we do for you as you serve as a Churchwarden.

Visitation dates 2022

20 June 7pm	St James' Church, Cardington
21 June 7.30pm	St Peter's Church, Hereford
29 June 2pm	St Peter & St Paul's Church, Weobley
30 June 7pm	Eaton Bishop Village Hall and Church
4 July 7pm	St George's Church, Pontesbury
5 July 7.30pm	St Mary's Church, Fownhope
6 July 7pm	St. Gregory & Great Church, Morville
7 July 7pm	St. Cuthbert's Church, Clungunford
10 July 3.30pm	St Peter & St Paul (Leominster Priory)
13 July 7.30pm	St Weonard's Church, St Weonard
14 July 7pm	St Mary's Church, Cleobury Mortimer
21 July 7.30pm	St Peter's Church, Bromyard



The Ven Fiona Gibson
Archdeacon of Ludlow



The Ven Derek Chedzey
Archdeacon of Hereford

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An intergenerational church model

The focus on being a more mission-focused church has often seen the buzz word Intergenerational Mission creep into our vocabulary here in Hereford Diocese.

As it is commonly referred to, the 'IM project' is a key part of the central diocesan strategic focus. In 2016, the IM project set out to reach people of all generations, particularly children and younger people. The diocese successfully bid for funding via the Strategic Development Funding under Renewal and Reform – a national Church of England initiative to increase the number of Christians.

The seven missionaries are across the diocese: one in a deanery team, another in a part of a multi-benefice team, and others are in parishes. Each missionary is tasked with leading new worshipping communities and nurturing faith among all generations.

Lizzie Hackney, the Lead intergenerational missionary for Hereford Diocese, explains: "The role of each IM is to act as a catalyst for change. The project and work are different in each place, but the principles are fundamentally the same. They work alongside others and help people identify their calling, focus on mission, build skills, and encourage growth and renewal of the whole Church before helping it reach out to the wider community".

She adds: "Risk-taking is a key feature of the project. Change is always hard, but this is where the project has seen the most significant growth opportunities. Not everything over the last four-plus years has worked well. One of the critical things we have learned is that the work only begins when we build a team that is grounded in prayer. Through this, we have seen that the mission priorities emerge."

Becki Dotson, Intergenerational Missioner in Sutton Hill and Woodside on the outskirts of Telford, has worked closely with Rev'd Dawn Taffinder. Together, they have built up a strong group



of church volunteers who pray and study the Bible. They're not afraid to try different worship styles, including Muddy Church, Messy Church, holiday clubs, and getting outside the church building. Beckie and Dawn seek to love and serve their local community – and feeding people is a key part of this mission. Their experience has led to a new opportunity to set up a well-being project, helping to form deeper relationships with the wider community and new working partnerships with organisations that traditionally haven't sought to work with the Church.

In Abbeydore Deanery, to the south-eastern corner of Hereford Diocese, covering the area of the Black Mountains and Golden Valley in Herefordshire, Geri Miller works as the deanery Intergenerational Missioner. This is a different model, and the approach here began with the clergy working as a deanery chapter to serve the many tiny rural churches. Lay and clergy leaders work collaboratively, sharing their skills and experience to serve a largely isolated community. Geri noticed an opportunity to connect with small children, babies and families. She set up two toddler groups, giving practical support including health and early intervention visits and giving spiritual support as the families shape church for them. Through conversation, she built relationships with the people and supported a local Brownie troop that needed an extra leader. This approach of meeting people where they are in their everyday life attracted funding from the local council and a local charity, who see the groups as fulfilling part of their strategy to alleviate rural isolation and build sustainable communities.

Geri explains her missional approach to work as being continually intentional. She offers prayer, seeks to share God's love in practical ways to help people, and speaks about the Bible.

The diocesan team hopes that people see that God is at work beyond Sunday services. Lizzie sums it up: "When we are part of a church community, we discover ways The Kingdom is growing. I hope the legacy is that the individuals who have experienced being loved by the Church will become the people who grow the Church in the future."

The Intergenerational Mission project ends in December 2022, when the first round of SDF (Strategic Development Fund) money runs out. The hope is to continue using Diocesan Total Return Funding to support parishes or deaneries wishing to request financial support for mission projects.

For more details, please contact Lizzie Hackney:
e.hackney@hereford.anglican.org





Congratulations to our national winner!

Last year, we launched our 'Good News' competition – and now we're proud to announce the national winner.

We asked for stories about your church community – written in the style of a newspaper article, and accompanied by a photograph and a suitable headline. We were looking for uplifting tales – of battling to achieve something special for the parish, perhaps, or tireless volunteering, or dedication to your congregation or wider locality. And we were inundated with amazing entries.

Our judges worked hard to select five regional winners from the huge list, and we announced this at the end of last year, giving each regional winner £1,500 towards church funds as part of Ecclesiastical's aim to donate profits to transform lives and communities.

Now – with the help of the public, through a show of support for their online story – the overall winner, who will receive a further £6,000, has been chosen.

A big congratulations to the national winner

Penlee Cluster Churches, down in the far west of Cornwall – St John's and St Mary's in Penzance, St Peter's in Newlyn, and St Pol de Leon in the village of Paul.

Determined to bring their community together during those difficult months, they launched a fantastic 'Never Alone' initiative. This multi-faceted campaign saw church members team up with local businesses to take pub meals, Cornish pasties, and fish and chip suppers to elderly and vulnerable people. Read their story and those of the other regional winners at:

www.ecclesiastical.com/churchcomp



Meet your Church Insurance Consultants

Our Church Insurance Consultants are a friendly and approachable team of highly knowledgeable insurance experts who are right on your doorstep and ready to offer guidance and help with any insurance or risk-related issues you might have.

From a simple explanation of the basics of your policy, to guidance on how to combat thieves and vandals, guard against fire, and improve general health and safety, they are there for you, free of charge.



The team – (from top left) Chris, Rebecca, Heather, Lynne, Peter, Nicky, Kay and Derek – are all deeply passionate about customer service, and our country's amazing churches.

Amongst them are theologians, choristers, regular churchgoers, and people who have worked with Christian charities here and abroad, so they really understand your specific needs. And because they're based at regional locations all over the UK, they're also able to tailor their advice to your local requirements.

They have decades of combined industry experience – and standing behind them is Ecclesiastical's 135 years of unrivalled expertise and insight in dealing with everything life might throw at you.



Where possible, the Church Insurance Consultants love to meet customers and talk face-to-face, and are happy to host networking events where you can get to know people from other parishes and share experiences, ideas – and smiles.

If you are unable to meet them in person, they're still there, offering exactly the same services online or over the telephone.

To find out more about the team, and how they could help you and your church, please visit: **www.ecclesiastical.com/cic** or email **meetus@ecclesiastical.com** (please include your contact details, the name of your church and parish, and policy number if possible), or call them on **0345 777 3322**.

Contains promotional material

Café raises funds – and spirits

When lockdowns led to a dramatic fall in revenue, one church came up with a way to raise funds and create a much needed local community space.



Christ Church in Lofthouse (near Leeds) was struggling for funding, and the village itself had been cut in half by the arrival of the M26 motorway many years ago, leaving its people without a proper place to meet. So the Reverend Mandy Rhodes and others put their heads together and decided to open the TLC Café in the basement of their church.

“Villagers still talk fondly about the old cricket club which was lost when the motorway came through,” said Mandy. “That was where people would meet up for parties and get-togethers. But since it went there hasn’t been anywhere suitable. Like most churches, we were hit really hard by the lockdowns – and we still are, with quite a few of our elderly parishioners now in the habit of joining services online. So we wondered if there was a way we could address both problems, and the café was born.”

They teamed up with CLO Coffee – a Leeds-based Christian coffee shop and roastery – to source a machine and barista training, and redecorated the basement hall, which is the former crypt. In November 2021, they opened the café – and it has gone from strength to strength.

“There’s a lovely, relaxed atmosphere,” said Mandy. “We’re seeing a real group of regulars building – people just like having somewhere to meet up again. After paying off our original outlay we’re now turning a profit, which means we can be more confident about paying our Parish Share. “We have local artists displaying their work here – our current exhibition is of art produced by a local head injury charity – and we take a small 5% cut of any sales, which helps. We have a charity shop and our food bank too. We’re running mother-and-baby drop-ins, and I’m looking at starting baby massage sessions. I’d say the future is bright!”

Especially in rural communities, church buildings are much more than just bricks and mortar. They offer vital spaces for quiet time, reflection and connection, as the TLC Café demonstrates.

From listening to customer feedback, we know that it’s not always easy to pay for the upkeep and care of rural churches, or for the ministry that happens in them.

We asked for your feedback on our printed toolkit – Fundraising in a Box – that was sent to all church customers in January 2021. You told us you liked the toolkit style, but guidance especially for rural parishes would be a helpful addition to our support. That’s why we’ve created a fundraising toolkit for rural churches, full of useful links and expert advice. **You can find it on our Church Fundraising Hub at www.ecclesiastical.com/rural-parishes**

More fundraising support

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

Our Movement for Good Awards open for entry



Charitable giving is at the heart of what we do – and has been for over 135 years. For the past three years, Ecclesiastical Insurance has run the Movement for Good Awards programme, giving away £3 million to great causes.

Did you know?

In 2021, we were delighted to award £25,000 to church-related charities. Please take a look at our winners’ map to see which charities and churches we have helped in your local area:

winnersmap.benefactgroup.com

The Awards are back and this year we have over £1 million to donate, but we cannot do it without you. This year, you’ll find information on the awards on our parent company’s website.

Visit: www.benefactgroup.com/movement-for-good to find out more.





Have you heard the e-news?

E-news is a monthly email full of tips and information and monthly risk reminders for all of our customers and anyone in your church community. To receive it is easy – **all you need to do is register on our website at: www.ecclesiastical.com/signup** 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 on the sign-up link to anyone you think might like it.

'Made Simple' guides



We know that understanding the insurance responsibilities for your church can be complicated, that's why we've created our 'Made Simple' guides.

These guides take you through potential risks and insurance implications of the day-to-day running of churches, as well as activities and projects that PCCs are often involved in.

They cover topics such as administration, events, community outreach, people on church premises, church property, building works and legal expenses. **You can find them all on our website at: www.ecclesiastical.com/church**

Information at your fingertips

The Ecclesiastical website is largely an online library of guidance and support for you and your church community. You'll find information about church and home insurance, risk management, fundraising and grants and lots more. 'Church Matters' newsletter is also on the website, making it really easy to share with others.

Visit: www.ecclesiastical.com/church

Ministry Bursary Awards

Financial support for 2023 sabbaticals

The experience of a sabbatical can be life-changing and have a long-lasting impact on your church and community. Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards (MBAs) provide financial support to members of the clergy planning to take extended study leave. Applications are open now until the end of September.

Established in 1987 to celebrate Ecclesiastical's centenary year, the Awards have supported almost 1,400 clergy members from Anglican Christian faiths. The sabbatical breaks and projects have varied greatly over the years – from traditional and modern-day pilgrimages to study visits, spiritual retreats and pursuits of lifelong dreams and hobbies.

Like Rev'd James Radcliffe from Lincoln, who worked in sports-based ministry in South Africa, or Rev'd Rachel Dale, who studied dementia and also worked with vulnerable children. One of our most recent MBA recipients, Rev'd Canon Imogen Nay, spent her sabbatical in 2021 looking at rewilding and green churches.

Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards are open for applications until 30 September 2022. Judging of the applications will take place in November and awards will be made during December 2022.

If you would like to read more about James, Rachel or Imogen's experiences and find out more about the Awards including eligibility criteria and application details, **please visit our website: www.ecclesiastical.com/mba**



Financial services

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

☎ **0800 107 0190**
✉ **getadvice@ecclesiastical.com**
🌐 **www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice**

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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.



Award-winning home insurance that supports your church



As part of a financial services group that exists to give its profits to good causes, one of the ways in which we do this is through our 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 our 130th anniversary, we have since donated more than £460,000, helping to support over 2,500 churches. A donation of £130 may not sound much, but churches and congregations have used the donations in many creative ways to fund all sorts of things:

St Mary and Bartholomew Solihull are using their grant to introduce contactless donations to support the church and raise valuable funds for charitable causes.

"This is important for both the church to enable us to continue to raise funds, for the parishioners to enable them to continue to donate in church without having to touch cash/the collection plate and finally to the local (and national) charities we support each year through our charitable giving which is only possible from the kind donations our parishioners make." **Duncan Watson**, Treasurer

St Albans West Leigh, which is located in a growing community, with a new housing development opposite the church and a further development close by in the planning stages, are using the money to welcome the new residents.

"We have decided to use the money to assist in funding welcome packs – which will be a booklet about our church and the locale along with some nice biscuits. The booklet and biscuits enable us to make personal contact with people as they move into our community, and to offer them a warm welcome." **The Rev'd Canon Karina Green**, Priest in Charge St Alban's West Leigh

Most trusted home insurance provider with the happiest customers

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. April 2022 saw Ecclesiastical top the Fairer Finance league table for home insurance for a record 15th consecutive time, retaining our gold ribbon status.²

And don't forget, we offer a discount to members of the clergy.

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

¹ Terms may apply. ² www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customer-experience-ratings/home-insurance

Parish Giving Scheme/ Generosity/Digital Giving



Churches that have joined the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) and taken advantage of digital giving have continued to raise funds by promoting planned and occasional giving to their congregation and community, they enable people to give to the life and ministry of the Church.

All Saints' Richard's Castle signed up to the PGS early in 2021 to strengthen community engagement and financial sustainability to stave off closure. PGS brought in over £6,000 in the first year,



Flourishing as a church beyond the pandemic

Finding ways to practice generosity helps us as a church and as individual Christians to grow as disciples of Jesus.

Generosity and giving are as much about the 'how' and 'why' as the 'what' – think of the story of the widow's mite. We are encouraged to consider how our generosity to those around us reflects God's love and calling and how all of our spending reflects what is important to us. The reason why we give matters too; do we recognise that we give in response to God's generosity, and do we understand and explain the impact that our giving makes?

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and

three times more than the PCC expected. So far, 21 people have signed up, including people from the wider community who are keen for the church to stay open even though they are not regular worshippers.

Churchwarden Roly Alden explains, "It's brilliant and so easy to set up. We received donations from local people, some I didn't expect would support the Church. For me, joining the Parish Giving Scheme is a no-brainer."



Shobdon and Pembridge churches installed contactless giving devices in the summer of 2021. Neither has Wi-Fi or a sufficient 4G signal, but both attract some tourists. Each has earned over £400 in just six months and more cash

donations. This might be because contactless devices prompt people to give and remind people of the Church's financial need. Their experience suggests that churches can expect £1 for every visitor who signs the visitors' book.

Digital Giving

Setting up online giving is simple: registering for Parish Buying, SumUp and Give A Little, linking this to your A Church Near You page, and generating a QR code. Why not include a weblink to your PGS page on your ACNY page? You can display a QR code in churches and parish magazines and on pew sheets and Facebook pages. Donations and any Gift Aid are sent automatically to your church account.

For more advice and support on giving, email:
finance@hereford.anglican.org

approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will."
(Romans 12:2)

If our heart and mind are one, then it follows that the planning we put in place will feel like it is an extension of our faith. For those beyond our church and Christian communities, it can help to explain why we need their support clearly and to be able to explain what difference their money will make to the local community. As well as offering explanations, we need to make it easy for people to give. Using some of the digital tools as part of the request is a simple step forward that has dramatically changed financial generosity for many churches in our diocese.

"Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back." (Luke 6:30)

Generosity is an intentional habit and requires continual perseverance. When it feels lonely, seek out support to keep trying or look at alternative solutions. In our central diocesan team, the Parish Giving Advisors will make the journey with every parish. Why not give them a call or drop them an email and start a conversation today?

For more details, visit: www.parishgiving.org.uk/home

The value of embracing eco

We recently caught up with Liz Mackay, Church and Society Link Officer at Hereford Diocese, to hear how she supports parishes embracing the environmental crises and moving towards becoming carbon net-zero.



"Part of my job is to support churches to become more environmentally friendly. I have to be honest, although I do my best in my own life, I have never really seen myself as a natural eco champion. As I have developed this work, I have found that I believe

in churches becoming more environmentally friendly. It is an excellent way, at one stroke, of loving God's creation, tackling injustice and opening opportunities to build relationships in the wider community, which in turn can help to grow the Church.

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1)

I believe that we have a stewardship role for God's creation and are called to increase social justice. Ignoring environmental concerns is a social injustice. Those who suffer most from the effects of climate change are often unable to pay rising energy costs and cannot make a different choice or live in countries which don't significantly pollute but experiences the worst extremes of climate events."

Liz also believes that the environment unites people of all ages, backgrounds and beliefs, and provides an excellent opportunity to build relationships and (ultimately) grow the Church. She explains, "One of the projects I am working on involves supporting parishes to develop partnerships with others in their community, such as parish councils, schools and gardening clubs. The old adage, 'A problem shared is a problem halved' is so true. Many people have spent time battling systems to make progress and have found renewed energy from joining people in a similar position or with a similar passion. I have seen this approach increase community recognition that the Church is interested in real-world issues and strengthened relationships between the Church and the wider community.

In building these projects, Liz hopes that churches will create reasons for people who may have felt isolated or not physically active to engage and feel involved (loving service). She also hopes it will build relationships, leading to missional opportunities to grow the Church. She adds: "In Orleton, the local ecumenical group, Christians Together, has set up an eco after-school club with an enthusiastic following of up to 12 young people. This allows us to build relationships with young people without feeling forced or committed to Sunday services. We hope this will develop into a Forest Church, a brand-new worship community that would introduce the Church to a new, younger audience."

To learn more about the work Liz is supporting, please visit our website: www.hereford.anglican.org/parish-support/caring-for-our-environment/eco-church

Email Liz Mackay, Church and Society Link Officer: liz.mackay@hereford.anglican.org

Eco Church



Eco Church offers a free online survey, enabling churches to record what they are already doing to care for God's earth, reflect on what further steps they want to take and then put it into action.

The resources help with each step along the way – for worship and teaching; management of church buildings and land; community and global engagement and lifestyle.

Visit the Eco Church website: <https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk>

Email Liz Mackay, Church and Society Link Officer: liz.mackay@hereford.anglican.org

For more information

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

Facebook: Ecclesiastical **Twitter:** @churchmatters

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