

Year of Engagement Dates for Your Diary

Bishop's Teaching Events

Saturday, 31st May, 2025

9.30am-1pm

St. George's Church, Pontesbury

Saturday, 19th July, 2025

9.30am-1pm

St. Michael's Church, Madeley

Saturday, 13th September, 2025

9.30am-1pm

St. Michael & All Angels, Ledbury

Saturday, 8th November, 2025

9.30am-1pm

St. Mary's Church, Ross-on-Wye

Bishop's Study Days

Tuesday, 24th June, 2025

10am-3pm

Craven Arms Community Centre,
Shropshire

Wednesday, 22nd October, 2025

10am-3pm

St. Peter's Church, Hereford

To discuss holding a **Spiritual Question Time** for the Year of engagement, please contact Rev'd Stephen Hollinghurst by email at Stephen.Hollinghurst@hereford.anglican.org

Everyone is welcome to these events. For more information about or to register for these and all our events please visit our diocese Eventbrite page online at <https://bit.ly/HfdDioYOE> or scan the QR Code



National funding brings Net Zero Carbon 2030 to three counties area

A Net Zero Carbon 2030 partnership between the dioceses of Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester, which is fully funded by the national church and launched last year, has now appointed a complete team of project specialists who will help to drive forward the bold environmental agenda to reduce the carbon footprint of clergy housing, church buildings, and schools.

Ian Hill, based in Hereford Diocese, is the new Net Zero Project Manager focused on schools. He will be working alongside Erica Siddall and Lee Westcott. They are

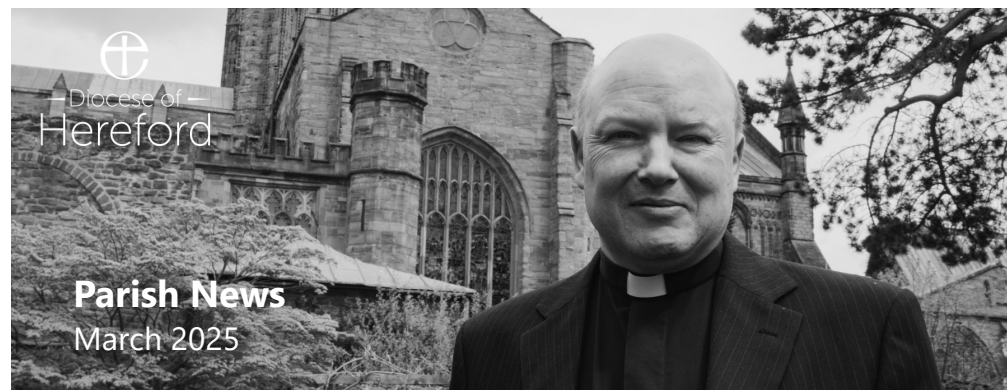
focussed respectively on clergy homes and church buildings. Ian, who has over thirty-five years experience, explains: "I'm particularly excited to apply my knowledge to help our Church of England schools across the three dioceses (Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester) reduce their carbon footprint, implementing practical, cost-effective solutions that will make a real difference to schools."

Find more information on NetZero 2030 here: www.hereford.anglican.org/parish-support/environment/buildings-energy/



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Reflections on Lent

by The Venerable Derek Chedzey, Archdeacon of Hereford

As we begin Lent you might think that there is nothing new to say about this period of the church year. As I was reflecting on what I would write I was reminded that March 2025 also marks the twentieth anniversary of the return of one of my favourite cultural icons. Doctor Who returned to our television screens on 26th March 2005 and a whole new generation was introduced to what has been and continues to be a British cultural phenomenon on a par with Sherlock Holmes. Even if you don't like it and science fiction isn't your thing it has generated entries in the Oxford English Dictionary, with Dalek and Tardis now part of our language.

You might be thinking what do Doctor Who and Lent have in common and to be fair on the face of it very little! Yet at the heart of Doctor Who is the important idea of 'regeneration' by which the Doctor changes his or her appearance and is completely renewed. The Christian faith also has regeneration at the heart of its message. Lent is an opportunity for each of us to open ourselves up to the power of God to bring spiritual regeneration in our lives. Lent is

traditionally a period of self reflection, abstinence and discipline which are not words which create a lot of excitement in our very instant society yet it is these very straightforward spiritual disciplines that lead to spiritual growth and help us to deepen our faith in God. St Paul writing to the early church in Rome challenges us to be renewed and regenerated:

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

The New Testament writers recognised that it is only when our inner spiritual life is brought to life that a pattern of behaviour, thoughts and way of living is radically changed to become more like Jesus. Lent allows us the space and time to reflect on how we live and seek God's forgiveness and strength to turn our lives in a different direction. The bible calls this repentance but in effect it means turning our lives in a completely new direction and living God's way rather than our own way. God will never force us or compel us to choose to live according to the rules of the kingdom

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but instead he stands ready to bring us spiritual regeneration when we turn to him. This is what is meant by John in his gospel when he talks about being born again. This is not some evangelical American term but the words of Jesus to Nicodemus when he enquires about how to live God's way.

"Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." John 3:1-3

As you approach this coming Lent why not give yourself the time to examine your life and faith and allow the Holy Spirit to challenge and change you to be more like Jesus? It is only when we invite God to help us to live according to his values and to help us lay aside

the things that hinder our journey with him that we can truly begin to become the people that God has created us to be and to fulfil the potential he has given us. This is true regeneration that is life changing and life affirming and enables us as followers of Jesus to be signposts of the kingdom in our communities. Paul in his letter to Titus sums this up perfectly:

"But when the kindness and the love of God our Saviour toward us appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ..." Titus 3:4-6

As we begin our Lenten journey, rather than give something up we should instead seek to take something up and ask God to begin afresh the process of regeneration in each of us as we seek to journey together and grow in our faith.

Parish Safeguarding Officer In-Person Training

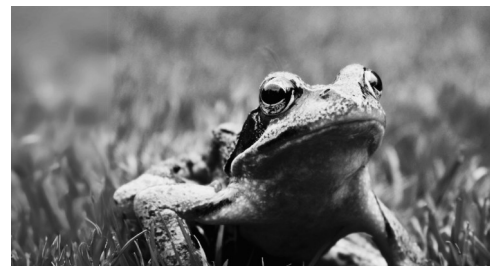
**Tuesday, 20th May, 9.30 am - 1 pm and Wednesday, 11th June, 9.30 am - 1 pm
Ludlow Mascall Centre**

Parish Safeguarding Officer induction workshops will introduce people to the PSO role and provide the tools required to carry out the job confidently. The session will introduce key working practices and relationships. It is intended primarily for new PSOs but any existing PSOs who wish to refresh are also welcome. It is helpful for PSOs to have completed or be up-to-date with their Basic, Foundation and Leadership safeguarding learning pathways before attending this induction session, but if not, it should be done soon afterwards. The first dates are at Ludlow, and we will add further dates for Hereford and Church Stretton in the coming weeks.

Please email Rachel.Arnold@hereford.anglican.org to book as spaces are limited.

Caring for God's Acre

By Harriet Carty



Frog hunting

March is the month for frog hunting, they can be seen and heard in ponds around the country with the male frogs the first to move to ponds to wait for the females to arrive. The males call to attract them and once the females have arrived the male will cling onto the female, wrapping around her with his forelimbs, using special 'nuptial pads' for extra grip. The female lays her spawn into the pond, the eggs of which are then immediately fertilised by the male. In March a glance into a pond may reward you with views of male and female frogs as well as developing frogspawn.

What has this got to do with churchyards and cemeteries? Very few burial grounds have ponds and they are rarely suitable places to install one, apart perhaps from a mini-pond in a Belfast sink or similar. They are, however, important places for amphibians generally, including frogs. Frogs move to ponds to spawn in the spring but spend much of the rest of their time on land and burial grounds provide excellent habitat for them. They can travel up to 500m away from a pond and will live terrestrially, feeding on slugs, snails and worms as well as catching flies or small moths with their sticky tongues. Frogs will hunt for food in grassland, garden areas, woodland and amongst grass tussocks and scrub. Many burial grounds contain some or all of

these habitats in close proximity to each other, a mosaic of different places providing food and shelter depending on the time of year and the weather. Frogs have damp, permeable skin and so cannot tolerate many of the chemicals that are used in gardens and farmland. Churchyards and cemeteries tend to be chemical-free which also means they can be full of delicious invertebrates. The colour of frogs can be affected by their surroundings and you might find red or even yellow frogs in some places.

So, you will not find frogs in your local churchyard or cemetery in March, but look in garden ponds surrounding a burial ground and you may find a great many who come to the pond to breed then return for most of the year. Churchyards and cemeteries contain lots of frog-sized spaces, cracks and crevices in the ground, monuments such as chest tombs with gaps and holes or spaces beneath the roots of old trees. Many of these will be used by frogs for overwintering as are churchyard walls, particularly drystone ones. You can help frogs, as well as other amphibians, by making more habitat for them. How about having some areas of summer meadow or tussocky, rough places round the back and out of sight. Could you pile up some deadwood in a shaded area. A compost heap is also a favourite. Both of these will gently rot down providing excellent shelter with a ladder attached!

All the best,

Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

Individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code **diomem22**