



Diocese of Leeds

archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens

Caring for your Church in the Diocese of Leeds

Caring for your church building and churchyard can be a complex task especially if your church building is old or listed (or both!). It is often difficult to know where to start, find the appropriate advice and support, or identify the grant funding needed to carry out regular maintenance and much-needed repair works.

Help is at hand, however, thanks to close collaboration between the Stewardship & Income Generation and DAC teams. Over the past year, both teams have worked closely together to devise a series of training webinars offering advice on how to maintain your church building and churchyard, develop a maintenance plan, find maintenance resources and grant funding and understand permissions required for church building works.

They've also collaborated with colleagues at Ecclesiastical Insurance to offer an informative webinar promoting health & safety awareness when maintaining your church building. To access recordings of the maintenance webinars, please visit:

www.leeds.anglican.org/content/training-0

Establishing a regular maintenance regime is a key element in the provision of effective long-term care for our church buildings offering important benefits such as safeguarding the church building as a continued, safe place of worship, promoting good stewardship of our buildings and churchyards to encourage more community involvement, helping PCCs to avoid expensive, major repair bills that can significantly deplete church finances, preserving the condition of the building fabric and any original heritage features for future generations to enjoy.

The DAC team are always happy to help with enquiries about works to churches. Find their contact details at www.leeds.anglican.org/dac. To receive regular news on grants, sign up for *Money for Mission*, the newsletter from the Stewardship & Income Generation team, by emailing becky.nicholson@leeds.anglican.org. Previous copies of *Money for Mission* can be accessed here: www.leeds.anglican.org/content/training-0



Churchwardens' Training

The next training event **via Zoom is on 6th July**. Please book with your Archdeacon's PA. This is aimed at any new Churchwardens or at anyone who feels they would benefit from a refresher. **Further training/forum dates will be offered in the autumn.**

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70,000 Students



The neighbouring parishes of St George's Leeds and St Augustine's Wrangthorn are working together in a missional partnership on a new project to reach out to unchurched students with the good news of Jesus.

There are about 70,000 students in Leeds, but only 0.6% attend church. Together, the two parishes have launched **Church@ Hyde Park Corner**, a student church for unchurched students, based at St Augustine's Wrangthorn, which is located right in the heart of the student area of Leeds. A team of five students from St George's and two interns from Wrangthorn is working together to make contact with unchurched students and inviting them to church. They are developing a strong digital presence, and expect this joint initiative to accelerate in 2021 as restrictions ease, with a major launch in September 2021.

Praying through the Pandemic as a Christian Community



I have long known that the power of prayer is the greatest weapon in the armoury of the Church and that its greatest offering of prayer is given to us in the offering of the Mass, simply because it is the coming together of the Body of Christ bearing witness in a

broken, devastated world to the goodness, the glory and the love of God. Of course we can pray privately, I am not saying anything that would detract from that, but we also need to be seen as a Christian community to be doing in the midst of this pandemic that which the majority of the population of the Parish have forgotten how to do.

Like many Parishes, the faithful here are as frightened as anywhere else, and some will remain isolated until it is clearly safe to return to some sense of normality; but for me, this is normality – the daily offering of the Mass and of feeding with Word and Sacrament the Holy People of God in this place and to place at the foot of the Cross the needs of the frightened, the lost, the innocent, the elderly, the housebound, the NHS, those who have and are dying of this wretched disease. It is ultimately God who will bring us through this, I have no doubt, but to keep doing that which is pleasing in his sight it the right thing to do.

Father David Nicholson is Vicar of St John the Baptist, Cudworth in Barnsley and a Chaplain to Her Majesty the Queen

Light in the Darkness

The pandemic has taken away so much. We grieve for these things and long for them to return. But I believe it's also worth celebrating the opportunities it has given us.

In the United Benefice of St Catherine's, Belle Vue, and St Andrew's, Wakefield, we have found new ways of worshipping and serving. From online services to telephone line services, Zoom Bible studies to paper packs, we have found ways to be together, while apart. New relationships have formed with our brothers and sisters around the city. At Christmas many churches across Wakefield came together to share the Christmas message with postcards and an online service. We also held a joint, sold out, drive-in Carol Service (see picture).



In terms of serving our community, we have been able to form the different churches and organisations into Community Hubs, serving the whole city. Running food banks, meals on wheels, befriending services, track and trace services and vaccine centres.

The relationship with Wakefield Council has gone from strength to strength and the blessing that flows from this will long outlast COVID.

So while we grieve what we have lost, let's also celebrate that when the darkness is blackest the light shines strongest.

The Reverend David Gerrard is the Area Dean of Wakefield and Vicar of the United Benefice of St Catherine's, Belle Vue, and St Andrew's, Wakefield

'Bring what you can and take what you need' in the Yorkshire Dales

'I never knew there was so many families in such desperate need in our area,' said one of the many volunteers at the Pop-Up Pantry in Bentham, on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales. Many in the community, especially families, have lived with low-pay or part-time work for a long time as the area relies on tourism, hospitality, farming and the care sector (the area is a popular retirement destination) but the COVID-19 pandemic has increased rural poverty dramatically.

The Pop-Up Pantry was launched by St John's Church Bentham in the Ingleborough Team in the very first weeks of the first lockdown, and now also runs in neighbouring Ingleton. Based in the church-run Youth Centre, it provides the perfect base for local people to access food, toiletries and social support (when possible). Their catchphrase is 'Bring what you can, take what you need', with a clear intention to recognise that we are all in this together.

Over the past year, the Pop-Up Pantries have opened their doors to everyone, delivered hundreds of food boxes, made over two thousand crafts kits for families and over a thousand 'gifts of hope' to isolated members of the community. Weekly hot take-away meals continue for families, reaching 60 every Friday night. The plan is to transition to longer-term support and the reopening of the youth clubs, when possible.

The Revd Anne Russell said: 'We have seen our parish churches open their hearts to those in need of support and although it's been exhausting, being at the heart of our resilient communities is changing us for the better.'

The Revd Anne Russell is Team Rector of the Ingleborough Team

Our Church Insurance Consultants are right behind you

Meet Ecclesiastical's Church Insurance Consultants – 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 134 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 experience, ideas – and smiles.

But if we find ourselves in a COVID-19 lockdown or you're simply 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/church/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**.



Make your good news a headline story!

This year, Ecclesiastical's church competition shines a light on churches across the UK – their bright ideas and success stories, community heroes and ingenuity in the face of adversity.

It's easy to overlook the important things that keep church communities strong, especially at difficult times, which is why we're looking for your uplifting stories that support church activities and bring the community together.

Tell us about your moments of inspiration, your clever solutions to problems old and new, and the people who've solved them – we want to hear your good news stories that can make front page headlines.

Find out more about the competition and how your church can enter at www.ecclesiastical.com/churchcomp [#churchgoodnews](https://twitter.com/churchgoodnews)

Information at your fingertips

Have you visited the Ecclesiastical website recently? It's had a bit of a facelift and looks really good. It is also full of advice and information about a wide range of risk management topics and includes Made Simple Guides about building works, people on premises and property. You will also find information about church, home, commercial and legal insurance and how to make a claim. You can also read an online copy of Ecclesiastical's bi-annual newsletter, Church Matters!

Explore the website at www.ecclesiastical.com/church



Contains promotional material

How online fundraising can boost your church

With summer around the corner, you may be starting to think about future events and how to raise those ever-important funds. Many churches have been looking at running events online, and it might be the best way forward at the moment. Ecclesiastical has put together some great ideas and top tips to get you started or increase your online success.

To get started, have fun and think creatively. What do you do face-to-face and how could that translate to online? Quizzes are great fun and easy to put together. You could have a quiz master read out the questions over a Zoom call, share your screen to display visual questions, or circulate quiz sheets via email and social media. How about streaming an online choir concert, or run craft or baking classes via Teams and sell virtual tickets to your Internet audience? Another idea is to offer the opportunity to request a favourite hymn in return for a donation.

More and more churches are using the Internet to reach not just their congregation and the wider community, but potential supporters literally everywhere. Online community groups and social media outlets like Twitter, Instagram and Facebook are a great way to publicise your activity to a new, wider audience – and particularly younger people who are otherwise hard to reach.

Ask them to sponsor a personal challenge and invite them to come up with their own challenges to benefit your church. Fundraising sites like **JustGiving.com** are quick to set up and can easily be widely promoted online. The Internet is also ideal for keeping everyone up to date, which is essential to keep those donations coming in. If you haven't dabbled yet, maybe have a look at what another church or community organisation has done.

If you find the Internet a bit daunting, once you strip away the jargon it's often much simpler than it appears. For instance, 'streaming' might sound difficult and mysterious, but user-friendly services such as Microsoft Teams are easy to download and can be used by lots of people joining in on their PCs, smartphones, or tablets.

Supporters can buy virtual 'tickets' – or make donations – via dedicated online fundraising platforms like **TapSimple.org** or **Eventbrite.co.uk**, which offer a one-stop process from hosting your event to processing payments and contributions. Many of them will handle Gift Aid for you too.

If your church has a specific project to pay for – a new sound system, why not try to 'crowdfund' via a website? These harness the power of a crowd of funders rather than individual donors. They take a matter of minutes to set up, using sites like **Crowdfunder.co.uk**, and provide a permanent home for your story, where you can post updates and images of your project for your supporters.

If this still feels too technical, ask around – someone in your congregation or local area who regularly uses a computer or a smartphone for work or leisure may already use these tools and can help you get started. Youngsters might jump at the chance to get involved, if only to show their parents and grandparents how it's done!



Fundraising in a Box

Earlier this year, Ecclesiastical sent out a 'Fundraising in a Box' kit to its church customers containing four booklets giving guidance and support to make the fundraising journey easier. For more information and guidance, including some really helpful webinars, please visit the Ecclesiastical fundraising hub at **www.ecclesiastical.com/church/fundraising** (if you are an Ecclesiastical customer and require further copies of the box, please contact us via the website).

Have you heard the e-news?

E-news is a monthly email full of tips and information for all Ecclesiastical church customers and anyone in your church community. To receive it is easy – all you need to do is register on their 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 website to anyone you think might like it.



Three cheers for roof alarms and SmartWater®!

Churches with these systems have found it's had a positive impact on reducing the risk of metal theft.



SmartWater® recently helped Police convict four criminals responsible for stealing metal from 35 churches located in Midlands, East Anglia and the South-West¹. And a roof alarm helped St Bartholomew's in Lancashire to scare off attackers not once, but three times in the same month.

St Bartholomew's has a 'monitored roof alarm' which sends out an audible warning on site, and alerts the alarm-receiving centre of movement on the church roof. The centre contacted the church's key-holder, and neighbours called the Police. As a result, offenders were arrested on site with tools in hand.

Lead and copper roofing are materials that characterise our beautiful churches – but thieves love it too, and churches are often a target. As COVID-19 restrictions ease, Ecclesiastical anticipate organised crime will return to target less well-protected areas of lead. The good news is there's positive actions you can take to protect your church.

A roof alarm is one, particularly if your church has significant amounts of metal. Ask Ecclesiastical for a list of approved installers. An approved forensic security marking solution such as SmartWater® is another. This is a clever liquid like DNA that you apply to external metal. It's unique to your church so items can be traced back to you. You must register it with the supplier and display signage, which acts as a deterrent. Using a forensic solution is a condition of your theft of metal cover. If you choose SmartWater®, Ecclesiastical will register it for you, saving you £120.

Thieves are likely to use a vehicle to carry their heavy stolen metal away. Restrict vehicle access with locked gates, fences and bollards.

Consider installing security lighting and cut back trees that might conceal criminals as they work.

There is more advice on the website: www.ecclesiastical.com/churchmetaltheft and also St Bartholomew's full story: www.ecclesiastical.com/documents/metal.pdf

¹ BBC News, 6 January 2021.

Risk helpline

The Ecclesiastical Risk Advice Line is available 9am-5pm Monday to Friday (except bank holidays).

Call: 0345 600 7531

Email: risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com

Taking a sabbatical in 2022

Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards provide financial support for members of the clergy taking extended study leave, and they are now accepting applications for sabbaticals taking place in 2022. You can find out more about the awards, check the eligibility criteria and apply on the website.

Find out more: www.ecclesiastical.com/mba



Rebuilding stronger from COVID-19

Churches and Christian charities throughout the UK and Ireland have received more than £3.8 million in funding to support their communities to rebuild stronger in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Allchurches Trust's Hope Beyond programme has supported more than 500 projects aimed at tackling loneliness, boosting mental health and building digital resilience. While the programme has now closed, Allchurches – the charitable owner of Ecclesiastical Insurance Group – is currently considering the next phase of its COVID-19 response.

St Luke's Healthcare for the clergy has received £20,000 Hope Beyond funding to offer counselling and therapy to support clergy and their families suffering as a result of COVID-19, giving them increased resilience and skills as they help the most vulnerable.



Shine – the community organisation working with St Stephen's Church in West Bowling, Bradford – will use its £5,500 Hope Beyond grant to transform a basement room into a counselling space, which leads onto a tranquil garden ideal for wellbeing groups.

To find out more about funding, and advice and resources for churches, head to www.allchurches.co.uk

Financial services

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

Call: 0800 107 0190

Email: getadvice@ecclesiastical.com

www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice



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.

Call: 0800 055 6503

Email: info@epsfunerals.com

www.funeralplans.co.uk



Car insurance

The Clergy Motor Insurance provided by Ecclesiastical 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

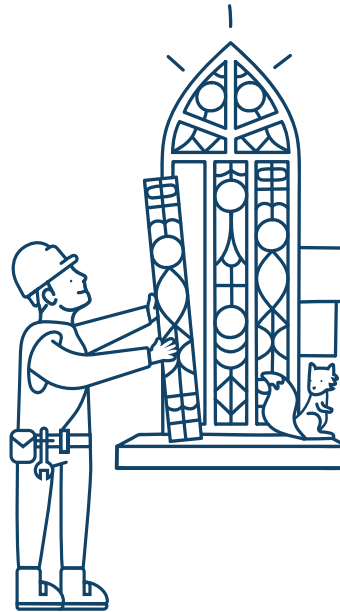
Call: 0345 450 9396

www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance

¹Subject to terms and conditions.



Protect your home and support your church with Trust130



Ecclesiastical has donated more than £430,000 to churches around the UK as part of their Trust130 campaign and it's been particularly helpful during the pandemic. Even the smallest amounts can make a big difference.

St Mark's and All Saints churches in West Parley, in the Diocese of Salisbury, are like many other churches – Treasurer Derek Warner is looking at a shortfall of between £15,000 and £18,000 for the year. Ecclesiastical's recent Trust130 donation of £650 went into general funds, and was a welcome addition.

'It's been extremely tough,' said Mr Warner. 'We have had no congregations, so obviously that means no collections. But even more importantly, we have lost all of our income from church hall lettings. We have survived by eating into our capital, and I'm looking at ways of cutting our budgets for 2021.'

'Donations such as the Trust130 money from Ecclesiastical Insurance are absolutely vital – they are really interested in helping churches and their communities and we're very grateful to them.'

Trust130 continues into 2021 to help and support churches

Ecclesiastical is really pleased to be extending the offer to run throughout 2021. Supporting your church is easy. Simply take out a home insurance policy¹ with Ecclesiastical and they will donate £130 to the church of your choice. And, of course, the more people who take out home insurance policies, the more funds that are raised. So even if you've got a really ambitious goal – like raising funds for a new church roof – there's nothing to stop you.

Want to know more?

It really is wonderful to hear how this programme is helping customers and the things that matter to them. You can hear more about what some customers are saying in a brand-new film clip on Ecclesiastical's website – simply go to the website to watch:

www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

If you would like a home insurance quote or more information, simply call 0800 7830 130 and quote AVNEWS21.

¹Subject to terms and conditions – please visit www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

Trust130.
Limitless donations.
Endless possibilities.





Living, Loving and Learning through COVID-19 in Cleckheaton

For the Benefice of Cleckheaton, the COVID crisis of 2020 has strangely felt like a 'breakthrough' year. In our town, the church and the Christian faith have often seemed like a pretty marginal influence, but the crisis has given us the opportunity to take a lead in the community, and communicate a message about what faith means in practice that people can relate to.

When the crisis began, we were determined to work with local partners in order to respond to emerging needs in our community. We had already built strong working relationships between our three churches and our local Methodist Church, and with our local Kirklees Councillors, and this gave us a strong base to build on. We began by offering volunteers to do shopping and prescription collection for vulnerable people, and a basic foodbank service. Council funding allowed previous local 'lunch club' provision to become a delivery service and meant the foodbank could expand. Basic publicity efforts, particularly through 'Facebook' community groups, established a 'virtuous circle' for us, where new volunteers and donations kept on coming our way.

This is definitely not a situation where the traditional 'core' church volunteers have to work even harder, but one where a whole new cohort of volunteers have found an enjoyable church-led context to work in. We also discovered that the disciplines of social distancing led us into working practices that were less stressful and more sustainable for both volunteers and clients.

Our contacts with local people who are struggling with the economic fallout of the pandemic has also led us to engage with justice issues locally. So many of our poorest citizens are being exploited by private landlords who charge extortionate rents but refuse to make repairs, even to essential items like central heating systems. We have what we call a 'Barnabas fund' which we use to help people with small amounts of cash to help them, typically with heating costs, and we are using our contacts with local government to urge enforcement action against landlords.

So, in 2020, we were LIVING on the edge, LOVING our neighbours and LEARNING constantly as we adapted to changing circumstances. In 2021, as the pandemic recedes, we want to heed the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's call to support mental health and young families by establishing new mutual support groups in our church venues.

The Revd Brunel James is Vicar of Cleckheaton in the Huddersfield EA

Pudsey Community Project

Richard Dimery, Vicar of Pudsey, writes:

In March 2020, days before lockdown, Pudsey Parish Church launched Pudsey Community Project to coordinate local volunteer responses, and to link goodwill and generosity with needs. Even though we'd paused in-person church services, we were naturally keen to be at the centre of providing practical care and support to the town during the crisis. The Church provides a structure so that people know the care offers they get from the people of Pudsey are safe and coordinated in a clear network of planning.

We have been distributing food and toiletry parcels, especially to those who are most vulnerable – including older people living alone, struggling families, single parents, and women fleeing domestic abuse. We have delivered tens of thousands of meals, have been collecting and delivering prescriptions, running a befriending scheme, operating a jigsaw library, shopping for people who are isolating – and set up a children's clothes bank with thousands of items for ages birth to 11 years old, including school uniform – all free.

We have done this through local people's donations, grant funding and a supportive relationship with Leeds City Council. We are linked into schools, children's centres, local charities and we're the city council's designated project for an area covering 20,000 households in outer west Leeds. The Project is now an independently registered charity with its first part-time worker who coordinates our six-days-a-week operation and we are planning projects working in mental health and youth provision when restrictions allow.

Our church's worship might mostly have been online this past year – but our mission of showing God's love and light and hope to our local community has only grown in the midst of this pandemic.

www.pudseycommunity.org.uk



Resourcing the Local Community in Bradford – Holy Trinity Idle

On 18th March 2020, Holy Trinity, Idle, held its final service in church for what would become five long months. Like the rest of the nation, we faced an unknown future, but one thing was clear: many people in our community would need help. As a *Resourcing Church*, with a commission to generous sharing, we wanted to play our part.

Knowing precisely where to start was a daunting prospect but contact from our local councillor triggered an initiative that would last throughout the summer and still impacts today. Without experience or expertise, but with time, a large work space and a willing team, we worked alongside local councillors, our Ward Officer, the police, community groups and schools. A plan unfolded to recruit volunteers from the community to provide practical and emotional support to those shielding. The response to our call through social media and leaflets was phenomenal: we inducted 150 volunteers who suddenly found themselves unable to work and wanted to help their communities however they could.

Other local churches quickly came alongside us: St John's Greengates, Bolton Villas Church and St James Bolton Woods all provided eager volunteers and regular support for our 'foodbank', whilst St Cuthbert's Wrose provided essential help with administration. For four months our volunteers shopped, collected prescriptions, befriended, conducted welfare visits, completing around 500 referrals, all overseen and coordinated by a fantastic team of six volunteers working five days a week. We also provided breakfast and a rest space for our local binmen, delivered parcels for our local foodbank throughout Bradford and provided 15 school-referred families with food parcels throughout



the summer. We even facilitated the secret purchase of a wedding anniversary card and flowers!

The legacy of being a Community Support Hub has been significant. The church has been enriched by renewed and strengthened relationships with local agencies and residents; people have 'tried church' as a result of their involvement with the Hub. Our foodbank collection bin remains popular and the community responded generously to a *Christmas Hamper* appeal. Holy Trinity has helped initiate a *Good Neighbours* scheme, run by community volunteers, which continues to provide support to those shielding or needing help.

Although the church building was closed, God's Church still fulfilled its calling as the hands and feet of Jesus, serving the most vulnerable in our communities. We thank God for the opportunity we had and the blessing and provision that he so abundantly provided.

Aspiring for Hope – The Hunslet Gathering, Leeds

One of the prominent features you notice when entering South Leeds is a majestic spire elegantly overseeing the south plain. An important symbol which united the community in a campaign to 'Save Our Spire'. The last few decades have not been kind to this once-thriving industrial area. Residents, businesses and the few churches are all struggling. Poor planning, poverty and pollution have left deep scars, and many are living difficult lives. But it is hard not to feel resilience and hope when walking the streets and meeting the people of Hunslet. A God-given open door of opportunities?

Under the wings of St Luke's, Holbeck, in the parish next door, we started to plant a new community church in Hunslet in summer 2019. The Hunslet Gathering seeks to embrace the diverse cultures and aspirations of the local community. Our style and activities are shaped by those we serve. Bible, meals and a family atmosphere, where everyone has a role, were centre to our physical gatherings. Now we spend more time together online, learning from the Lord Jesus and from each other through this difficult time. WhatsApp, Facebook (@hunsletgathering) and Zoom are some of the tools we use every day to strengthen His seedling.

Roots are growing, our core group is being established in prayer. We look forward to being a physical gathering in our community again, praying for people we meet in the streets, guided by the Holy Spirit, demonstrating the love of Christ in presence and actions in Hunslet. The Spire stands. A God-given scene of opportunities.

The Revd Dr Jean Louis Pecher is Assistant Curate in the Benefice of Holbeck

For more information

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

Facebook: Ecclesiastical **Twitter:** @churchmatters

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