

Diocesan Interns celebrate year of service and growth

Our Diocesan Interns have been celebrating their successes as their year of serving in churches across the region comes to an end.

At a celebration held at St Matt's in Burley, the Interns came together with their mentors, line managers and other supporters to worship, look back on their year, and be commissioned by the Bishop of Leeds, the Rt Revd Nick Baines.

This year we have had interns serving at St Peter's Morley, St Luke's Holbeck, St Augustine's Wrangthorn, St George's Leeds, Holy Trinity Boar Lane, Wortley and Farnley, Lighthouse at St George's Crypt



and St Matt's Burley.

This year's interns shared some highlights from their year, and thanked their mentors and line managers for all the support while they have been serving.

After a certificate presentation, the Revd Jude Smith, Director of Church Revitalisation for the diocese, presented Joanna with leaving gifts, as she is leaving to take up a new post in the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham.

Bishop Nick thanked Joanna for her service, and prayed for her.

Community Garden brings people together in Bellerby

One of our Ripon churches has been celebrating community and the environment with their Community Garden.

Recently the United Benefice of Leyburn and Bellerby welcomed the Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds, to Bellerby for a service and tour of their Community Garden.

The service started off in the garden, with a hymn and prayers, before the congregation heard from members of the community about the transformation of rocky wasteland to a beautiful community garden with a greenhouse, space to relax and the opportunity to garden.

The Revd Stephen Hanscombe, vicar of the Benefice of Leyburn and Bellerby, said: "It was a fantastic afternoon where our people came together to celebrate all that is going on in our communities."



Singing in the rain

Bishop Toby

Summer's here! I know that joyful shout may have been rare in recent wet weeks, but as I write... the sun is shining.

Many of us have rearranged our holiday plans or seen promised events marred or cancelled due to the "worst since records began" weather, and we are all aware of the new global uncertainties driven by increasing climate chaos.

Memory, perhaps rose-tinted and with a hint of Vivaldi, takes us back to an imagined time of predictable seasons, rather than today's turbulent weather patterns.

It is tempting to look back at our economic climate in a similar way: the period of zero interest rates as a time of financial security, a time of plenty. Of course, it wasn't that way for many people. For example, poverty and deprivation in our communities led to the need for foodbanks at the same time as the possibility of negative interest rates was being discussed.

And with hindsight, where was the good stewardship in that time of plenty that prudently filled metaphorical grain stores ahead of plague, pestilence or war?

We are in testing times. As Christians, this should not surprise us. For most of the church's history and for most of the world's Christians today, such as our sisters and brothers in our link dioceses of Sudan and Tanzania,



life has been and continues to be precarious.

As with the climate or the economy, so with our faith. It is tempting, faced with global and local insecurities, to hark back to a time when the church seemed more stable, or God's ways seemed more predictable. But the Bible, and our Sudanese friends, call us to put our hope in Jesus, who doesn't always take us out of the storm but is here with us in the middle of it.

Our diocesan "Barnabas" initiative encourages us to live confidently, generously, and sustainably as churches in our turbulent times. As we learn to live this way, with Jesus, going with the grain of God's work in the world, we experience the joy of tapping into the energy of the Holy Spirit and sharing that hope with others.

Our two new bishops, the Rt Revd Smitha Prasadam and the Rt Revd Anna Eltringham will be active in our Huddersfield and Ripon areas from next month and we all look forward to welcoming them and the new gifts they bring.

So, let's have a little more singing in the rain...

Horbury parish to connect with children and families

One of our Wakefield parishes is able to connect more with children and families thanks to new funding.

The parish of St Peter and St Leonard, Horbury, with St John, Horbury Bridge recently secured funds for a further three years of their Children and Families Project.

As a result of hard work, the parish has seen congregations grow, and become significantly younger in demographic.

In this second phase, the parish has secured over £100,000 of funding, from the Fellowship of St John, the Community of St Peter, Horbury, the Henry Smith Charitable Foundation, the St Leonard's Trust, and the Bishops' Development Fund of the Diocese of Leeds, which has made this bold step possible.

Responding to the generosity of these charitable bodies, Fr Christopher Johnson, Vicar of Horbury with Horbury Bridge, said: "The investment in the parish that these charities are making is paying off, transforming our church communities into places where all generations can come together to worship God and find fellowship with each other."



Diocese of Leeds secures £3.9 million for Barnabas: Encouraging Confidence



The Diocese of Leeds is delighted to have secured £3.9 million from the Church of England for Barnabas: Encouraging Confidence.

The Barnabas programme offers our churches resources and support at different levels, and is how we all work towards the diocesan vision of ‘Confident Christians, Growing Churches, Transforming Communities’.

The funding for Barnabas was announced at Diocesan Synod on Saturday, July 15 by the Bishop of Leeds, the Rt Revd Nick Baines.

Bishop Nick commended Barnabas to Synod members, saying: “Our diocesan vision has not changed in the nearly ten years we have been the Diocese of Leeds.

“We want to grow confident Christians who consequently grow churches which help to transform our communities.

“This vision has been, and continues to be, at the very heart of the strategic direction of this Diocese.

“I am pleased to be able to tell Synod this morning that two weeks ago the Strategic Mission

and Ministry Investment Board agreed to give the diocese £3.9 million to fully fund the first phase of the programme we are calling ‘Barnabas: Encouraging Confidence’.

“Barnabas sets an overarching strategic framework around which the diocese can intentionally be supportive of the missional needs of parishes and can bring a focus on revitalisation, growth and sustainability.

“This funding provides the wider foundation for supporting parishes right across the diocese as we use it to develop a long-term investment partnership rather than a series of ad hoc projects.”

In Acts 11, the Apostle Barnabas encourages the early church to celebrate the good already happening, to put resources in the right places, and to accompany one another in mission.

This story underpins our approach: drawing on the wisdom of the parishes, recognising everyone has something to give, and reflected in strong relationships across the diocese.



Cranmer Awards come to Yorkshire for first time

The Cranmer Awards are coming to Yorkshire, for the first time in the history of this prestigious competition.

The Yorkshire Heat of the Cranmer Awards, an annual competition for children between 11-18 years old, will take place at St Margaret’s Church, Ilkley, on Saturday, October 14.

The Cranmer Awards is a national competition run by the Prayer Book Society to introduce young people to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, described as the ‘bedrock of the Anglican Church’.

Named after the great English Reformer Thomas Cranmer, the awards encourage young people to develop their public speaking skills by reading a passage of their choice from The Book of Common Prayer.

Fr Alex Crawford, Vicar of St Margaret’s said: “We’re really pleased to be able to bring the Cranmer Awards to Yorkshire.

“The beauty of the traditional language of worship has been deeply loved by countless worshippers over the centuries in this country, and we’re glad to play our part in helping to inspire the next generation.”



Rooted deeper in God

Revd Joanna Seabourne
Diocesan Director of Interns

As I prepare to leave the Diocese to take on a new role as rector of St Giles West Bridgford, I look back with great thanksgiving for the last 17 years and for each of the different roles I've held and communities I've been a part of. Reflecting specifically on the last five years and my role as Diocesan director of interns I give thanks that the programme is now established and has seen over 64 interns and 16 mission apprentices take part. There have been Diocesan interns serving in each episcopal area through different streams such as the Mission Apprenticeship, the New Wine Discipleship year and the Ministry Experience Scheme.

It has been a genuine privilege to journey alongside those who are wanting to grow as disciples and seek more of what God is calling them to do with their lives; to watch young adults grow in confidence in who they are as a child of God and stepping out using the gifts and skills He has given them. The programme wouldn't work without a dedicated team of line managers, mentors and teachers all willing to give of



their time to invest in each intern.

I would often say when speaking to groups of students that people are willing to dedicate vast amounts of time to becoming a great musician, an athlete or a baker, but when it comes to growing as a disciple we often expect it to somehow happen without any intentional effort. Giving a year of their lives to grow their roots deeper in God, developing a rhythm of life that sustains them, having the chance to explore theological questions and learning more of the Bible, equips them for life long discipleship whatever area of work they go into next.

With each cohort of interns I have also been personally stretched, challenged and blessed and have grown in my own understanding of God's love. I look forward in the years ahead to bumping into many who are working in all walks of life, serving in their local church, and growing as disciples of Christ, building on the roots they put down during an internship in the Diocese of Leeds.

Team Leeds take part in packed agenda at General Synod

Team Leeds played their part at General Synod in York recently, participating in debates and discussions as part of a packed agenda.

Diocesan representatives took part in proceedings which covered a huge range of topics.

Synod backed a regional trial to offer Church of England weddings free of statutory fees, following a debate brought by Blackburn Diocesan Synod.

Following a motion from the Diocese of Oxford, Synod called for renewed action from the Church and Government to tackle the impact and causes of climate change.

Members of Synod also heard about recent national safeguarding matters, and had an update on the progress of the Living in Love and Faith process.

