

FAITH IN SUSSEX

The diocesan publication reaching church communities across Sussex



THE CORONATION

SEE HOW THEY PARISHES CELEBRATED WITH JOY ON PAGES 10 - 13

MEET THE NEW DEACONS

/ 14 - 19

Fourteen new candidates share some of their journey to ordination.

SETTING THE GROUNDWORK

/ 20 - 21

Read how two more churches gained Eco status.

POET ON A PILGRIM PATH

/ 28 - 29

Kevin Scully is Berwick's poet in residence.

Maycamp
2023

Unity

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Anointed.

The Coronation marked another wonderful opportunity for communities to gather across the diocese rejoicing in our diversity and also in our commonality. At the heart of the celebration was the ancient Coronation Service set within the central and familiar act of Christian worship, the Eucharist. In the middle of this wonderfully grand affair was a particularly moving moment, which none of us got to fully see. King Charles having taken off his Robe of State stood as he was, in simple clothing before his God.

To honour the sacred encounter between God and his monarch screens were placed around him. He was anointed with the perfumed oil of Chrism on the head, hands and heart. The sweet smell of the oil signifies the love of God, that the anointed one is called to proclaim, this love of God in what they say and think (head); what they physically do (hands); and in everything they are (heart). The anointing set him apart as our king. A king who is anointed to reign and build the kingdom of God as a servant to all.

Those of us who are Christian are anointed, set apart through our baptism to also proclaim God's love in what we speak, what we do and what we are. What you read in this addition of faith in Sussex is the response of individuals called to worship God as the household of faith, proclaiming and marked with the unconditional love of God in service to the world that God created.

+Will Lewes



Proclaiming the Mystery of Faith 2023-2025

We shall shortly be introducing some resources for parishes that will mark the next three years. Find out more on pages 30-31



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WE CAN ALL BE THEOLOGIANs /22-23
Meet three students of Christian Studies at Chichester University

HYMNS WE LOVE /53
A new resource that you will love

HISTORIC CHURCH BELLS RING OUT AGAIN / 36 - 37
Piddinghoe's restored bells are back!

A SOURCE OF SUPPORT FOR RETIRED CLERGY / 25
We hear from the Bishop's Chaplain for retired clergy.

CONTENTS

- 6-9 NEWS
- 10-13 THE CORONATION, WHAT A SHOW!
- 14-19 MEET THE ORDINANDS
- 20-21 ECO CHURCH NEWS
- 22-24 WE CAN ALL BE THEOLOGIANs
- 25 SOURCE OF SUPPORT FOR RETIRED CLERGY
- 26-27 REFLECTING ON THE HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE
- 28-29 POET ON A PILGRIM PATH
- 30-31 YEAR OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
- 32-33 STRIVING FOR RACIAL JUSTICE IN THE DIOCESE
- 34-42 PARISH NEWS
- 43 MISSION FUND NEWS
- 44-45 NEWS FROM OVERSEAS
- 46-47 HOW MOTHERS UNION EMPOWERS WOMEN
- 48-49 A DAY EXPLORING CURSILLO
- 50-51 EDUCATION NEWS
- 52 HYMNS UNPACKED
- 53 HYMNS WE LOVE
- 54-56 BOOK REVIEWS
- 57 CATHEDRAL NEWS

To subscribe to Faith in Sussex magazine, please contact the communications department: communications@chichester.anglican.org

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 Chichester Diocese

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 Diocese of Chichester

NEWS

ACROSS OUR DIOCESE



NEW HIGH SHERIFFS

The new high sheriffs, among the first to be chosen by King Charles, began their year in office at a historic ceremony at Lewes Crown Court in April, continuing a tradition stretching over 1,000 years.

Andrew Bliss QPM succeeds James Whitmore of Pulborough in West Sussex and Richard Bickersteth takes over from Jane King from near Nutley in East Sussex.

The high sheriffs have also appointed a chaplain for each county. Rev David Murdoch from Horsted Keynes takes the role in West Sussex and Rev Jonathan Meyer from Winchelsea in East Sussex.

Photo courtesy of Andrew Mardell

SOUTH OF ENGLAND SHOW IS CALLING YOU

The South of England Show in Ardingly is returning for its 55th year and with more than 150 things to see and do there's something for everyone. It takes place from Friday, June 9, to Sunday, June 11.

Rev Sue Wilkinson will be on hand to welcome you to The Sanctuary with her team and representatives from Mothers' Union and will be offering refreshments and a quiet moment to rest your feet. Mother's Union will also be offering its Ministry of Cake. Be sure to pop in and say hello. This year The Sanctuary is at the Horse Village, Hackney Terrace.

VOCATION DAY

This was an event for people to explore ordained ministry. It was hosted by the Diocese of Chichester in St Nicholas Church in Brighton and aimed to help those from all traditions and different churches consider the privilege and demands of a calling to ordained ministry and to hear about the different contexts in which to serve in the church.

It coincided with Vocations Sunday on April 30, an annual event to encourage individuals to consider what God might be calling them to.

The day was led by Keir Shreeves, the diocesan director for ordinations. He said: "I was really encouraged by how the day unfolded. We had good numbers of people exploring a vocation in the church and this day was intended to help them consider the next steps. We gave them the space to listen to some of our clergy and opportunities to reflect and ask questions."

Lou Shorey was one of those attending. Lou is from St Mark's Church, Holbrook. She said: "The day was really helpful. The variety of speakers and the ministries that they represented painted a picture of what serving in the Church of England can and does look like. The pace of the day was right, the good weather helped and the opportunities to reflect, ask questions and chat over lunch with some of the team running the day were welcome."

Matthew Bland, who attends St Mary's Church, East Grinstead, found Vocation Day well structured. He said: "I found it useful. The content of the talks was deeply informative and painted a very attractive but also realistic picture of what ordained ministry is like in the Church of England."

"I was grateful that it covered a wide breadth of experiences of ordained ministry, ranging from parish priest to distinctive deacon, chaplain to self-supporting minister."

If you were unable to attend and have questions about ordained ministry, do get in touch. You can find out more [here](#).

MAYCAMP - BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND MAY 26-29

Maycamp brings together hundreds of young people from across the diocese for a bank holiday weekend of faith, fun and fellowship. It is for anyone aged 11 to 15, plus we have a leadership stream for those aged 16 to 18.

The theme this year is unity. Across the weekend there will be a series of main meetings with engaging talks addressing what this word means to us in the local church and in our own discipleship. Seminars will explore topics such as social action, overseas mission, spiritual disciplines, money, worship, vocations, leadership, tough questions and much more.

DIOCESAN ENVIRONMENT DAY

Environment Day is hosted by the Archdeacon of Brighton and Lewes and Debbie Beer, diocesan environmental officer, with a talk by the Rev Dr Nigel Dilkes, priest, botanist and environmentalist. It is on June 10 from 9.30am to 3pm at St Leonard's Church, Hove. Tickets are £8, including lunch and refreshments. Please book using Eventbrite [here](#).

NEWS



DIocese Welcomes New Authorised Lay Ministers

Forty three new lay ministers from churches across Sussex were commissioned in Chichester Cathedral in April by Will Hazlewood, the Bishop of Lewes.

The Rev Jayne Prestwood, officer for lay vocation and ministry, runs the training programme and welcomed them all to their new roles. She said: "It is wonderful to welcome another large cohort who will be exercising different ministries across the diocese."

Authorised lay ministry is recognised across the Church of England as a vibrant and growing expression of lay ministry. The diocese continues to expand its ALM training programme to provide flexible and affordable skills-based training in a variety of ministries.

ALM training is a one-year programme and candidates can choose various areas of work, children's, pastoral, youth, family or community ministry as well as worship and liturgy, mission-enabling or ministry in the workplace.

Newly commissioned Ian Tout, a worshipper at St Peter's, Sompting, (Parish of South Lancing and Sompting) found the course an engaging and affirming experience. He said: "The commissioning service was a wonderfully uplifting occasion with well-chosen and appropriate hymns and readings which made it a very special event affirming our ministry. It was good to meet up with new friends that we had all made during the course of our training."

The names of those commissioned and the parish they serve in can be found on the diocesan website [here](#).

Charity Founder is Honoured

Gail Millar, chief executive officer of Befriended, a charity that makes a difference in the lives of lonely, isolated older people in Mid Sussex, is one of 500 recipients of the Coronation Champion awards announced ahead of the coronation.

She was honoured for her outstanding commitment to volunteering.

The Bishop of Horsham Ruth Bushyager, who is the patron of Befriended, said: "I am so delighted that Gail and the work of Befriended has received this recognition from His Majesty the King. Isolation and loneliness are a cause of deep suffering in the lives of huge numbers of older people across Sussex and Gail has worked with inspirational passion to bring the blessing of connection and companionship to so many people."

You can read more about the award on the diocesan website [here](#).

St Francis of Assisi Exhibition

This exhibition at the National Gallery in London presents the art and imagery of Saint Francis (1182–1226) from the 13th century to today. It looks at why this saint is a figure of enormous relevance to our time due to his spiritual radicalism, commitment to the poor and love of God and nature as well as his powerful appeals for peace and openness to dialogue with other religions. It runs until July 30.

Praying for those to be ordained



2023

Year of the Old Testament

ORDINATIONS

The Ordination of Priests takes place in four venues across the diocese on June 3, 4 and 5. Please pray for them and the parishes where they continue to serve. Ordination details can be found on page 19 and [here](#)



The Coronation...

...what a show!

FROM broadcasting the coronation service for those on their own to hosting lunches, festivals and Messy Church among many other activities, the diocese put on a great show of celebration fit for a king. Here is a selection of churches where communities gathered to welcome King Charles and Queen Camilla. Long Live the King.

At **St Peter's East Blatchington** in Seaford, Rev Arwen Fowles broadcast the service for people who otherwise would have been on their own. She said people told her the screening of the service inside the church felt like "being actually present in a side chapel of Westminster Abbey".

She said: "What a lovely image – the parish churches as the side chapels. It was very fitting to bring Westminster Abbey into St Peter's, welcoming the King and the whole ceremony into our chancel and as we all stood and joined in with the service the Cross of Christ remained firmly in place overseeing it all."

In **Sidlesham** at **St Mary's** the celebrations started on Thursday with a coronation-themed afternoon tea followed by a coronation re-enactment on Friday at the primary school for the whole community. The bells then rang out on Saturday with the "ring for the King" during the Eucharist

and the celebrations closed with a regal-themed service on Sunday.



YOUNG BELL RINGERS IN SIDLESHAM IN THE MAKING

The Church of St Mary the Blessed Virgin, Sompting, held a special service of prayer last month in preparation for the coronation of the King and Queen, held by the Order of St John in Sussex.

The service was attended by the High Sheriff of West Sussex Andy Bliss, members of the Order of St John and St John Ambulance from around East and West Sussex and a representative of the Order of Malta.

For the coronation weekend, **Chalk Spring Churches, the parish of South Lancing and Sompting** held Evensong at St Michael's to celebrate community, faith and service. Ninety people attended and after the service they all gathered and enjoyed cake in the sunshine.

Rachel Edwards is the bell tower captain at West Hoathly. She said: "Our main ring for the King in West Hoathly was a quarter peal on the morning of Monday's street fair, organised by St Margaret's Church. We were joined by friends from Ardingly and Lindfield and some of the bellringers from other local towers in the area helped out."

Around 50 people from **Worthing and Heene** gathered in St Botolph's Church, Heene, on Saturday, April 29, to "sing

for the King" with a selection of anthems and hymns associated with coronations and other royal events under the direction of Judith Ellis, the church's musical director, the church choir and the church's catering team

The anthems sung were I Was Glad (Parry, and Handel's Zadok the Priest and Alleluia Chorus from Messiah. The church choir performed O Taste And See composed for the coronation of Elizabeth II in 1953 by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Many familiar hymns were also sung.

The event concluded with prayers for His Majesty the King and the Royal Family and the singing of the National Anthem.

At **Chichester Cathedral** many people gathered to watch the coronation on a giant screen on the Cathedral Green with themed arts, crafts, games and face painting for children. On Sunday the cathedral was full to bursting with people attending the Sunday Eucharist livestreamed to allow people to continue being part of the great event and to hear Bishop of Chichester's coronation sermon, a moving account of what a life of service under God truly means - you can read it here. This was followed by Evensong at 3pm. During the Big Help Out on Monday people were invited to help clean the cathedral. Volunteers helped to clean the brass, dust and deep-clean the choir stalls to keep the moths away.



THE BIG HELP OUT AT CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL



ST PETER'S EAST BLATCHINGTON

WILLINGDON & HAMPDEN PARK



Petworth's celebrations continued after the Sunday service with a packed Market Square where the whole community joined in with fancy dress, competitions, entertainment and food.

St John the Evangelist, Preston, pulled out all the stops for a right royal celebration. A community bring and share lunch was hosted in Knoyle Hall and the volunteers and church members ensured everyone had a jolly time. The church recognises that many older people are living on their own and it hosts many activities to bring them together. The coronation was a great opportunity to do just that.

St Richard's, Aldwick Chichester celebrated in glorious style, gathering congregations and friends from far and wide. It used the occasion to launch its Lunch on Sunday, a new initiative which will be hosted by the church on the first Sunday of the month.

It was a family affair at St Stephen's in Bexhill. Church members enjoyed a live screening of the coronation and toasted the King and Queen with a party afterwards in the hall with a full lunch and lots of activities for children with Messy Church, where youngsters could make their own crown.

At St Mary's East Grinstead the children's church had lots of fun dressing up for the occasion. Fr Adam held a family mass followed by a celebration lunch in the hall. He said: "What a fantastic family mass and lunch we've had at St Mary's today. A huge thank you to all who came and made it

such a success. Thank you too, to our friends from the East Grinstead Concert Band, who played magnificently as usual.

The vicar of Boxgrove Fr Ian Forrester led celebration and prayers for the King and Queen following the singing of a Te Deum in thanksgiving for the coronation. A loyal toast was proposed by Cllr Henry Potter.

A well-attended free Coronation party was held in the parishes of Willingdon & Hampden Park and the Hydneye where many bounces were bounced on the bouncy castle, many cups of tea were made and 200 burgers and hotdogs were served.



A CORONATION BARN DANCE WAS HELD AT WADHURST PARISH



BOXGROVE



PETWORTH



EVERYONE ENJOYED ST ANDREW'S TANGMERE AFTERNOON TEA PARTY IN CELEBRATION OF THE CORONATION



ST MARY'S, EAST GRINSTEAD

MEET THE ORDINANDS

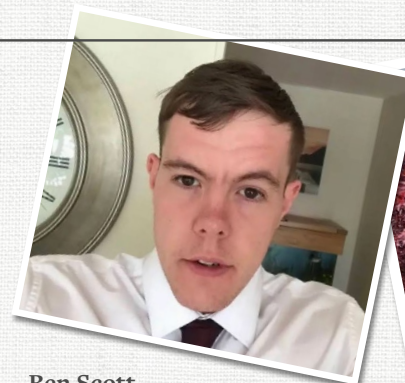
THE 14 men and woman on these pages will be ordained deacon this summer, June 24 and 25, then begin their public ministry in churches across the diocese. The services will place a seal on the calling they have received from God to serve the Church. We asked them to tell us a little about themselves so that we might call them, their families and parishes to mind in prayer ahead of their ordination service.

Dave Green
St Wilfrid, Aldwick

The Church of England has played a huge role throughout my Christian life and spiritual growth starting from the age of six. My wife Karen has been an incredible rock through the highs and lows of life. I have been married for 36 years and have been blessed with five children.

It has been a joy to serve God in the parish through prison fellowship and through Outreach UK door-to-door evangelism. It gives me great joy looking forward to the next stage of serving God through a curacy at St Wilfrid's.

I strive to know love and serve Jesus the rest of my life wherever that journey takes me but always in the strength of the Lord.



Ben Scott
South Lancing and Sompting

I grew up in a small mining village in north Warwickshire. The call to ordination had probably been simmering in the background for a while but it was in 2012 when my vicar went on sabbatical and I began to think more deeply about priestly ministry that my journey really began.

I studied at Northampton before doing two years as a pastoral assistant at St Alban's Cathedral, with formative experiences at both Walsingham and Mirfield. With ups and downs along the way my faith was strengthened as the God who called remained faithful in my journey.

I have been lucky to spend my final year of formation alongside the community at St Bartholomew's in Brighton which has been a source of great encouragement.

I am excited to be ordained in June and be serving in a missional catholic parish with a range of traditions in the lovely coastal village of Lancing. I cannot wait to join in with what God is doing in that community. I ask for your prayers as I approach ordination to the diaconate on June 25.



Sue Anson
Clayton with Keymer

I was born in Edgware, London, moving to Sussex when I was 12. I now live in Hassocks where I have been for 20 years, along with my husband Mike. We have two adult children, one now working in London and one at university in Liverpool. I love nature and walking beside the sea.

My call from God to stand up and be counted came about 15 years ago when my father died. I discerned a call to Reader ministry at the time. God continued to lead me as I followed his direction to move careers from teaching geography after 23 years to the YMCA and then hospital chaplaincy, just as the pandemic began. At the same time I completed an MA in counselling, all the while knowing I felt a growing call to ordination that just wouldn't go away. There was also a real pull from God to minister in my local area which involved me moving churches a few years ago. I am really excited about serving my parish and can't wait to see what God has in store for me.



Caroline Scott
St Wilfrid's, Haywards Heath

Having not grown up in a Church family, I was baptised and confirmed in my early forties. I remember my parish priest at the time telling me that my life would be transformed and indeed he was right.

Once confirmed, I threw myself into church life and from this I began to realise that God was calling me to a more formal role within the Church. As I began to explore this, I have found that God's call was to serve not as a priest but as a distinctive deacon.

Being a deacon is rooted in the servanthood of Christ and acting as a bridge between the church and the local community.

As a self-supporting minister, I will continue to work as an accountant alongside my role as deacon and I am very much looking forward to joining the parish as assistant curate.



Dominic DeSouza
Ifield, St Peter and St Paul,
Hellingly, and Holy Trinity,
Upper Dicker.

My call to ordination began in my teens and slowly grew until I could not ignore it any more. I first trained as a Reader in the Church of England at St Augustine's College of Theology, but it was clear God wanted more. Having forged a career in the NHS I went back to St Augustine's to train part-time and am now looking forward to serving my curacy with Mother Christine and the people of St Margaret of Antioch, Ifield, Crawley, as a self-supporting minister.

I believe God is calling me to encourage other people to encounter Christ through God's sacramental presence, to build new relationships between the Church and community and to walk alongside people as we progress together in our journey of faith.

Together we serve Christ and with the prayers of Our Lady, St Richard and all the saints I would ask that you pray for me and all those to be ordained.



Elly McKay-Smith
Hellingly and Upper Dicker

I am excited to be ordained deacon and to serve as assistant curate alongside my work as a chaplain for YMCA Downlink Group. Training over three years at St Mellitus, London, and with a placement at St John Meads in Eastbourne I am looking forward to a rural setting which is where I hear God calling me to serve.

The challenges of blending established rural churches with rapidly growing new housing estates offers a wonderful setting in which to grow my own faith and to seek to spread the light and hope of God.

I am also looking forward to introducing my daughter Sophie and my grandson Hunter to a new branch of our church family.



Fiona Coldicott
St John The Evangelist,
Cophorne

I have thoroughly enjoyed studying at St Augustine's College while working as a cleaner, caring for my mum, with three (two now adult) children and a vicar husband.

I was a teaching assistant for several years, love historical murder mystery novels and Dr Who. In 2018 I sensed that God's call on my life had changed. During the discernment process, as I read the ordination service for deacons, the words really resonated with me and it was like a light turned on.

I find the image of the deacon as a "door-keeper" really helpful, inviting those on the margins in and sending the Church family out to live and work for Jesus in our own contexts. God willing, I am being ordained as a distinctive deacon this June.

I look forward to building bridges between the Church and the community in my parish.



James Lashwood
St Michael's, Eastbourne

I had a Roman Catholic upbringing at school and was fascinated with Jesus. As I grew up, I struggled with a sense of guilt and shame. However, a friend at work invited me to Alpha - and there my faith came alive. The moment I gave my life to Jesus I had a desire to tell others about God's amazing love. Since then, I have sensed Jesus's calling on my life to share the gospel.

My studies at St Mellitus have stretched and equipped me and I am so grateful to all those who have supported and encouraged me to pursue my calling, not least my wife Rachel and son Sam. Rachel and I are looking forward to moving to Eastbourne to join in with what God is already doing in the community to share the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Joe Wells
St John's, Crawley

Growing up in a Christian family on the Isle of Wight I always had some sort of faith. It was during my first time at the Soul Survivor festival when I was 14 that a passion was sparked in me to pursue God and commit to following him. This marked the beginning of a big shift for me, changing from going to church with my family to making it my own faith and my own journey.

It was through Soul Edge, a discipleship training school where I met my wife Rachel, leading the course together for two years, and then through conversations with the vicar and curates at St Mary's Southampton that a sense of calling to ordained ministry in the church really developed.

The last three years training on the mixed-mode programme at Trinity Bristol have been some of the most formative years of my life. Through the joys and challenges, I have learnt more about myself and grown in ways that I couldn't have imagined as well as making some amazing friends.



Kate Middleton
St Matthias, Brighton

My ministry journey began over two decades ago when I was called out of my original career in medicine. I finished a psychology PhD, then almost immediately began working with a local church in their work supporting the community. After nearly 20 years co-leading in that church I recognised the call to Anglican ordination and in 2020 left to take up a placement in our local Anglican church where I have been serving since, learning liturgical tradition and practice.

For around 18 years I've also been one of the directors of a national organisation, the Mind and Soul Foundation, bringing together biblical and psychological wisdom to help people manage the pressures life throws at them and release their full potential.

My family and I are excited to move to Brighton this year as I join the team at St Matthias. This new season is a very welcome return to full time ministry for me after time out in training and a chance for us all to get to know a new community. We'd very much appreciate prayers for a smooth transition, especially for my daughter who is sitting her A-Levels this term.



Chris Webster
All Saints, Eastbourne

I've been studying for ordination at Oak Hill College in North London, I'm married to Jess and we have three lovely children who keep us busy. After being in London for the past 22 years, the family and I are excited to move to Eastbourne, especially my daughter Sylvia as she says it's always sunny there.

I grew up in Norfolk and went to university in London, where I planned to be a graphic designer. God had other plans as I became a Christian, which led me to explore how to serve God in telling others about the good news of Jesus.

It was a long journey to ordination - I was a school's worker in Kingston-Upon-Thames for ten years and then a children's and youth worker for a church in South East London. It's been such a joy to see God at work having an impact on many lives and I look forward to serving him at All Saints.



Levison Kandi
Brighton's Benefice of
Moulsecoomb, Bevendean
and Coldean.

My vocational journey has been very long. During all that time I've been aware of the sense of calling to ordained ministry which was endorsed by various people from all walks of life. My sense of calling became more intense in the last few years culminating with the Bishop of Lewes calling me to ordination last year which I humbly accepted.

I'm humbled and honoured to be one of the two pioneers of the Exceptional Fast Track Ordination pathway in the Diocese of Chichester.

The training programme has been intense, but with support from my family, my local parish church of Moulsecoomb and Rev Emma Graeme, the journey has been awesome. I acknowledge my spiritual director Rev Canon Edias Basvi for walking alongside me on this journey. I acknowledge posthumously the late Rev Canon Daniel Nhema for mentoring me over three decades.

I'm looking forward to my ordination as well as to serving my curacy. To God be the Glory.



Tracy Fitcroft
Felpham

I felt I had a calling to ordained ministry but like many others I kept trying to ignore the call. However, it was on a trip to the Holy Land that I felt it was God's timing to explore this feeling of being called further. The process of discernment has been a long one but the encouragement from family, friends and strangers over the time has been uplifting and amazing.

I trained through the Portsmouth Pathway at Ripon College Cuddesdon and loved the fellowship of Tuesday evenings, eating together, worship and teaching. Although the course started online because of Covid, I managed to make friends. It has been an amazing process learning with others from different Anglican traditions which has broadened my outlook and led to some interesting conversations.

As a self-supporting minister, I will continue working and serving in the parish. My work has been very supportive, allowing me to work flexibly to achieve this. I'm really looking forward to serving with Rev John in Felpham and seeing where God takes me.



Richard Keeble
St Saviours and St Peter,
Eastbourne

I was born and raised in Harrow, North London. My dad was a parish priest so I grew up going to church regularly. Sitting still and paying attention was difficult for me, as my mum can attest, and I feel sorry for my Sunday School teachers looking back.

But it instilled in me a sense that the Church was home and that God had a purpose for me as he does for everyone else. My faith gradually grew deeper and I wanted to learn more so studied theology at King's College London.

Unsure what to do next, I ended up as the sacristan and chapel intern at Pusey House, Oxford. This was a wonderful experience for many reasons. The rhythm of the Book of Common Prayer's offices, daily mass and community life were extremely formative and spiritually nourishing. It is also where I met my future wife Clara - we married in September last year.

Training at St Stephen's House has brought many more blessings, not least a thorough immersion in the Catholic tradition, and some great friends for life. Clara and I are very excited to be moving to Chichester Diocese and serving the people of St Saviour's, Eastbourne.

Praying for those to be ordained




2023
Year of the Old Testament

Ordination details can be found [here](#) and below

Saturday 3rd June at 12noon

St Mary's, Horsham by the Bishop of Horsham

Will Kane to continue to serve at St John's, Crawley
Charlotte Dobson to continue to serve at St John's, Crawley
Peter Sutton to continue to serve at Horsted Keynes
Caroline Armitage to continue to serve at West Grinstead
Peter Leith to continue to serve at All Saints, Hove

Sunday 4th June at 5.00pm

St John's Meads, Eastbourne by the Bishop of Horsham

Kizzy Penfold to continue to serve at St Helen's, Ore
Janice Bartholomew to serve at East Hoathley, Chiddingly and Framfield
Damian Brennan to continue to serve at the Cuckmere Churches
James Roe to continue to serve at St Peter's, Brighton
Emily Roe to continue to serve at St Peter's, Brighton
Peter Winstone to continue to serve at All Saints, Crowborough

Sunday 4th June at 5.00pm

St Paul's Brighton by the Bishop of Lewes

Thomas Cotterill to continue to serve at St Bartholomew's and St Paul's, Brighton

Monday 5th June at 7.00pm

Holy Trinity, Bosham by the Bishop of Horsham

Maria Sadler to continue to serve at Holy Trinity, Bosham
Liz Yonge to continue to serve at Easebourne, Lodsworth and Selham

ECO CHURCH NEWS

Setting the groundwork... how eco is your church?

TWO churches in Burgess Hill have gained bronze eco status with A Rocha and are now on the way to achieving silver.

In November last year Ginny Nicholls, electoral roll officer for St John's the Evangelist, volunteered to become its Eco Church representative.

Eco Church is an initiative run by A Rocha UK, an organisation which encourages churches to become more environmentally aware.

It gives three awards, bronze, silver and gold, and covers five areas of church life:

- Worship and teaching
- Buildings
- Land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle.

The first step in applying for an award is to complete the Eco Church survey. Ginny needed help from the vicar, churchwardens, church administrator and fabric manager to complete the questions.

She said: "The survey automatically updates to show how close you are to one of the award levels. From our answers,

we nearly had bronze status without having to do any extra work.

"The survey provides a lot of guidance on how you can improve your overall score, ranging from changing your paper in the photocopier to recycled paper, running car sharing schemes to installing solar panels on your church roof.

"To help us get bronze level in all five areas we ran a 'buy a lightbulb' initiative. We invited the congregation to buy an LED lightbulb to swap out the old lightbulbs. We had 39 to replace and they cost £20 each. The congregation was very generous in purchasing these light bulbs.

"I also created a noticeboard that gave information on Eco Church, advice on recycling and promoting a local shop called Scrapless, which promotes refilling empty bottles/jars and thus reducing your plastic intake. I hope to lead regular litter picks around our church and parish to encourage the community to get involved.

"Once you have bronze in all five areas you submit your request for an award status. A Rocha UK then reviews your answers and then issues the

award. We are now aiming for silver."

Jules Middleton, vicar of St Edward the Confessor's Church, agreed it requires just a few simple steps to get started and the rest naturally follows. The parish now joins the many other churches recently awarded bronze.

She said: "There are simple things we can do in church. Small things add up, which lead to natural growth and spiritual growth."

Church members of St Edward the Confessor and groups in the community are fully behind the eco initiatives that grew from the vision that Jules shared when she arrived in 2021. In that short time the church has gained the bronze award.

This encourages churches to make changes to improve their climate impact, to care for the environment and to inspire and encourage others.

Jules said: "It is about setting the groundwork. The vision process involved the garden church or outdoor church. It is something I wanted to do in my heart, to be naturally led, and we've been praying over the land."

More and more churches across Sussex are realising that by following a simple "how to" guide provided by A Rocha, they can start the process, achieve some easy wins and gain bronze status.

Jules said there are many simple things that can be done by everyone collectively and individually.

She said: "It's a shared responsibility. We offer creation care tips in the parish newsletter, simple things that we can do in church and at home such as thinking about the products we buy and looking at what is in our cleaning products. Is it harmful to the environment? Refills could work."

Other ideas include:

- An all-ages monthly garden service
- Hold "environment Sunday" – we got a speaker from A Rocha
- Community garden – we planted snowdrop and seeds, thinking about how seeds carry life
- Create a firepit and pray over the land. This leads into our garden project and meeting mental health needs and loneliness.
- Set up a friends of the churchyard group.
- Ask members of the public to get involved. Find out about accessibility issues and offering a quiet place.

Jules said: "Working in partnership with others is key

and we teamed up with the Mid Sussex Rangers."

You can rewild your churchyard. Letting it grow is a long-term project that has long-term benefits.

Jules said: "Family events are key but ask people what they would like to do. Think about working with faith schools and non-Church schools. Build relationships through mutual interests. We created an Advent spiral - this involves planting evergreen shrubs and placing lanterns or candles at the centre of it. The kids loved it."



Love Your Burial Ground Week

CARING for God's Acre is the conservation charity for burial grounds and this year it has teamed up with Churches Count On Nature 2023 for Love Your Burial Ground Week.

This is a celebratory week which has been running for many years. Caring For God's Acre has been encouraging all who help to look after churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries to celebrate these fantastic places in the lovely month of June in any way they choose.

There have been history talks, picnics and even abseiling teddy bears. Churches Count On Nature 2023 is part of Love Your Burial Ground Week, focusing on the brilliant wildlife to be found in churchyards and chapel yards. It is a joint initiative promoted by Caring For God's Acre, the Church of England, the Church in Wales and A Rocha UK.

Churches are encouraged to Join in with this dedicated week to count nature and celebrate burial grounds, from Saturday, June 3, to Sunday, June 11.

[Find out more here](#)

“We can all be theologians”

Meet three students studying Public Theology or Christian Ministry at Chichester University

Lesley Hurst

Lesley has been working for the Diocese of Chichester as assistant director of education since 2016. She enrolled on the MA in public theology to further understand how theology relates to and can inform the issues that face Church of England schools.

Lesley said the structure of the course can be adapted to your own context and encouraged others, whether lay or ordained, to explore the continuing relevance of theology in an everyday context.

She said: “I decided to apply for the MA in public theology as my job role requires me to work with people both lay and ordained from a variety of church backgrounds. I was nervous entering the course as I had convinced myself that everyone else would be ordained clergy with a lot of experience. In fact I am part of a cohort with an even split of both ordained clergy and lay people.

“The course has a good range of modules and is incredibly diverse. In particular, the Christian leadership module

was incredibly useful in terms of relating study to my work. The great thing with this course is that you can approach the assessments in a way that is suitable for your own context, meaning that a research project on the use of songs in collective worship in schools is equally relevant as a research project into the opinion of a congregation on the content of Sunday services when completing the Practical Theology Project.

“As I approach the end of the taught part of the MA and come towards my dissertation, there is a level of sadness that I won’t have any further study days with my fellow students. The diversity that comes from our different backgrounds and experiences brings a richness to conversation and an insight into the way in which theology can be explored which I would not have had previously.

“I would highly recommend this course to anyone who feels they would like to explore the continuing relevance of theology in an everyday context and not to be put off if you aren’t an ordained member of clergy. We can all be theologians.”



The diversity that comes from our different backgrounds and experiences brings a richness to conversation and an insight into the way in which theology can be explored

“With my brain already aching from the work out it was receiving, I realised it was the best thing I’d done for years.”

David Gent

In the 25 years since his ordination, David Gent has served in a range of rural multi-parish benefices. He is now rector of five parishes around Bristol airport. When he enrolled for an MA in Christian ministry at Chichester he initially regretted his hasty decision.

David, who balanced his homelife with studying for an MA and being a full-time minister, said: “It was one of those ‘what the heck have I done’ moments.

“In a fit of excitement at the beginning of the year, I had agreed to put my name down to do an MA in Christian ministry. However, the day before the course started, I was regretting this big time.

“As rector of a busy multi-parish benefice and diocesan and family commitments besides, taking on the commitment of an MA was a crazy thing to do. However, by lunchtime on the first day, with my brain already aching from the work out it was receiving, I realised it was the best thing I’d done for years.

“So why has getting a place on the Christian ministry course been so fulfilling over the last 18 months? The inspiring teaching and the mixed bunch of fellow students have certainly been important ingredients in the mix but the thing I’ve found most important is the flexibility of the essay choice.

“All students attend the same modules during the course. However, when it comes to the actual essays, the world is your oyster.

“Well almost – it’s about reflecting on your own experienced and you soon realise that whether the course has been on the Bible, leadership, ethics or spirituality, you really do have loads to reflect on within your day-to-day experience.

“For me, that’s been the most important thing. The course hasn’t been an add-on extra. It’s given me some extra tools for what I’m doing already. And my ministry feeds directly into the course. It’s a symbiotic relationship which is feeding me academically and spiritually.”



Kirsty Stannard

Kirsty has a busy schedule with church life as well as a hectic family life. She works in strategic development for St Peter's Brighton which involves project managing the church planting programme. She also supports her husband Neil's ministry as rector of the 3Bs parish and chaplain at Steyning Grammar School.

As an English undergraduate, Kirsty was on the lookout for a way to engage with theological training to complement the experience she gained supporting her husband in his ministry, but also give her the flexibility that she needed.

She said: "Having both worked for a church and supported my husband in ministry, I felt fairly confident that I knew what I was doing but articulating the theological reasons why I found less easy. Having completed an English degree as an undergraduate I had been exploring some kind of theological training but I didn't want to take a purely theoretical course and I was also keenly aware of my limited spare time.

"When I came across the MA in Christian ministry in 2021 it seemed perfect. Context-based, rooted in the everyday practical expressions of our faith and open to non-clergy, it was everything I wanted from a course of study. Moreover, I was relieved to see that it was a manageable combination

"I have loved the course and been challenged, surprised and stimulated by the content."

of only three blocks of three teaching days per year so would fit into my busy schedule. It feels bizarre to think that this was two years ago and I'm about to complete my final module before I start my dissertation.

"I have loved the course and been challenged, surprised and stimulated by the content. At each three day 'school', I come home exhausted and with my brain fizzing with information I'm keen to share and ideas I'm eager to implement. What I've also enjoyed has been the range of people delivering the modules and their wealth of knowledge and experience, much of which is also contextual and so exemplifies the intentions of the course.

"In August 2021, I was prepared to find elements of the modules daunting and to feel some impostor syndrome about being back in education. I expected to enjoy absorbing new material and thinking about theology, the Bible, Christian spirituality and orthopraxy in novel ways.

"These expectations were not confounded. What has taken me by surprise has been the enjoyment of living the experience with the other students – we have asked lots of questions, teased one another

(and the module leader), sometimes shared emotional or difficult experiences, supported each other both academically and personally and had a lot of fun. We definitely don't always agree but we've always been honest about our differences and respectful of one another's views which is a refreshing antidote to the polarising polemics that seem to dominate society at the moment.

"The theologians, philosophers, politicians and Biblical characters we've studied have been wide-ranging and have genuinely had a positive effect upon the way I evaluate my Christian work and personal life. I'm looking forward to really engaging with my dissertation this year, although I'll miss the contact days at Chichester University."



A source of support for retired clergy (and those about to step back)'

CHICHESTER Diocese has one of the largest numbers of retired clergy in the country and the contribution they make is immense, not least in rural areas where clergy are thinner on the ground.

Simon Hobbs took over from Jonathan Prichard as the Bishop's Chaplain for Retired Clergy in March and is finding his way around the diocese and the many retired clergy and groups that exist to support them as well as widows, widowers and spouses.

He offers support to them and their families and helps clergy prepare for retirement.

"Clergy are ordained for life even if they are no longer licensed to a particular role within the church, and this works two ways of course," said Simon.

"Retired clergy are still part of the family and deserve the best support we can offer. Some retired clergy take on specific roles and others help on an occasional basis while others are no longer active. So much depends on personal circumstances.

"One of the things I want to look at in my role is what opportunities for ministry are available for those retired clergy who would wish to continue offering this. Many find a new aspect of their vocation in retirement, which they wish to pursue.



Gary Ingram, retired priest, shares his story. "I've been retired for 7 months, following more than 39 years of stipendiary ministry in 4 Dioceses. I am counting my blessings, but it was one heck of a change - giving up a parochial priestly ministry - not least the privilege of standing at the Altar week after week, and preaching on God's good word; losing my home, my community [ecclesiastical and secular], my friends [for that's what so many of my parishioners were], and links with the church school and youth organisations in the village. I even miss chapter meetings! But I now have a freedom to do what I want, when I want.

"For families too, retirement can be both a liberation as well as a bereavement and adjusting to that can take time. I recently visited the Eastbourne group for retired clergy spouses and widow(er)s which meets regularly to offer social activities and mutual support.

"I run two training days for retiring clergy and their families and recommend that clergy start planning for retirement five years before they retire, especially if they will be looking for housing from the Church of England Pensions Board. But there are many things to consider before retiring, not least the emotional side of leaving office and what might come next.

"If I can be of any help or support, please do contact me. My usual working day is Friday, but I also work flexibly so that I can get around to seeing people and attend groups and meetings as best I can."

"I have found a new church home nearby, and as I did the rounds to find where I best fitted in, I found a warm welcome in every Anglican church I visited.

"Retirement is not a new chapter: It is a whole new book. I see more of my family. My relationship with God remains strong and positive, and we talk daily. I love having time - time to choose what I want to do, and simply to sit without having to rush, and at last, a garden small enough to enjoy looking after.

Simon is on retiredclergy@chichester.anglican.org or call him on 07500 043361.



REFLECTIONS ON THE DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

THE Archdeacon of Lewes and Hastings, Dr Edward Dowler led a group of more than 40 people from churches across the diocese to the Holy Land, visiting key places known to us through the scriptures. His wife Anna sent back daily reflections which allowed those unable to make the journey to feel part of the encounters the pilgrims experienced each day. Her posts and photos were followed by hundreds of people each day.

Setting the scene in one of her earliest observations, Anna wrote about Peter, their driver and guide from Nazareth, saying he was one of the one per cent of Christians in Israel. Peter told them: “It is not easy to be a Christian in the Holy Land. You are not on a holiday or a sightseeing tour. You will be guided in prayer through the places Jesus knew. I want to help you see things in a different way.”

She recounted the ancient places that Jesus walked in and the people he met. She said the week of pilgrimage had been a road to Emmaus: “We have travelled it together, doubting, hoping, seeing, stumbling. Pilgrims who have been bereaved confided the sense that their lost loved ones have accompanied them along the way. And Jesus has walked beside us, sometimes discernible, sometimes out of sight, explaining the scriptures to us through the word and the bread and through our Palestinian guide Peter, whose Christian faith has withstood decades of war and oppression and faces a frightening future.

“Pilgrimages make family out of strangers. It’s not an individual journey but a communion of souls. Different people were moved by different aspects. An experience that left some of us cold were a revelation to others. We’ve learned as much from our fellow travellers, as from the sacred sites we visited

“The destination of those bereft disciples on the evening Christ rose from the tomb

“My reflections will continue for the rest of my life.”

has been lost in time. Early Christians were undaunted by geographical niceties. If they didn’t know where an event took place, they made a guess (and built a church on it). Various contenders for the town have been earmarked over the centuries.

“The Emmaus we were headed for was selected by the Crusaders since it was handily on the pilgrimage route from Jerusalem to Jaffa. It’s a hillside town called Abu Ghosh, the seven miles specified by Luke from Jerusalem’s old city. It looks as though the Crusaders may have guessed correctly. Four years ago, excavations on the outskirts uncovered the ruins of the ancient settlement of Kiryat Ye’arim where, according to the Book of Samuel (7:1-2), the Ark rested for 20 years after being returned by the Philistines. Archaeologists reckon this could be the lost town of Emmaus.”

Joan Bull, an authorised lay minister from Felpham parish near Bognor was one of the pilgrims. She said: “Pilgrims talk of ‘walking in the footsteps of Jesus’ and even today Jerusalem remains the same hotbed of conflict and danger that our Lord would have faced.

“The prospect of going to the city where our Lord was crucified was indeed daunting.

From serene spirituality on board the boat King David to the unexpected scale of the Judean desert, to the shocking sight of the Pit where our Lord probably spent his last night and so much more, this whole pilgrimage has brought every word of scripture that I hear or read to life for me in a way not experienced before.

“My reflections will continue for the rest of my life.”

In her final post, Anna asked: “And what have we learned? That we are rooted in centuries of faith whose churches lie layered beneath our feet. That we are one body with Christians from across the world, whose prayers and hymns mingled in a myriad languages with ours.

“It can be a strain being a pilgrim, illusions broken, struggling to feel permanently spiritual. But faith is not about fantasies and feeling. It might be a slow dawning. It may take a long time to discern the change in us, there’s worry that real life will subsume us and we’ll lose the connection we found in Galilee. What is certain is that road to Emmaus continues for a lifetime and that from now on, when we are in church and we hear the gospel read, we will be there because we were here.”

You can read the daily posts from the pilgrimage on the diocesan website [here](#).

Poet on a pilgrim path

A PILGRIM route which passes through the beautiful landscape of the South Downs, Low Weald and Cuckmere Valley has its own poet in residence.

The Cuckmere Pilgrim Path, which was established along existing footpaths in 2018 by Peter Blee, rector of the churches in Arlington, Berwick, Selmeston with Alciston and Wilmington, is a circular walk of about 12 miles (18km) over varying terrain and takes walkers around seven ancient rural churches.

Kevin Scully, a retired Church of England priest, was appointed Poet in Residence in June last year and marked the start of his work by reading at each of the churches on the annual walk on one of the hottest days of the year.

He also read some of his own work over afternoon tea in Berwick Parsonage garden.

Since then he has made contact with local groups, especially those involved in poetry, led walks and workshops and written site-specific works related to the Pilgrim Path.

Among the events have been a Poetry Harvest at Arlington Church, followed by Man Up In Wilmington in Wilmington Church. Both were instigated by the Rev Shirley Pearce, associate vicar serving those parish churches.

Kevin is in the process of writing poems based on the locale and features of the ancient churches on the route. And there is plenty to write about. For instance, the Good Shepherd church in Lullington, dating from the 13th century, is the smallest church in Sussex and one of the smallest

Kevin is in the process of writing poems based on the locale and features of the ancient churches on the route. And there is plenty to write about.

churches in the country, being 16 feet square and seating about 20. There is no electricity and evening services are conducted by candlelight. The building is the remains of the chancel of a larger church which is believed to have been razed by fire in Cromwellian times.

The Bishop of Lewes, the Rt Rev Will Hazlewood, will lead a special closing service at the end of Kevin's residency on July 29. Once again, this will coincide with the annual walking of the path led by Fr Blee.

Kevin Scully is a published and produced writer in a range of work. His poetry has been published in Theology, online platforms including Second Chance Lit and the ironically titled Saccharine Poetry. A poem is in Poems In Praise of Libraries curated by SIMS Poetry Library, Los Angeles. Kevin was longlisted for the single poem competition run by Live Canon in 2017.

His early poetic work was overtaken by journalism and playwriting. He has published eight non-fiction books, mostly religious, and two novels. Ten stage and radio dramas have been produced.

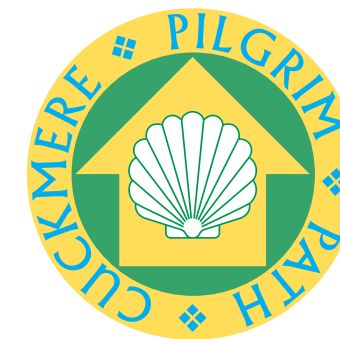
His poetry takes a range of forms and often steps into the shadows of spirituality and religion.



He also casts an eye backwards, evoking memory but not for nostalgia. The light of the southern hemisphere often illuminates his writing.

Kevin is on the organising committee of the Tunbridge Wells Poetry Festival and a member of the Kent and Sussex Poetry Society. He is studying for a MA in writing poetry at the Poetry School, London. www.kevin-scully.com

All six pilgrim routes are listed on the website here: <https://www.cuckmerepilgrimpath.org.uk/>





2023

Year of the Old Testament

Year of Old Testament is going very well so far. In his introduction to the 2023 Lent Course Bishop Martin hoped it would help each of us to “pull the meaning of the Old Testament into your encounter with Jesus, sharpening your awareness of his death and resurrection at Easter, and its tremendous significance.”

The Lent 2023 course podcasts were a resource that proved popular for churches and groups across the Diocese. They were also useful for individual quiet reflection.

Churches Together in Pulborough explored The Year of the Old Testament with a five-week course of discussion and study of a film called ‘The Covenant’.

Tony Holloway, a Reader at St Mary’s said, “The Covenant’ film was produced by Hannah Leader a member of our church and a film producer and lawyer by profession. It was filmed on location in Morocco, Madeira and Akko in Israel. We screened it at St Mary’s Church of England Primary School in Pulborough.

“The film shows Ezra known by some traditions as ‘Ezra the scribe’ drawing together the stories in the Pentateuch that tell us of God’s covenant with his people. The events we see depicted, Ezra leading a remnant of the Jewish people back from captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem occurred approximately 500 years before Christ.

“The year 2024 will be kept by the Chichester Diocese as the Year of the New Testament, and Hannah has already completed the filming of the four New Testament gospels which are currently available in over 1300 languages.”

Bible Reading Marathon

Bishop Ruth was invited to read the Book of Ruth at a ‘Bible Reading Week’ during Lent at St Mary’s Horsham. Lisa Barnett, the vicar, said “We held a Bible Marathon where The whole Bible was read in a week. We were delighted that Bishop Ruth could take part. We also planned various creative displays including a display of interesting Bibles of different languages, styles and translations for people to look at and touch. We also welcomed schools in to take part. Later this summer we will be welcoming visitors to our big Flower Festival in June which will be inspired by the books of the Old Testament.

Prayer Podcasts

Revd Canon Christopher Irvine from the parish of Ewhurst Green and Bodiam, along with Reader David Bowles explored the Psalms during Lent – in a series of three podcasts. You can view them here

REMAINING YEAR OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SEMINARS FOR 2023

Thu 25 May 2023

Signs of Christ: Reading the Bible in the Early Church

Free. 10.00-12.00. Zoom.
Led by The Revd Dr Earl Collins

This seminar will look at the methods the Early Church used for reading the Old Testament as a witness to Christ and the Gospel, especially in worship and personal prayer.

Click [here](#) to find out more and book

Thu 29 Jun 2023

‘With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God’ (Colossians 3.16): The Psalms in Prayer and Worship

Free. 10.00-12.00. Zoom.
Led by Canon Rebecca Swyer

This seminar will explore some of the challenges and opportunities the psalms bring to our prayer, worship and understanding of God.

Click [here](#) to find out more and book

Thu, 13 Jul 2023

The Song of Songs: The Mysticism of Love

Free. 10.00-13.00. Zoom.
Led by The Revd Dr Earl Collins

How did such a short but powerful erotic poem find its way into the canon of Holy Scripture for both Jews and Christians? Drawing on insights from the Christians mystics we will reflect on how they have

seen the spiritual life as a love affair with God and think about the place of passion and desire in how we pray.

Click [here](#) to find out more and book

Thu, 28 Sep 2023

Modern Methods of Biblical Interpretation

Free. 10.00-13.00. Zoom.
Led by The Revd Dr Earl Collins

Christians are often bewildered by what seems like a profusion of complex modern ways of reading and interpreting the Bible (such as form and source criticism, feminist criticism, etc.).

This seminar aims to bring some clarity to what such methods entail.

Click [here](#) to find out more and book

Thu, 19 Oct 2023

The Temple: the Jewish Foundation of Christian Faith

Free. 10.00-12.00. Zoom.
Led by Canon Dr Dan Inman

In this session, we explore something of the Temple’s significance for understanding who Jesus was, the significance of his death and resurrection, and also how ‘Temple theology’ might continue to shape the Church’s purpose and mission – particularly with regard to how we think about our worship.

Click [here](#) to find out more and book

Thu, 2 Nov 2023

Reading the Bible in Liturgy

Free. 10.00-13.00. Zoom.
Led by The Revd Dr Earl Collins

In this seminar we will compare and contrast how the Bible was read in the various versions of the Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship, to consider how Christians of the Anglican tradition have encountered the Word of God in their common prayer.

Click [here](#) to find out more and book

11th September

Penhurst Retreat Centre

Exploring being in Covenant with God”

Led by Alison Marchant

Alison Marchant is a Lay Reader at St Peters with St Michael’s, Bexhill. She is also a member of Bishop’s Council, Diocesan Synod, and the Diocesan Overseas Committee. She worked in Jerusalem for 9 years and has been involved there for over 40 years through CMJ (an Anglican Mission, since 1809).

This relaxed, interactive day will explore what covenant originally meant in Bible times, how it has developed over the years, and begin to uncover some of the amazing depth and riches of what it means for us personally to be in covenant with Almighty God today.

Striving for Racial Justice in the Diocese

In the last issue of Faith in Sussex, we reported on the first Black History Month service in the Diocese which took place at Chichester Cathedral. Our two Racial Justice Officers, Godfrey Kesari and Martha Mutikani, were commissioned. The event was made possible by people coming together in a united desire to address this important ministry. The event heralded a time of change.

“We were reminded to be kind to people who look like us but also to those who look different from us.”

One of the most significant outcomes of the Black History month event was a School hosting a Racial Justice Diversity Day. The Diocese also marked Racial Justice Sunday with two specially arranged services that took place in Crawley and Brighton.

Hundreds of pupils from local primary schools gathered at Steyning Grammar school to take part in a Racial Justice and Diversity Day in February. The day was so successful that there are now plans for similar events in other schools across Sussex.

Around 500 children of Year 5 from six different schools in and around Steyning arrived and looked excited to be part of the day.

The day was jointly organised by Mr Tom Leighton, Deputy Head, Demi and Billy, the Junior Ambassadors for Racial Justice at the school, who were both commissioned by Bishop Martin last year, Bola-Alysia Ayonrinde (National Education



Bola-Alysia Ayonrinde (second from the left) at Christ's Hospital

Lead for Racial Justice, Church of England Education Office) and Hannah Persaud (Growing Faith Networks Lead, Church of England) and Martha and Godfrey, the Racial Justice Officers of the diocese.

Tom, who welcomed the children and introduced the days programme and leader said, “The events of the day were immensely productive, and the outcome exceeded our expectations. Certainly, this kind of event is worth being held in other schools and possibly in churches and other organisations too.”

Revd Neill Stannard, chaplain at the school, and the local parish priest led the opening

prayer and shared a thought. He reminded everyone of the question which was asked to a teenage child – “What do you want to be when you are older?” The child replied, “I want to be kind.”

Tom said, “We were reminded to be kind to people who look like us but also to those who look different from us. This gave a terrific start to the day’s carefully crafted and packed programme.”

For Racial Justice Sunday, two events were held. One in Brighton, at St Peter’s Church which Bishop Will led, and one in Crawley, at t John’s which was led by Bishop Ruth.

PARISH NEWS



PANTRY POPS UP IN CHURCH TO TACKLE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

THE Pop-Up Pantry food bank in St Peter and St Paul in Rustington, near Worthing, opened its doors to eight people in October 2021. Eighteen months on the church supports 60 people regularly, including 25 families at the School Pop-Up Pantry every week.

RUSTINGTON is a vibrant coastal village in West Sussex but you could be blissfully unaware of the deprivation and despair steadily growing as rising food and energy prices meant many were struggling to survive.

The Trussell Trust saw record numbers of people seeking help between April and September last year, with 320,000 people forced to turn to the charity's food banks. That is a 40 per cent increase in comparison to the previous year (source: The Big Issue).

But God is clearly on the move in the Church, helping people navigate through these difficult times.

Strong partnerships and building relationships have been the key to dispelling the stigma around using food banks.

Husband and wife team Grace and Charlie Sims were instrumental in setting up the pantry.

Grace said: "While at the beginning we thought that we would be handing out bags of food it has become much more than that. Our mantra from the start was to welcome everyone and don't judge. We have got to know our pantry users, they are our neighbours and our friends. They open their lives to us, they ask for prayer, for fellowship and some have also started coming to church services.

"At Georgian Gardens School, the need was identified but the stigma of using a food pantry was a huge barrier until two wonderful volunteers came along, Ann and Alex, who changed things around. They pour out their love and kindness to everyone who comes to the School Pop-Up Pantry which now serves approximately 25 families every week.

"God keeps multiplying our food supplies. Our church parishioners continue to give dried foods on a weekly basis and there are collection points in the village shops for local people to drop off supplies. The village has certainly come together to share their provisions.

"Our pantry users are grateful to Rustington shops for all they are doing to get them through these tough times.

Willow and Eve provide good quality pre-loved clothing, Wadsworth provides fresh fruit and vegetable donations, Cook shop gives a selection of healthy ready meals and the Butcher and Deli has been instrumental in raising funds to ensure our users regularly receive fresh meat and cheese.

"People have been incredibly generous and we have been awarded grants from our local council. We started off with a handful of volunteers and we now have 23 dedicated volunteers who give their time and share their gifts to reach out to our community in need.

"We now provide our users the opportunity in a calendar month to attend three coffee mornings and a 'Pantry Social' on one afternoon where they can enjoy a hot meal, craft activity and time to get to know each other and our church.

"A lady who has been using the pantry since it opened in October 2021 said: "Since coming to the pantry things have happened to me. They say God works in mysterious ways and I believe that now. I remember when I didn't have washing powder and one of the volunteers said "I have washing powder for you". Then I had holes in my socks then we went to the pantry and there were some socks going free. This might be a coincidence but I'm starting to believe it's God."

Eighteen months on, St Peter and St Paul Pantry has become a community hub for local people and is now at the stage

where representatives from charities attend the Pantry Socials once a month to give valuable information and advice. Recent visits have been made by Christians Against Poverty, Citizens Advice Bureau and Southern Water.

"Our vicar, Rev Natalie Loveless, visits the schools and spends time with the pantry clients. As a result she is considered a trusted presence and a provider of a safe space for people to open up and share their experiences.

"Our curate Rev Laura Darrall also volunteers at the pantry once a month. People recognise our church leaders as approachable people who care about them and who want to spend time with them.

"The feedback from all sides is a testament to God's grace. Those who give food tell us how much it means to them to know they are doing something practical to help their neighbours. The pantry volunteers tell of the sense of purpose the pantry gives to their lives. One of our volunteer said, 'I want to come every week, this is the best thing I've ever done. It's what community and church should be about'.

"The pantry users who receive food, kindness and spiritual support feel they are a valued part of the community. We thank God for all he is doing in our church and we continue to be led by Him as we navigate through these difficult times."

Rev Natalie said: "We are all hugely grateful for all the love that Charlie and Grace have poured into this project, which comes from the heart. The pantry demonstrates how much the whole community cares about one another and they have used their gifts and experience with great generosity to serve God and neighbour."

The Big Issue has reported how the UK's rate of food poverty is among the worst in Europe as the cost-of-living crisis makes it harder for people to afford to eat.

Millions are being pushed below the breadline as food prices soar, with many struggling to feed themselves and their families.

Food prices increased by 16.7 per cent in the 12 months to January 2023. That is a 45-year high, with the costs of essentials rising at exceptionally high rates.

The Trussell Trust warned that need is outstripping donations for the first time in its history forcing it to launch an emergency appeal to ensure food banks can meet the "alarming level" of need.

Meanwhile, according to the Big Issue, more than 89 per cent of independent food banks reported increased need for their services in December 2022 compared with December 2021.

HISTORIC CHURCH BELLS RING OUT ONCE MORE



St John's Church, Piddinghoe, sits in the beautiful South Downs National Park near to Newhaven with its rich and thriving maritime history. It is a place of contemplation, reflection and peace.

Rudyard Kipling refers to Piddinghoe in his poem Sussex. "Where windy Piddinghoe's begilded dolphin veers" refers to the unique weather vane which sits on the church spire.

The bells at Piddinghoe have rung out for the last 300 years, celebrating countless births, deaths and marriages. They have rung every Sunday, calling people to practise their Christian faith. From graffiti in the bell tower to the impromptu messages

on the back of the organ, generations bear testament to an extraordinary relationship between music and faith.

However in 2018 strange noises were heard emanating from the bell tower. Brigid Simmonds, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) secretary at the church, explained what happened.

"We discovered the bells were tired and in need of much care and attention," she said.

"The largest tenor bell was found to be defective. Sadly, none of the bells could safely be rung full circle and only two could be chimed due to the poor condition of the fittings and frame."

Since the discovery, Piddinghoe Parochial Church Council has been working with a local resident who has extensive experience and a passion for restoring church bells in London and Sussex. He generously donated to the restoration in partnership with the National Heritage Lottery Fund

In 2022 the project received £34,000 from the National Heritage Lottery Fund but the entire project would cost £83,000. Thanks to the Keltek Trust, The Sussex Bell restoration Fund and help from the community and benefactors, the funds came in to complete the restoration.



The bells at Piddinghoe have rung out for the last 300 years, celebrating countless births deaths and marriages.

The Piddinghoe bells were removed in November 2022. The work was carried out by Blyth and Co, church specialists with 70 years of experience with bells. This company had recently re-hung and restored six bells at nearby St Peter's church in Rodmell (reported on here in Faith in Sussex) and restored three 15th century bells at nearby Iford.

To celebrate the restoration, Bishop Will was invited on St George's Day to bless each bell. They have all been named after a saint.

You can hear Brigid Simmonds interviewed by BBC Sussex Radio about the celebration, restoration, the naming and blessing of Piddinghoe's historic church bells on April 23. [Listen here](#)



Naming of the six church bells

The restored Bells from 1713 were named:

Tenor Archangel Michael:
6cwt 0qtr 13 lbs in A

Fifth Saint George:
4cwt 3qtr 9lbs in B

Fourth Saint Marcia:
4cwt 2qtr 0lbs in C-sharp

The recovered Bells donated by The Keltek Trust:

1820 Third Saint Thomas:
4cwt 0qtr 16lbs in D

1733 Second Saint David:
2cwt 2qtr 21 lbs in E

1733 Treble Saint Brigid:
2cwt 1qtr 6lbs in F-sharp



James, Maureen and Sue Shaw

FOOD LOCKER IS KEY TO SUPPORTING THOSE IN NEED

TWO food parcels a day are being collected from a food locker in the courtyard of Christ Church, in central St Leonards, one of the most deprived parishes in the diocese.

Christ Church has a history of outreach. It was built as a mission church specifically for the poor and has continued with its mission. The church started the local initiative of Surviving Christmas in the 1980s.

Maureen Harman, 74, has been the Churchwarden for five years and a member of

the church since 1986 when she moved to Hastings. She is also PCC secretary and a trustee of Christ Church Old Buildings Trust. Working with other volunteers in the parish, Maureen has been instrumental in ensuring the church continues its outreach and mission to serve the community, especially the growing number of people finding themselves in deprivation and hardship.

She said: “We offered the local council the use of our crypt for SWEP, the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol that councils had to initiate. In

2018 we offered our crypt as an emergency weekend night shelter throughout the winter in response to a call out from James Robinson who runs Surviving The Streets (STS). James asked on social media if there was anywhere they could get the homeless in at night out of the torrential rain.

“Thus the link with the charity was forged. James formed STS himself with his brother. He is a local who had connections to Christ Church as a boy. The charity was his idea. His energy and dedication is amazing. He’s all for promoting this sort of initiative.

Last year the locker gave out 755 food parcels, 24 homeless kits and 34 pet parcels.

“In February 2021 James approached me to ask whether they could place food lockers outside the church. Christ Church is prominently situated in the heart of St Leonards and given the needs of the area the PCC were in full agreement for this to happen as it was much needed. It was an essential part of our outreach again as the demand for help of this kind was increasing and the main food bank was on the outskirts of the town.

“After a lot of legal red tape and delays with ordering and delivery the food locker finally arrived in our courtyard. It provides food parcels, bedding and items for rough sleepers and items for pets. There are actually three lockers. One for food, one for equipment for rough sleepers and one for pet items. “

People needing the service contact the number displayed on the food bank and they are then given a pin number for the appropriate locker.

Maureen said: “It works extremely well as it gives people more privacy than going to the usual sort of food bank. We see the volunteers stocking it up regularly so it is well used.”

The church was able to fund the purchase and installation through its Sarah Brisco charity and is also supporting the charity by letting it use the courtyard for ice tents for the rough sleepers when the weather is really bad.

Maureen said: “I would say that this is very much the way forward as no storage facility is needed within the church itself, it doesn’t have to be run by church volunteers, although it could of course. The big plus point too is that it is open all the time. All the person has to do is contact the number on the food bank locker.

“We are so glad we’ve done it. We can direct people to it. It is a continuing part of our outreach in an already deprived area where hardship is hitting more and more people for the first time. There has been a

great team effort on behalf of the clergy, particularly Bishop Peter with his expertise, members of our PCC and James Robinson.

“We are continuing in talks with James re future initiatives that we can work on together. All of us at Christ Church would encourage other churches to go down this path. We may not be able to feed the five thousand but we are enabling Surviving The Streets to feed an ever-increasing number of people in our parish who, after all, are our extended family.”

Last year the locker gave out 755 food parcels, 24 homeless kits and 34 pet parcels.

James Robinson can be contacted on 0792 9176 462 or email support@sts.direct





ST BARNABAS IS HERE TO STAY

Thanks to a grant from the National Churches Trust (NCT) the church can now look forward to a bright future.

CHURCHWARDENS and the congregation of St Barnabas in Bexhill have much to celebrate even though it is on the National Churches Trust (NCT) At Risk register.

Thanks to a grant from the National Churches Trust (NCT) the church can now look forward to a bright future.

St Barnabas, in Sea Road, has a rich history and is held in special affection by the community.

The Grade II listed building, Bexhill's second largest, was designed by distinguished Victorian architect Sir Arthur Blomfield.

Plans for the future of the church are in line with its history of social outreach.

Churchwarden Angela Wyle said: "Sadly St Barnabas needs much repair and updating and has been placed on the A list of heritage at risk."

A feasibility study said: "St Barnabas is a treasure to celebrate, a lovely generous space, with some fascinating and unusual features, well worth investigating."

But major interventions were needed to meet the costs of major repairs and adapt the building to ensure a long-term viable future.

Angela said: "To support our plans to transition St Barnabas Church into a community hub, the National Churches Trust granted £9,000 towards paying for an architect to give a design for the future. For this, I would like to express my grateful thanks. Finding the best way forward takes bravery, thought and specialist help and the National Churches Trust grant has enabled St Barnabas to grapple with the challenges it faces."



The history of social outreach at the church was started by its first vicar, the Rev Mortlock. He supported the poor of the town, providing them with a nurse to help with their medical needs. Recognising the need for children's education, he opened the first primary school — the building now houses the Bexhill library.

St Barnabas's outreach continues today by accommodating the Homelessness Unity Group and other support work such as bereavement and support groups and other social activities. Of course, the primary purpose is worship and the pastoral care of the community.

The Parochial Church Council (trustees) are delighted to have the backing of Dr Edward Dowler, Archdeacon of Hastings, who has offered much practical advice and spiritual support.

He said: "I am delighted to be able to support the transition project at St Barnabas Church. Since it was built in 1891, the church has stood as a beacon of the Christian faith in its town centre location.

"We hope that the project will continue to enable it to do so for many more years, while also opening up this spacious and sumptuous historic building and the surrounding land for a range of wider community uses."

St Barnabas aims to be a fully committed community church and meeting point for everyone.

Deputy churchwarden Russell Meredith said: "This exciting news will help us prepare for the future. St Barnabas is a splendid building with a vast amount of space that needs to be adapted so that more in the community can make use of it.

"Currently we are without a vicar but we are looking for new ideas and volunteers to help expand our outreach and would be pleased to hear from anyone interested."

St Barnabas aims to be a fully committed community church and meeting point for everyone.

Please email judithdmeredith@yahoo.co.uk if you are interested in helping.



GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY AND FUNDING BODIES MEANS A CHURCH CAN NOW OPEN DAILY.

St Nicholas in Lavant has revamped its building with a contemporary high-spec kitchen. The church is used by a wide range of organisations from children's youth groups to Post Office services.

The building project received a £73,000 heritage grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for improvement works and more than £100,000 from several trust foundations and generous benefactors including the Duke and Duchess of Richmond.

Rev Martha Weatherill said: "We are delighted that this worthwhile building project has been completed thanks to our benefactors, meaning that this church will be available to the village's current and future residents for years to come.

"It is an important time to celebrate our heritage. The church which is over 1,000 years old was in need of renovation.

"It has been much used and much loved over the years by the church and community groups but was beginning to show signs of wear and needing upgrading and extending."

Completion of the works was followed by a heritage festival at the church. It brought together volunteers from the community, local historians and authors, staff from the Novium Museum and staff from the West Sussex Record Office to enjoy an evening with illustrated talks by local historians Andrew Berriman and Alan Green and a Eucharist with rededication and blessing by the Bishop of Chichester.



The church is used most days for community events, here you see it ready for the toddler group and then reset for the next day's Lunch House along with the lovely new kitchen

MISSION FUND

The Mission Fund aims to help more people in Sussex develop Christian faith and commitment to worship. Its grants to parish churches support imaginative new forms of local mission or new developments of current mission.

The committee meets twice a year to administer the grants. At its March meeting, Meg Coppin, youth worker for All Saints, Danehill, gave an encouraging update on the parish strategy for outreaching youth and families and the growth the church has made since her appointment. Meg will soon be handing over the reins and recruitment is under way.

Among the latest grants handed out are:

West Blatchington was awarded £30,000 for a family worker and recruitment is ongoing

Hurstpierpoint was awarded £30,000 for a family worker and recruitment is ongoing

St Edward the Confessor, Burgess Hill, was awarded £30,000 toward a children, families and school minister

St Bartholomew's, Maresfield, was awarded £20,000 toward a children and families worker

St Andrew's, Hove, was awarded £30,000 toward a children and youth worker

St John's, Broadbridge Heath, was awarded £30,000 towards a youth worker

Berwick PCC was awarded £26,000 for an education and outreach worker

Small grants were approved for **Bishop Hannington** and the **diocesan youth team (DYT)**.

The DYT's new initiative, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, has been a huge hit. Still in its infancy, the committee heard there are now 40 young people due to complete the Dof E this year alone with a growing list waiting to start.

The £1,000 grant will enable the organisers to buy resources and equipment which will help to increase participation for all. Some will be to buy rucksacks for those unable to afford their own.

Parish youth officers wishing to find out more about the scheme for young people should send an email

For Lewes contact **Jane Perry**

For Horsham contact **Lee Buck**

Deadline for submissions

Application forms must be received by October 6 for formal consideration at the next Diocesan Mission Fund Meeting on October 24.

If you wish to apply, contact Rob Dillingham, deputy director of apostolic life.

News from overseas

THE Diocese of Chichester has enjoyed companion Links with six dioceses covering nine countries for many years. The links are about companionship, praying for and learning from each other and meeting each other when possible.

The diocesan overseas committee has access to four funds, some of which are restricted to particular areas or type of potential support. In addition, there is usually an annual Harvest Appeal. There will be information issued soon for any parish or school wishing to support it.

Currently six young men and women are being supported in training, both full-time and part-time, at three colleges in Kenya. In the last issue of Faith In Sussex, you read about two of them, Michael and Haizel studying at Carlile College in Nairobi, Kenya, on page 43 [here](#).

In this issue Adam Tomalin a student from the diocese training with Crosslinks in South Africa, gives an update on his training and his life with

“We are incredibly grateful for your support”

his wife Nomfundo. They have both been studying at George Whitefield theological college in Cape Town. Nomfundo has completed a year of study and will continue with more counselling training and Adam will continue with the degree at George Whitefield College for another two years.

Adam said: “I grew up in Hailsham and attended Hailsham Parish church. I’ve been based in South Africa for a few years now. When I first came here, I was working in Johannesburg at Hope Church where I was an intern working with teenagers. I then became the youth worker. Nomfundo and I got married and then we came to Cape Town to study together. We have been supported by funds from the diocese. We’re incredibly grateful for your generous support and your prayer. Thank you so much.

“We’ll be keeping you in contact with our news, what we’ve been learning and the many exciting things happening here. We’re currently involved with a church called The Message Church and we have enjoyed the opportunity to be able to serve in the kids’ ministry team and the music ministry team as well.

“South Africa is a country that we both want to settle in the longer term. We both have a heart and a passion to see greater unity and diversity in this country which has suffered so much brokenness in the past with injustices and evils which still spill over into the present day. We long to see the gospel of Jesus Christ be the thing which unites people together. As God’s people, we are agents of change and transformation, to share the gospel and to witness to the transformation of Christ and his kingdom into the world.

“We also have got a huge heart for wanting to reach out, to care, to love and to show compassion to those who have suffered all kinds of abuse, particularly of women and children. We pray that the church will be a place of safe refuge for all people. We also want to train others to minister the gospel in a way that is appropriate, that is holistic, that isn’t just Bible bashing but actually in a way that is going to show the love of Jesus and his word and his kingdom into those lives.

“We are incredibly grateful for your support.”

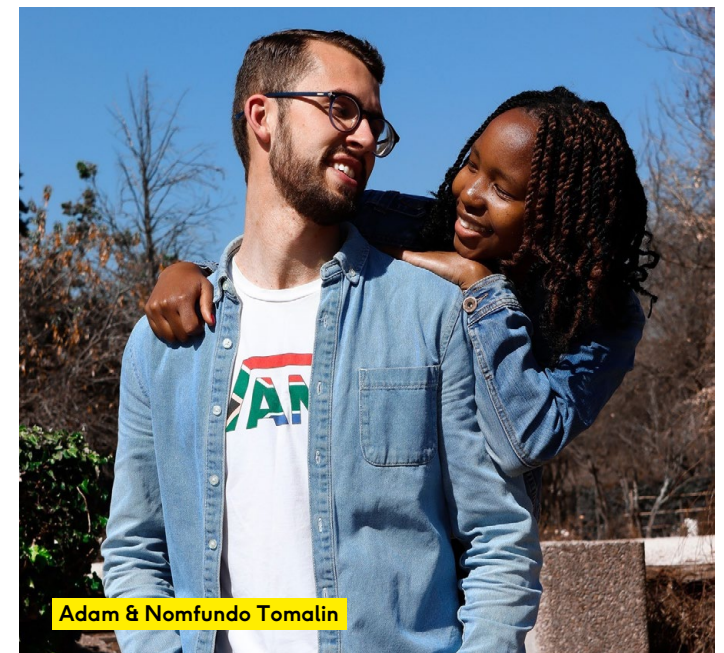
The diocese considers that building projects and income-generating projects are best supported by individual parishes. Similarly, schools are best supported by individual schools or parishes.

If your parish would like to consider supporting a parish or school or would like to sponsor a student in one of our link dioceses, contact Rev James Campbell, companion links officer.

Do you feel called to support the work of the Anglican church worldwide? There are vacancies in the diocesan overseas committee that support the projects of our companion Links. If you are interested in joining the committee, contact Bishop Ruth.



Rev Patience Wanzalla, until recently the principal of Carlile College, Nairobi, Kenya, visited the UK in April and spent part of Holy Week visiting the Diocese of Chichester. The highlight of the visit was attending the Chrim Mass at Horsham, where she chose to renew her ordination vows. This was followed by lunch, hosted by Bishop Ruth, where she met two of our priests, Paul Doick, Rector of Henfield, Shermanbury and Woodmancote and Laura Darrall, Assistant Curate of Rustington. Also present was her host, Margaret Lumley, a member of the Diocesan Overseas Committee. Patience is pictured here outside St Mary Church in Horsham with her host Margaret and the Bishop of Horsham Ruth Bushyager.



Adam & Nomfundo Tomalin



How Mothers' Union is empowering women

A MOTHERS' Union project in Sierra Leone aims to empower women, change their lives and lift them out of poverty. Karen Hill, diocesan president Mothers' Union Chichester, tells how it will work.

Mothers' Union (MU) in Sierra Leone continues to support women who are key providers for themselves and their families, unlocking their economic and social possibilities through literacy, savings and business training circles.

Sierra Leone faces challenges including limited economic opportunities, lack of education and healthcare, weak governance and the effects of civil war. As a result, more than 60 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, making it one of the poorest countries in the world.

The MU project there can make a real difference to the lives of women and families. With financial support, we can provide financial services, training and mentoring to help women develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. We can ensure they have access to the resources they need to expand their businesses, increase their income and pull themselves and their families out of poverty.

This project will also support vulnerable women to take a more active role in leadership positions.

MU will empower women to be the agents of change in their own lives. In the first year, we will do this by using trained professionals to train five members of MU leadership. In turn, 16 voluntary facilitators (VF) will receive training from these MU leaders. The VFs will establish 16 literacy circles in the diocese, recruiting 25 members per literacy group. In total 400 people will directly benefit from the first year of the project. We estimate a further 5,411 from personal, church and community networks will indirectly benefit from the training.



Through facilitating safe learning groups women will be encouraged to take on leadership roles in their communities and church, helping them to break down gender inequalities and allowing community spaces to address harmful social norms which enable gender-based violence and act as barriers to empowerment of women in rural communities.

By the end of the project, 70 per cent of beneficiaries are expected to improve their literacy, business and agricultural skills. A further two thirds are expected to start or expand their existing business or agricultural activities. Beyond the end of the project, 30 to 50 per cent of women are expected to be in leadership or decision-making roles at a community level and 60 per cent engaged in ongoing income-generating activities.

By the end of the project, 70 per cent of beneficiaries are expected to improve their literacy, business and agricultural skills.

An improvement in the levels of household income and/or food security is also expected in at least 50 per cent of households assisted. In addition, the project hopes to contribute to a reduction in gender-based violence at household and community level as well as improvements in the levels of basic health, hygiene and nutrition.

MU has great experience running church and community-based training projects. Our Literacy and Financial Education Programme has previously run in Sudan, Tanzania,

Ethiopia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since 2017 more than 900 trained facilitators have been engaged with our training projects, helping at least 5,000 members who remain engaged with MU's work as they see the direct change they facilitate in their communities.

Mary Sumner House will be putting resources together suitable for parishes or schools – please contact Karen at chichester.diocese@mothersunion.org



A DAY EXPLORING CURSILLO

I WAS invited to attend a Cursillo Day, known as an Ultreya, at the Church of the Good Shepherd on Shoreham beach.

I had been curious to know more about the Cursillo movement. I'd heard about it and published articles about it but could not really get my head round what the purpose of it was or what kind of people it would appeal to.

It is actually a simple strategy - to know love and follow Jesus through prayer, study, and action. It is a spirit-filled community equipping our parishes to enable God's love to be shared by everyone.

Cursillo literally means short course - Cursillos de Cristiandad is short course in Christianity. Its

foundations grew out of Spain after the 2nd World war. One aspect of it is the two or three-day courses in Christianity which are held twice a year.

Cursillo in Chichester Diocese came about in 2000 through the involvement of Bishop Lindsey Urwin, who was then Bishop of Horsham and a keen supporter of Cursillo.

Judy Short has been the current lay director for Chichester Cursillo since May 2019. I'd met Judy at other church occasions and she invited me to attend an event and write about it for Faith In Sussex.

I was surprised at how many churches were represented from across the diocese. There were groups from many

parishes including St James the Less Lancing, Shoreham Beach, St Mary Goring, Pagham, Rustington, Ardingly, Ferring, Findon and St John the Evangelist Preston. There was also a special guest, Libby Bradshaw, the lay Director from Southwark Diocese.

The Rev Andrew Bennison, vicar of Shoreham was in attendance. He told me: "It was a joy to host members of Cursillo from across the diocese at the Church of the Good Shepherd. As a vicar there are few things more encouraging than simply being able to 'sit back' and let lay people take the lead, sharing their faith with one another and finding mutual support.



"Cursillo is a vibrant example of what we seek to nurture more and more in our benefice - people who desire to step forward and claim their faith for themselves, nourished by prayer and worship in the parish church and then sent out as resilient, compassionate disciples in the world."

The day rushed by with shared testimony, group sessions, a lively service and a bring-your-own lunch with lots of home-made cakes and tea to enjoy afterwards. There was also a pop-up shop to browse in, filled with lots of home-made items for which donations were invited.

Rev Gary Ingram, who is already a Cursillista and a recently retired vicar, was one of those attending. He is currently taking some time out and he was exploring whether Cursillo was something he wanted to get more involved in.

He said: "I thought I'd come along and see how it all hangs and what goes on. You can feel the warmth of fellowship here. I think it is a good thing. It empowers, encourages and inspires. You are encouraged to take the next step, but it is not forced.

"I'm free to choose things and one of the things I may well choose is this."

The social aspect of this meeting is a key part of "how it all hangs". It is a very welcoming space where you can make lasting friendships - some people go back over 20 years.

Judy Pullin, a retired midwife and teaching nurse, is a church member of St James the Less in Lancing and has been a Cursillista for 23 years. She said Cursillo gives you structure for the rest of your life. She said: "My first experience with Cursillo was that it was well organised, well-resourced and a supportive place where one can share in the Christian life, their hopes, progress and disappointments, without judgment."

In groups, known as group reunions, we were encouraged to talk about a situation in the past week where we were able to support someone with prayer. The other themes for discussion were study and action. It is very humbling to hear other people talk about their experiences and even more so when they share their testimony.

You can feel the warmth of fellowship here. I think it is a good thing.

One of the most moving testimonies we heard was Judy's. She told us her heartfelt story of a life that was not perfect. Life decisions did not work out quite the way she had thought. She felt she had let other people down. She talked of being tested and challenged during a three-year period following the death of her mother which ended with her attending St Mary de Haura Church in Shoreham. She was led on a journey that brought her into contact with the Cursillo movement which has been the bedrock of her faith ever since.

I commend Cursillo to anyone who feels they would like to explore a little more about their faith journey, where you can joyfully explore God's will by knowing, loving and following Jesus in an encouraging, supportive and welcoming space.

You can contact Judy on lay.director@chichestercursillo.co.uk



EDUCATION NEWS

Church school wins CBeebies prize

HARTING Church of England Primary School beat tough competition from across the UK to win a nationwide CBeebies competition.

Staff and pupils created a heart-warming video to the song Calling Out by Cbeebies star Andy Day and his band the Odd Socks, which was the theme tune for this year's Anti-Bullying Week.

Their reward for winning the TV show's anti-bullying prize was a live performance at the school by Andy and the Odd Socks.

Nick Tidey, headteacher, said: "It's a fantastic achievement for our very special school and my warmest congratulations go to the children and staff who put so much thought and care into creating a wonderful Harting and the Odd Socks video.

"Our video has now been viewed upwards of 15,000 times and has been shared and liked by a number of celebrities (including Hugh Bonneville and Tamzin Outhwaite), the Department for Education as well as the Anti Bullying Alliance and Andy and the Odd Socks.

"I am incredibly proud of all of the children and the community in spreading such an important message far and wide."

You can watch the video on the school website [here](#)

Bronze global award for pupils

Earlier this year a Global Neighbours Award was achieved by South Bersted Church of England Primary School. The school focused on two themes, the environment and social equality.

Global Neighbours is an accreditation scheme run by Christian Aid in partnership

with the Church of England's Education Office. With free training and resources, Global Neighbours helps schools develop a culture of "courageous advocacy".

Deputy headteacher at South Bersted Rachel Bush led the project in the school. She said: "One aspect that drives our school vision is to create 21st century global citizens and as a result, we ensure our curriculum has opportunities for children to respond to global events.

"We want to equip our children to have the courage to stand up for injustice and social inequality whenever they see it. We feel that children will gain a greater understanding of the world and feel empowered."

To gain accreditation the schools must meet specific criteria. South Bersted was highly commended for its bronze award and comments included:

"Teaching and learning across the school is providing a

strong basis to develop pupils' understanding of global citizenship with several curriculum initiatives providing pupils with opportunity to ask big questions including some surrounding refugee status.

"Collective worship is providing opportunities for pupils to reflect on global issues on a regular basis. This is through special assemblies and collective worship plan. There are examples where the content of assemblies has influenced pupils' choices and responses.

"It is pleasing that pupils are given opportunities to engage in informed action. Whilst many of these have been focused fundraising activities the range of issues considered is wide."

There are encouraging starts to pupils sharing their learning with the wider school community. This has been achieved by hosting events and exhibitions in school, including a Fairtrade café.

Rachel said: "South Bersted school's journey is now to make links with schools and organisations in other countries and try to further our impact through our local community."

The scheme is open to all primary schools in England and Wales, regardless of faith. Schools can apply for three levels of accreditation, bronze, silver and gold. You can find out how your school can create global citizens by visiting the Global Neighbours website [here](#)

Leavers' celebrations

THE Diocese Education Team is putting finishing touches to a series of special services of thanksgiving and blessing for all Year 6 pupils leaving Church of England schools this year. All of them will be moving to their senior schools in the autumn.

The theme for the 2023 Leaver Celebrations this summer is Anointed. There will be eight services at different locations across the diocese including

Chichester Cathedral from June 19 to July 6.

Archdeacon of Chichester Luke Irvine-Capel, chairman of the Diocesan Board of Education, offers thanks and prayers as more than 3,500 Year 6 pupils attend the services.

He said: "We have recently joined in the celebration of King Charles's coronation. At the heart of this ancient rite was the moment of anointing during which the King was sanctified and strengthened by the Holy Spirit to follow the anointed One, the Christ, who came not to be served but to serve. As we pray for those leaving our Church of England Primary schools this summer we ask that they, too, will rejoice in the dignity that they have as children of the Kingdom of God and that during their time at primary school they would have come to know and love Jesus who continues to invite them to follow him." The Diocesan Board of Education works alongside 154 schools across Sussex.



THE GOD OF Abraham Praise

OUR Chichester Diocese is encouraging us to keep this year as The Year of the Old Testament so it seems appropriate to focus on a hymn which clearly links with those Hebrew Scriptures to which we refer as “Old Testament”. The hymn The God Of Abraham Praise is the work of one Thomas Olivers. Orphaned at an early age, he lived a wild youth until one day he heard the famous preacher George Whitefield. The fiery sermon led to his Christian conversion and to his becoming, like Whitefield, one of the preachers of John Wesley.

In 1770 Thomas visited a Jewish synagogue in London where he was moved by listening to the singing of the Hebrew Yigdal, which is about the articles of Jewish Faith. The tune so haunted him that he wrote a Christian hymn to accompany the traditional Jewish melody. The resulting hymn, The God Of Abraham Praise, was included in the Methodist hymn books of the Wesleys and from there was included in many other hymnals. It is very lengthy hymn and when used often some verses are omitted.

BEFORE THE SAVIOUR’S FACE THE RANSOMED NATIONS BOW

The connection with the Old Testament is very clear, as in the opening words “The God of Abraham praise, Who reigns enthroned above”, Abraham being a key figure in the Biblical story. The Lord is often referred to, even by Jesus himself, as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The promise in Genesis 12 v1-3 that through Abraham’s descendants there would be blessings for all people is a key part of the unfolding Gospel story. However, the context of the hymn is also clearly Christian and biblical. The thought of God’s kingship is embedded in the hymn. He is the one “who reigns above”. He is “the Lord our King, The Lord our Righteousness”. He is “The God who reigns on high”. This is a recurring theme in the Old Testament, challenging and reassuring in our troubled world at the beginning of 2023.

It is also clearly a hymn with Christ in view, especially in the imagery of the nations gathered in the presence of the Lamb of God: “Before the Saviour’s face the ransomed nations bow”. It is a hymn very suitable for use in procession, with its many verses and with its feel of the people of God journeying on “with Jesus in our view and through the howling wilderness our way pursue”. The hymn is traditionally sung on Trinity Sunday: “Before the great Three-One they all exulting stand”. Above all the hymn is a great outpouring of praise to the God who is “Abraham’s God and mine”, reminding us of the debt that many of us as Christians owe to our Jewish forebears.

The late Frank Colquhoun aptly described the hymn as “a magnificent piece of writing, combining Hebrew imagery and idiom with distinctive Christian writing”.

Hymns We Love

A MUSICAL WAY TO EASE LONELINESS

CHANCTONBURY Church has been involved with a pilot project which aims to reduce loneliness and isolation and support those who are bereaved using the power of hymns.

Hymns We Love, which is particularly aimed at older people, has been in production with the churches of St Mary’s, Washington, and All Saints, Buncton, part of Chanctonbury Church, taking part.

It launches on June 1.

It is a series of talks focusing on different well-loved hymns. At the start of a session, a hymn is played and sung. Then there is a talk exploring the history of the hymn and its writer and the meaning behind the words. The hymn is then sung again, there is a prayer and the opportunity to take part in a small group discussion.

Pippa Cramer, of Holy Trinity church in Claygate, Surrey, was co-founder of Daily Hope, a free phone line set up at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic with the Church of England and Faith In Later Life. One of the popular features of Daily Hope was Hymns We Love.

HYMNS WE LOVE WAS RECORDED IN THE CHANCTONBURY PARISH AND BEARS WITNESS TO THE CENTURIES OF WORSHIP THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THESE SPECIAL CHURCHES

Andrew White, head of operations for Chanctonbury Church, explained how the partnership with Hymns We Love came about.

He said; “We were approached by Pippa Cramer to be part of this important community project. Pippa and her colleagues had identified that while older people face challenges including loneliness and dementia, many have a residual affection for Christian hymns, some of which they may have sung in years gone by. Hymns We Love uses these wonderful hymns as a means of sharing the gospel. It is hoped this may be a catalyst for local churches and individuals who have a heart for evangelism and

seniors’ ministry to reach out to older people local to them and share God’s love.”

Hymns We Love was recorded in the Chanctonbury parish and bears witness to the centuries of worship that have taken place in these special churches.

Bishop Martin commended the resource saying: “Hymns are an important element in our worship and in personal devotion.”

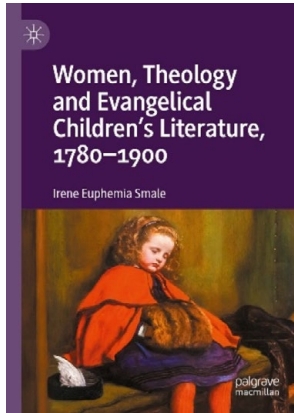
Pippa said in an interview with **Church Times** that after many requests for Hymns We Love to be written up and published, the resource is now in production and will soon be available for churches to use nationally.

She said: “My big dream and prayer is of giving hundreds of thousands of older people all over the country the opportunity to discover how much God loves them through Hymns We Love.”

This is an online resource which can be downloaded once you have signed up to the website. Take a look at the introduction [here](#) and episode one.

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

BY REVD JOHN TWISLETON



WOMEN, THEOLOGY AND EVANGELICAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, 1780 -1900

By Irene Smale

THIS book provides a wealth of fascinating information about many significant and lesser-known 19th century Christian authors, mostly women, who were motivated to write material specifically for children's spiritual edification because of their personal faith. It explores three prevalent theological and controversial doctrines of the period, namely Soteriology, Biblical Authority and Eschatology, in relation to children's specifically engendered Christian literature. It traces the ecclesiastical networks and affiliations across the theological spectrum of Evangelical authors, publishers, theologians, clergy and scholars of the period. Rather than dismissing Evangelical children's literature as simplistic, formulaic moral didacticism, this book argues that, in attempting to convert the mass reading public, 19th century authors and publishers developed a complex, highly competitive genre of children's literature to promote their particular theologies, faith and churchmanships and to ultimately save the nation.

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-19028-5>

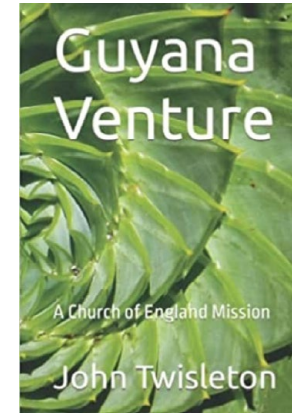


THIRTY WALKS FROM BRIGHTON STATION

By John Twisleton
Illustrated by Rebecca Padgham

THIS is a practical handbook for exploring the city and its surrounds reaching beyond the daytripper's duo of pier and Pavilion to 266 sights with commentary on a good number of these. The walks are listed in order of length from one mile up to 18, 21 circular and nine using public transport for the return journey. Detailed walk routes are provided supplemented by schematic illustrations to give the overall feel of each walk and its sights. John Twisleton describes his motivation being linked as a historian to love for Brighton and Hove as a walker to the replenishment of body, mind and spirit attained in that pursuit and as an environmentalist to the provision of a handbook for recreation with low-carbon footprint. The paperback and Kindle are available via thirtywalks@gmail.com

Amazon 2022 £11.99 ISBN 9798816786676 174pp

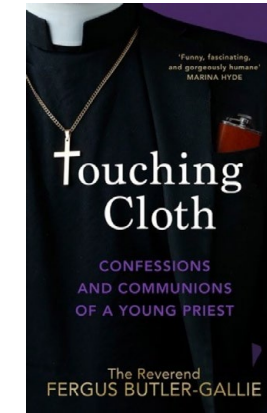


GUYANA VENTURE

A Church of England mission
By John Twisleton

The beauty and challenge of Guyana, formerly British Guiana, has drawn a succession of missionaries from the Church of England to South America. Closure of Guyana Diocesan Association in 2022 is a milestone in this mission partnership of which this book is a celebration. Addressing two centuries of missionary enterprise Guyana Venture is framed by John Twisleton's service to the Diocese of Guyana reflecting his commitment to it as well as to the Anglo-catholic faith of fellow missionaries. Mindful of the ambiguities of the colonial past he writes proudly of the Church of England's venture, especially helping raise up priests to serve Guyana's vast interior crowned in 2021 by the consecration of an Amerindian bishop. Available in both Kindle and paperback.

Amazon 2022 £9.99 ISBN 9798419307384 96pp Foreword by Bishop Peter Wheatley

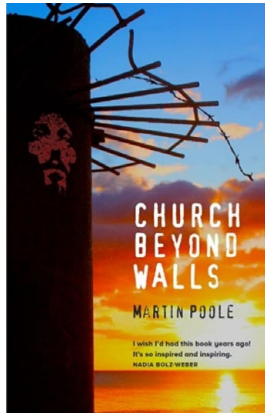


TOUCHING CLOTH

Confessions and Communion of a young priest
By Fergus Butler-Gallie

"Ow about a lifetime of being asked whether budgies go to Heaven by strangers on buses?" This is not the most attractive challenge of priestly ministry but it is part of a witty, readable capturing of it by a young priest whose ministry is sadly now on hold. Touching Cloth as a title builds from his choice of all-round detachable clerical collar which can be expanded by a new purchase when it gets tight. As a priest I identify with the "tight" times he describes as well as his joyous scenarios as when he helps an asylum seeker from Iraq to become part of the flower arranging team. This humorous rollercoaster of a book has the power to shake ministerial apathy.

Bantam Press 2023 £16.99 ISBN 9781787635753 208pp



CHURCH BEYOND WALLS

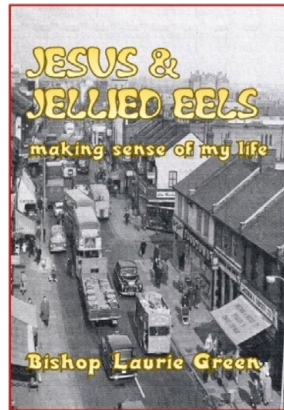
By Rev Martin Poole

Nadia Bolz-Weber writes the introduction to *Church Beyond Walls*, which tells inspiring, informative and occasionally funny stories of how a group of people took Christian spirituality outside church buildings to engage a world increasingly uninterested in religion, God and faith. From imaginative and wide-ranging experiments, it draws out principles to inspire local churches to express their faith in their communities and it shares liturgical and other resources developed for these occasions. Based in Brighton and known as Beyond, for more than ten years this group of dreamers, artists and provocateurs have experimented with public art, created light shows and walking meditations, partnered with retailers to create spiritual shop window trails, celebrated the festivals of the church in secular spaces, used folk traditions and more to introduce people to the Christian faith. Their goal and the aim of this book is to help local churches create opportunities for epiphanies: moments when the divine can break into human experience.

Martin Poole is the vicar of St Luke's Prestonville, Brighton

The book is to be launched on June 18 but is already available for pre-order on Amazon. £16.99

Canterbury Press Norwich – ISBN 978-1786224828 208 pp



JESUS AND JELLIED EELS

Making sense of my life

By Bishop Laurie Green

Former Bishop of Bradwell Laurie Green, who is now an assistant bishop and a spiritual director in the diocese, recently published his autobiography the title of which, *Jesus and Jellied Eels*, links to his being born an Eastender.

His colourful story, beginning with work in a jellied eel factory, relates studies in London and the USA, working with Hell's Angels and singing in New York nightclubs. The book goes on to describe his journey from parish ministry in Birmingham to training priests in the Aston training scheme back to East London and to being a bishop serving the people of Essex. Another book of his, *Let's Do Theology*, has been acknowledged as a servant of contextual theology.

Brimstone Press 2022 £9.99 ISBN 978-1906385903 292pp

Cathedral News

THE REVEREND CANON SIMON HOLLAND INSTALLED AS INTERIM DEAN OF CHICHESTER

The Reverend Canon Simon Holland was installed as Interim Dean of Chichester by Bishop Martin during a service of Choral Evensong on Sunday 30th April.

Simon has been Vicar of Saint Paul's, Chichester and St Peter's, Westhampnett since 2012, and until recently was the College of Canons' representative on the Cathedral's Chapter.

Simon's appointment will enable a sense of continuity and flourishing at the Cathedral until a permanent successor to the Dean can be appointed. He will remain in post for the duration of the vacancy.



THE CLOISTERS KITCHEN & GARDEN OPENS AT CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL



A warm welcome awaits at the new Cloisters Kitchen & Garden, located within Chichester Cathedral's 600 year-old Cloisters. It offers an exciting new menu featuring the bountiful local produce from the county. New café operators, Seasoned, are delighted to have recruited their full onsite team from the local area too. Do pop in for refreshments or to sample their new menu.

RESILIENCE IN CLAY

Chichester Cathedral presents its summer exhibition, *Resilience in Clay*, a collection of sculptural works from the artist Kate Viner.

Since 2019 Kate, an artist who exhibits internationally, has been working with local charity Sanctuary in Chichester to produce creative opportunities for asylum seekers and refugees in the Chichester District.

Through developing this new body of work, celebrating human diversity and resilience, the artist has sought to bring Chichester residents together to explore different cultural values, faiths, and build connections.

The exhibition comprises seven sculptural portraits. Each of the subjects are connected by the fact that they are building a new life in Chichester, some having found refuge from persecution based on conflict and religious, social and or ethnic discrimination.

Resilience in Clay will be on show from 12th June – 31st August 2023 and will be supported by a programme of events including an Artist's Tour and a portrait drawing workshop. Activities will also be taking place as part of Refugee Week, from 19th – 25th June 2023.



Chichester Diocesan Pilgrimage Committee
invites you to join the
Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage
£200 including travel



Illuminate

SHINING AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD

YOUTH PILGRIMAGE

MONDAY 31ST JULY - FRIDAY 4TH AUGUST 2023

Contact **Mrs Vicky Townsend**

Email : victoriaell@standrewwesttarring.co.uk

Address 1 [Ecmoad Road](#), Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 8RN

Mobile 07800 855187

Age 11-18 years

Application Form: www.sswshchichester.weebly.com