

FAITH IN SUSSEX

The diocesan publication reaching church communities across Sussex



Bringing Faith to Life

A Church School's Inspiring Art Project of Creativity & Collaboration

Pages 38-39

MEET THE DEACONS

/14-15

Four new candidates share their journey to ordination.

FIND YOUR ROLE

/16-17

Three of our church members reflect on their lay ministry course

KEEPING PEOPLE SAFE

/22-23

Meet the team building healthy safeguarding cultures in our parishes.



A chance to walk and explore,
think and worship,
with lots of food and fun!

Choose from three options:

28-29 Jun (ages 11-17) in West Sussex

12 Jul (ages 18-30) in Chichester

11 Oct (ages 11-17) in East Sussex



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**DIOCESE OF
CHICHESTER**
TO KNOW · LOVE · FOLLOW JESUS



This year we celebrate 1700 years of Christian faith summed up in the words of the Nicæan creed.

The words of this fairly short statement unite Christians across the world today, as they unite us with the generations of the past. What do these words mean to you? It is often the case that we take familiar things for granted, and gradually overlook their value and the impact they once made on us.

Every Easter we are given an opportunity to renew our commitment to Christian faith, sealed in the sacrament of baptism. We do this by rehearsing the words of this creed.

In Robert Bolt's play, *A Man for All Seasons* the soon to be martyred Thomas More tells his favourite daughter, Margaret, that when we take an oath, we hold ourselves in our hands, like water. And if we open our fingers – meaning if we are inattentive to what we believe, how we live and behave, we needn't hope to find ourselves again.

Finding our true selves is a challenge in an age of fake news, superficial popularity, and a pronounced loss of respect and understanding for our past.

Our celebrations this year in the diocese of Chichester, and the wider Church catholic, invite us to recover ourselves as children made in the image of God, loved by our creator, and destined, by his mercy, for the perfection of life in his presence.

+Martin



Celebrating
Faith

Look out for...

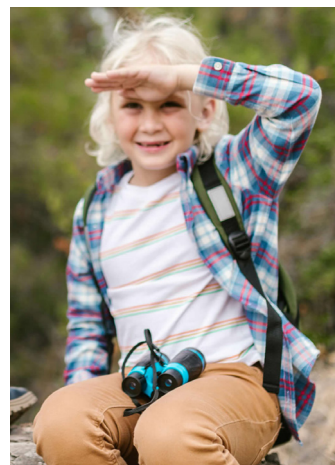
family Camp

Friday 11th to Sunday 13th July 2025

Join us for a weekend of fun, worship and family time!

Don't miss out on the opportunity to come together with other families from across the diocese. We will gather in the heart of the beautiful South Downs National Park to enjoy a weekend of fun activities and adventure, combined with worship and family time.

Designed primarily (but not exclusively) for families with primary school aged children. The weekend will start on Friday afternoon and finish at lunchtime on Sunday. The cost for the weekend is £25 per person* (under 5's free) including two evening meals and use of all the Stedham Campsite facilities.



For more information about the weekend and how to book tickets, speak with your church leader or visit:

www.celebratingfaith.co.uk

* Bursaries may be available for disadvantaged families



DIOCESE OF
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CHICHESTER 950 /10-11

A celebration involving our schools, churches and Cathedral

COMMUNITY GARDEN GROWS /33-35

Read how a church connecting with its neighbours is seeing shoots of growth

ACCESS FOR ALL /20-21

Join the Disability network and help church communities be more welcoming and inclusive for everyone.

ARTICLES OF FAITH /24-30

We asked clergy, the dean and our Lay Training Officer to reflect on an item that has been important to them in their faith journey.

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

If you would like to discuss an article for a future issue of Faith in Sussex please contact the editor: lisa.williamson@chichester.anglican.org

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Chichester Diocese



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Diocese of Chichester

NEWS

New Safeguarding tool

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team has introduced a new tool, the "Parish Dashboard," to help Incumbents, PCCs, and Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) manage safeguarding compliance more simply and efficiently.

Already in use across most dioceses for over six years, the Parish Dashboard replaces the "Simple Quality Protects" (SQP) system, which has served Chichester parishes for eight years.

The new system is designed to provide real-time information and enhanced monitoring, building on the structures already established by SQP.

The aim is for all parishes to be using the Parish Dashboard by the end of the year. During the transition, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team will offer online and in-person drop-in sessions to support parishes. For more information, visit the diocesan safeguarding website. <https://safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org/>

Exploring vocation

A vocations day took place for anyone wondering whether God might be calling them to ordained ministry in the Church of England. The event at St Mary's Church in Horsham welcomed guest speakers Bishop Ruth and the Rev Giles Carpenter, diocesan director of vocations.

Clergy conference 2025

The title of this year's clergy conference, to be held at the University of Kent in Canterbury, is The Mystery Of Faith. As well as the three keynote speakers, there will be a variety of workshops to take part in. To book and find out more, visit the booking page on the diocesan website. The conference will run from September 7 to 10. Please book your place if you have not done so already.



Prayers for May Camp



May Camp is our flagship youth event that takes place at Plumpton Racecourse over the bank holiday weekend 23 – 26 May. Join us as we pray for the team who are in the final stages of getting the event ready. Let's pray for the group leaders and for God to meet every person who is onsite. For each person's heart to be open – for seeds to be sown. Let's pray together that this is the time for people to turn to Jesus and start a relationship with Him.



A beautiful day at Chichester Cathedral for the commissioning of the Authorised Lay Ministers. Over 50 people completed the modules and were presented with their certificate by Bishop Will. You can read about three of them on pages 16-17

Services for the ordination of priests

These services mark the initiation of new deacons into the priesthood and the ordination of new priests. They take place on:

On June 14, the following will be ordained by the Bishop of Horsham:

Carole Linda Darling, Quintin Peter Delpont,
Zoe Louise Eborn

On the same day Timothy William Newton is being ordained priest by the Bishop of Lewes.

On June 15 the following will be ordained by the Bishop of Horsham:

Scott Michael Canadas, Thomas Stephen Dare,
Nathanael Edmund Gillett,
Matthew Simon Porter.





Churches mark VE Day

Bunting, flags and poppies were on show across Sussex as our church communities gathered for events to mark VE Day May 8 and to remember those who never returned home. Bishop Martin spoke of VE Day on BBC Radio Sussex and Surrey and said: "It is a day filled with rejoicing and happiness and it brought an atmosphere of hope to the nation."

Cursillo celebrates 25 years

Cursillo in Chichester has been helping pilgrims across the diocese delve deeper and explore what the Holy Spirit has in store for them for more than 25 years. Anniversary celebrations will take place on June 14 at Wychcroft Retreat Place in Redhill. It is open to all those in Chichester who have been on pilgrimage with Cursillo. You can find out more at www.chichestercursillo.co.uk/ or speak to Trudi Kearsley, lay director, at Trudikearsley@hotmail.co.uk

School leaver services



A great honour

Kay Haffenden, the church warden at Shoreham Beach, was presented with the British Empire Medal for her work with early years children's provision at the day nursery Kamelia Kids in Goring, Worthing, where she is chairwoman of the nursery trust. Kay is also a school governor of a senior school with extensive experience in education and the lead trustee for safeguarding.



KAY WITH THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF WEST SUSSEX LADY EMMA BARNARD

This June and July more than 3,700 Year 6 children from 133 Church of England primary schools will attend one of our 14 leavers' services held across the diocese. As part of schools' involvement in the year of faith celebrations, we will have our own version of the Nicaea 1700 poem written by Rev Laura Darral and each of our diocesan bishops will lead at several of the services as we reflect on the theme of "belonging".

Our service celebrates the time these young people have spent at their Church of England primary schools and is an opportunity to pray for them as they head off to secondary school in the autumn.

Are you ready?

The Church of England's Energy Footprint Tool is now open for churches to enter energy use from 2024. The data collected from the tool will help your church understand its carbon footprint and will mean you may be eligible for grants to help kickstart your net zero projects. The Church of England's Energy Footprint Tool is open until 30th June 2025. For any queries or support with completing the EFT, please contact steve.collins@chichester.anglican.org

To help you get started, watch the video here: <https://youtu.be/NGMZxmnlQA>

Chichester

950

This year the Diocese is celebrating two extraordinary milestones: the 950th anniversary of Christian ministry in the Diocese of Chichester and the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed.

Designated as a "Year of Faith" there has already been a series of deanery celebrations bringing together parishes, schools, and communities to celebrate the gift of faith.



We believe!



2025



Celebrating 950 years
of the Diocese of Chichester &
1700 years of the Nicene Creed



**Celebrating
Faith**

www.celebratingfaith.co.uk

The Prayer of St Richard

Thanks be to thee,
O Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits
thou hast given us,
for all the pains and insults
thou hast borne for us.
O most merciful redeemer,
friend and brother,
may we know thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly,

DEANERY CELEBRATIONS ACROSS SUSSEX

Every deanery in the Diocese hosted a special service between January and February 2025. Each one was led by at least one of our bishops. These gatherings, from All Saints in Crawley Down to St Paul's in Chichester, were opportunities for reflection, thanksgiving, and renewed commitment to the Christian journey.

Kate Bailey is the rural dean for Rye. She said: "Being the furthest deanery away from the Cathedral in Chichester, it's important that we come together with other deaneries. The recent Deanery Celebrations really helped - with people from the Cathedral and Diocese coming to our neck of the woods. Some people really began to realise that they are indeed part of this wider Diocese, not just "that Deanery on the fringes of Kent"!

A member of the cathedral also attended each celebration. In Rye, Vanessa Baron, Canon Treasurer at the Cathedral, presented the programme of events planned for the Cathedral during the year. She said: "Many people have never visited our beautiful Cathedral, and so it is wonderful that groups are coming to us on pilgrimage. They should be wonderful days hopefully reinforcing the fact that we too are part not just of the Diocese, but of the Church of England too."

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: A HUB OF HERITAGE AND INNOVATION

Chichester Cathedral, at the heart of these celebrations, continues with its dynamic programme under the banner "Chichester950."

The launch of Religion, Revolution & Reformation, an interactive exhibition tracing the Christian story in Sussex from 1075 to the present day, has attracted many visitors and continues until 15 November.

A concert, which took place earlier this month, commemorated the 60th anniversary of Bernstein's Chichester Psalms and was also premiering a new composition.

In the summer on June 15th the Cathedral will host TrinityFest on the Green. This is a community festival celebrating the Cathedral's foundation with food, music, and cultural events.

In October, an immersive art and sound installation will illuminate the Cathedral's 950-year history with a dazzling show.



CHURCH SCHOOLS: ART AND THE NICENE CREED

Church schools have played a vital role in celebrating the emergence of the Nicene Creed, using art to explore and express the core roots of Christian belief.

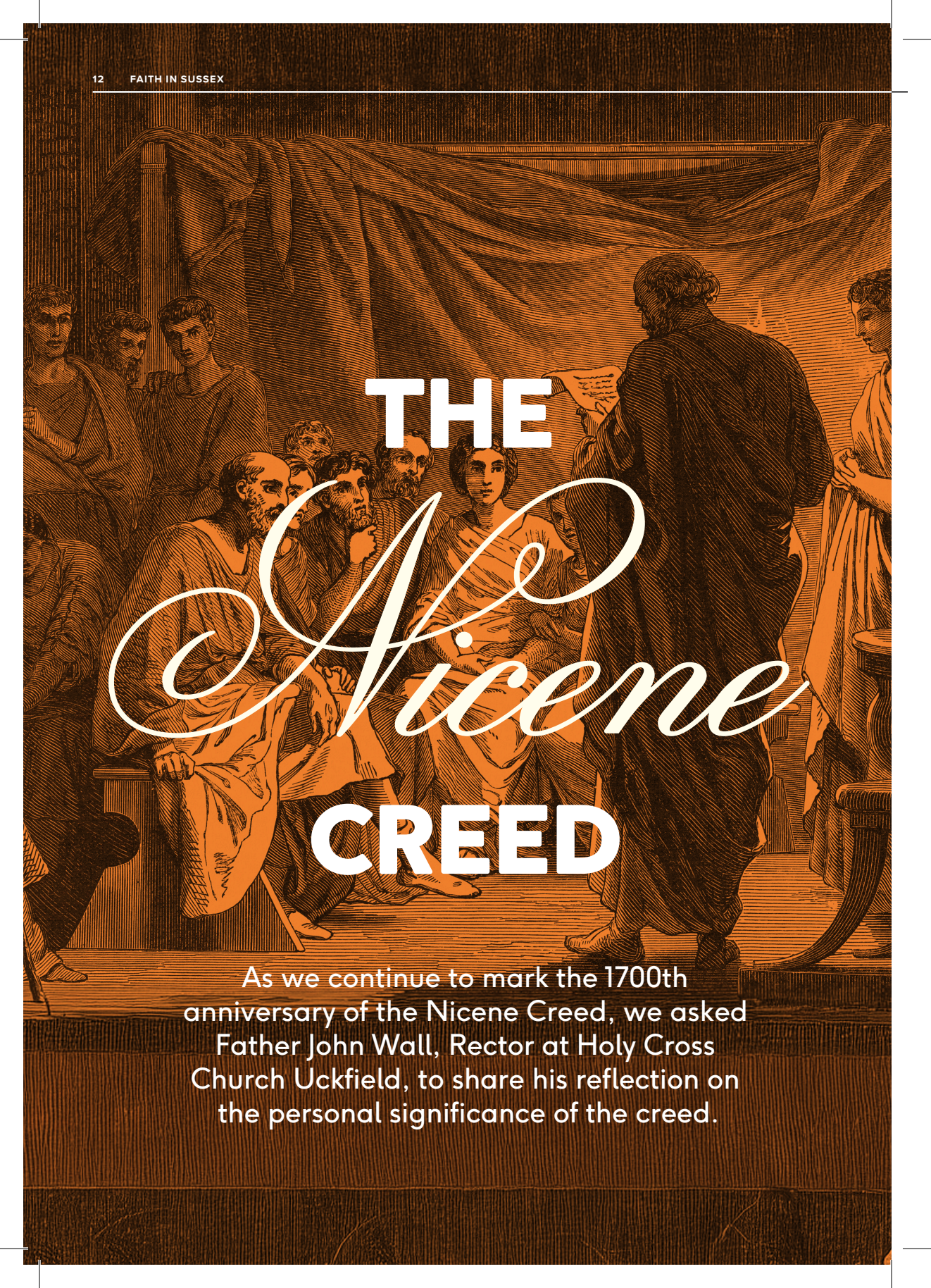
At St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, in Crawley, each class reflected on a section of the Creed, creating a frieze of seven panels that brought the Creed to life through scripture, spoken word, and visual art. The project culminated in an Easter service, with the artwork later displayed in the parish church. Read more about this on pages 38 and 39

LOOKING AHEAD: YOUTH PILGRIMAGES AND FAMILY CAMP

Celebrations continue into the summer with three youth pilgrimages, including a weekend walk on the South Downs and a day pilgrimage ending at the Cathedral, open to secondary school students and young adults

In July, families from across the diocese will gather at Stedham Campsite for a weekend of worship, workshops, and community at the Family Camp-an inclusive event designed for families with primary-aged children but open to all.

As the Bishop observes : "These celebrations serve to inspire and strengthen our faith as we seek together to know, love, and follow the Lord Jesus in 2025 and beyond.



THE *Nicene* CREED

As we continue to mark the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, we asked Father John Wall, Rector at Holy Cross Church Uckfield, to share his reflection on the personal significance of the creed.

In my experience, familiarity doesn't so much breed contempt as oblivious apathy and no more so than with the Nicene Creed. Having been ordained now some 36 years, I must have cheerfully recited it at Sunday morning Eucharists getting on for 2,000 times without really registering it at all.

At best, I have had my mind distracted by the logistics of the service – keeping my eye on the intercessor that they haven't forgotten they are on the rota for this week or checking that there are enough ministers of communion. At worst my mind can wander off in any direction (rather like my contemplative prayer time) and I realise that by "One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic" I shamefully have been going over my shopping list for Monday and ruefully I return to the matter in hand.

All in all, I am hugely grateful that in this 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, from being a liturgical bit part player, the Creed is finally taking centre stage during the Diocese of Chichester's "Year of Faith".

Here in Uckfield during Lent we had a series of sermons with different clergy speaking on different clauses, shadowing the Diocesan Lent Course. I had "We believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church" – appropriately – on Mothering Sunday.

Forged out of dissention, argument and desperation, the Creed gives us a foundation of hope, an anchor which roots us into the ground and mystery of God.

Forged out of dissention, argument and desperation, the Creed gives us a foundation of hope, an anchor which roots us into the ground and mystery of God. As a community, it reminds us that there has never been a time when the Church on earth (as opposed to Heaven) has been amicable, sorted and unshakeable. You only need to look at St Paul's stropky and exasperated letters to his 1st century young churches squabbling among themselves about questions of faith, Christian belief and behaviour, to realise that "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose".

The 4th century church was made up of broken, fragile people touched and transformed by a sense of the divine, trying to communicate that sense the best they could. It's how things were then and it's how things are now.

On a personal level, entering into what "I believe" for each one of us is a challenge: do we try to be "one"? Are our lives "holy" and consecrated to God? Are we truly "Catholic" and inclusive in our reaching out to the world? Are we authentically "apostolic", in handing on the faith from our generation to the next?

In our personal lives, however calm or buffeted about by life each one of us is, listening Sunday by Sunday to these oft repeated, smoothed over words, the Creed can be a lifeline to enable us to engage with God afresh, aided and abetted by those who formulated it 17 centuries ago. Over the next few Sundays, I will make a real effort to pay attention and to let the poetry of the Creed speak to me anew.

CATHEDRAL HOSTS DEACON ORDINATIONS

The Right Rev Ruth Bushyager, Bishop of Horsham, will ordain four candidates as deacon at a service in Chichester Cathedral on Saturday, July 5, at 3pm. Family and friends will be among the congregation at this significant moment in their lives.

Each of the candidates will then begin their ministries as curates serving in parishes across the diocese. After a year of working and training in their parishes, these deacons will – God willing – be ordained as priest.



Alex (Alexandra) Barlow

St Peter's Brighton

Originally from South East London, I grew up in a family with a strong tradition of vicars and missionaries, though I never imagined I would follow in their footsteps. After years of resisting my calling, I've had the privilege of working in mental health, school chaplaincy, and leading a café-style church service. I'm excited to join St Peter's Church in Brighton with my husband Charles and our children, Grace and Charlie, as we grow together in faith and Community.



Andrew Dyvic James

Clayton with Keymer

My journey to ordination began years ago during worship, leading me to spend time in a monastery where I discerned my call to priesthood. I later immersed myself in parish life at All Saints Hove, drawing on my previous experiences as a chef, pub landlord and shepherd.

After training at Ripon College Cuddesdon, I'm thrilled to return to the Diocese of Chichester with my wife Synne and our two children to begin my curacy in Clayton with Keymer."



Jack (James) McDonald

St Leonard's Aldrington

I grew up in Guildford and studied in Swansea before joining a church revitalisation project in Gosport, where I met my wife Kaitlan. My call to church leadership began in 2017 during prayer at a festival where I experienced deep joy from the Holy Spirit. After training at St Mellitus, I'm excited to join the St Leonard's team and continue serving Jesus through the gifts God has given me. Outside ministry, I enjoy history, cooking and supporting Crystal Palace FC.



Monique Mendes da Costa

Slaugham and Staplefield Common

I've always been drawn to community and hospitality as reflections of God's welcome into His family. This inspired my call to ordained ministry, inviting others to meet Jesus and share in His table. Originally from London, I've worked as a student pastor, in community engagement roles for charities and even ran a dog-walking business. My husband Abraham and I love exploring new places, swimming and bargain hunting. As I complete my training at Wycliffe Hall, we're excited to join the West Weald Parish."

Please pray for those being ordained and the parishes in which they will serve.

FIND YOUR ROLE IN CHURCH MINISTRY



The Authorised Lay Ministry training programme in the diocese provides flexible skills-based training for lay people to equip them in public ministry and serve their local parishes.

There are currently nine electives to choose from, covering pastoral care, mission, chaplaincy, worship and liturgy, preaching, care of creation and eco church, rural ministry, small group leader and youth and children.

Rev Bev Miles has been teaching on the pastoral elective. She said: "The pastoral elective is more than just a course, it's a transformative journey that reshapes faith, ministry and personal identity. The privilege of guiding students through this process is profound and I love to see how God inspires people as they journey through this course. There is a transformation in their understanding of faith, ministry and who they are in relation to God and each other."

For those who have undertaken the pastoral elective, the experience has been equally compelling.

One said: "I don't think when I began that I really knew what pastoral care was."

Others described newfound insights into ministry and personal growth.

The elective fosters a sense of wonder and joy in those who take part. One said: "I am humbled and blessed beyond words as to how the future might unfold with the knowledge I've gained."

Participants leave with a renewed sense of possibility. Another said: "The most helpful part has been making it all seem relevant and possible for me."

Beyond theological study, it cultivates interpersonal connections, with one former student saying: "Care for each other was a real blessing."

Roger Philips from Holy Trinity, Forest Row, recently completed the leadership and mission and found it a transformative experience.

He said: "The course has expanded my perspective on what it means to 'do church' and how the Church of England can adapt to reach diverse communities. One thing I valued was being able to think through some valuable insights into the various ways people engage with faith and the importance of contextual mission - that we meet people where they are.

"The course encouraged me to think creatively about how to connect with those on the margins and I've felt challenged to really think about how I can help to create and shape community in church.

"I really believe that the mix of teaching, discussion and reflection has helped me to develop a deeper understanding of God's mission and my role within it. I'm really looking forward to putting this all into practice and I would highly recommend this course to anyone seeking to revitalise their approach to leadership and mission."



Ann Beard is the churchwarden at Portslade and Mile Oak parish. She said that after 50 years of worshipping at the Good Shepherd, Mile Oak, and holding various positions including churchwarden, server and chorister, she was searching for something more within the parish.

She said: "The 2024 advert for the ALM courses jumped out at me, especially the worship and liturgy module. I felt that God was calling me to do this so that I could help our busy vicar. I asked Fr David Swyer to sanction my application which he and our PCC did. Unfortunately I then broke my ankle and had to defer to the 2025 course. Maybe this was a test of whether I would still want to do it? I'm so glad that I did. I've learnt so much and I've met people from other parishes, learnt about different ways of worship and liturgy and I've been enthused to implement new services bringing the faith and love of God to our parishioners."



Steve Law from Thakeham parish said he was drawn to the pastoral course because it offered a wide range of relevant content from active listening to praying with and for people, all in the context of Jesus's ministry.

He said: "In all it consisted of six in-person sessions. This elective was facilitated by Reverend Beverley Miles, affectionately known as 'Rev Bev', who was incredibly generous and supportive to me and my fabulous cohort of nine. We all absolutely loved it and found the whole experience wonderfully enriching, spiritual as well as immensely practical.

"It has helped me on my discernment journey and deepened my faith as well as equipping me to be a pastoral carer. I am really looking forward to being an active member of the pastoral care team and offering support to those that need and want it."



Greg Moore has just started in the role of officer for lay ministry and training. He said: "This is a wonderful opportunity to continue to develop the role of the laity within the church. We will look at widening the areas available for study and hope to be able to run some courses within deaneries rather than centralised at Church House. Please contact me for more details at Greg.Moore@Chichester.Anglican.Org."

"We all absolutely loved it and found the whole experience wonderfully enriching"

Focus on the finances

ST MARY DE HAURA GIVING BANNER

By Dr Jonathan Smith
Licensed Reader at St Mary de Haura

At St Mary de Haura, we believe our giving and donations banner is an important part of our wider communications. It speaks not only to our regular congregation but also to the many visitors who step into our town centre church - a landmark at the heart of Shoreham for over 900 years

Our welcome panel, featuring a photo of the congregation, highlights the people-centred nature of our church life. In the quiet chapel, a prayer banner invites visitors to enjoy moments of peace. Our Friends banner reminds everyone of the ongoing costs to maintain this historic building, which receives no government or central church funding-relying instead on the generosity of local residents and supporters worldwide

The wording of our donations banner, developed with the help of the Diocesan Generous Giving Adviser, is open and friendly. It emphasises that St Mary's is here for the whole community - not just as a place of worship, but as a green space, a venue for events, and a home for generations of Shoreham families.

We hope the banner, with its vaulting imagery at the top, not only expresses our need for funds but also lifts our thoughts-and our aspirations-to heaven.

Welcome to St Mary's

Thank you for visiting,
and we pray that you find
peace and hope here.

We would really appreciate your
support to help us to maintain
this Grade 1 Listed Church.

You may not realise it, but it costs £325 a
day to keep this church open to meet the
needs of our community, welcome
visitors, and maintain a living and
worshipping presence here.

The costs of building maintenance and
restoration are in addition to this.

We receive no grants from
government, and rely on
donations to help us to meet our costs.

We are grateful for donations
large or small.

Please use the card machine
provided.

Thank you

We hope you enjoy your visit.



NEW VIDEO ON CULTURE OF GIVING

The latest "Journey of Generosity" testimonial video focuses on the experiences of

seven Anglican parishes and you will hear from both clergy and laity about their transformative paths towards a culture of giving. Each segment of the video offers unique insights and practical wisdom that will resonate with different aspects of church life. You can view the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbzLXUocGdw>

EASYFUNDRAISING UPDATE

Easyfundraising continues to be an important component of many churches' "Journey of Generosity" strategy. To date, more than 220 parishes have signed up to the programme and new churches are being added every month. As well as providing an income stream, many participating churches now recognise the missional value of Easyfundraising, as they involve not only members of their own congregation but friends, family members and the community. If you want to hear how this works in practice, please watch the videos of Rev Jamie Gater and the team at St Dunstan's, Forest Row here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zU4fXcjhDkl>

GROWING GENEROSITY

Molly Reuter, parish adviser (finance, stewardship and governance) has been involved in the first roll-out of Cornerstone, a pilot launched in March by the Church of England to give parishes the tools to improve the culture of generosity within their churches.

The platform combines the parishes' financial data alongside responses from a generosity survey completed by members of the congregation to highlight the areas of strength in generosity within the parish as well as areas that may need more focus.

Once this work is completed, parishes are able to choose any of the 50 pathways related to their focus area in generosity, for example legacy campaigns, and work together to complete step-by-step actions to improve this area of generosity.

Molly said: "As part of the pilot scheme, six parishes in our diocese were identified to 'test' the platform. The feedback we received from the workshop was that parishes really valued the opportunity to spend time together as smaller groups to discuss the culture of generosity within their parishes and the actions they can take together to move forwards.

"There is an extensive grants database on the platform with support and guidance on how to write applications. There are 650 grants, curated for churches, covering a range of purposes, values and geographic areas. It is updated weekly and is the biggest range of grants currently available to churches."

North Mundham with Merston and Hunstan is one of the six parishes on the pilot programme. Rev May Barker, rector of the parish, said the workshop gave her church group a great opportunity to engage together with the Cornerstone platform.

She said "I was surprised at how straightforward the platform was to navigate and how many pathways there were to choose from. As a group we identified the areas we wanted to explore and one was around legacies. This was something we had been thinking about for a while, but didn't really know where to start. The pathways give you step-by-step advice and ideas which has given us the confidence to plan a legacy campaign for the future."

Molly said: "We are hoping to roll out the scheme across the diocese and welcome any enquiries or questions in the meantime."



ACCESS FOR ALL

Chichester Diocese now has two disability officers whose aim is to make church communities more welcoming and inclusive for everyone.

Rev Jo King is the vicar at Holy Cross North Bersted in West Sussex and has been diocesan disability adviser since last year, originally alongside Reverend Annette Hawkins.

She said: "Annette brought a wealth of compassion, lived experience and professional knowledge to the role. Tragically, she died suddenly during an operation before we could fully realise our shared vision. She is deeply

missed and we are grateful for all she contributed to this work."

Rev Brendan Martin is the rector at St Alban's Church in Frant, East Sussex, and was appointed recently to serve alongside Jo in parishes across Sussex.

He was inspired by his son Malachi, who uses a wheelchair and lives with complex medical needs. Brendan said: "Together, we are keen to build a

Chichester disability network, bringing together anyone in the diocese with an interest in and passion for access for all."

Jo said: "Neither of us are professionals in the field but we both bring a strong personal commitment and hope to be a point of connection for experts, people with lived experience of disability and others who share our passion for accessibility."

Her church has just celebrated the completion of an access project which involved creating a ramp and building a toilet.

She said: "As part of the diocese disability advisory team, I am often heard to say 'accessibility is more than just ramps and toilets'. This is true but sometimes it is exactly about ramps and toilets.

"At Holy Cross it has taken us over four years to see the project from first sketch to finished work and we are delighted with final result. Our new slope and steps have enhanced the entrance of our church, they have made it easier to tell that the church is open and welcoming of everyone. Once inside our new toilet has not only provided a great facility but also tidied up and refreshed our entrance hall.

"The new access has helped our regular congregation enter the church easily and safely but has also been a great benefit for weddings, funeral and baptisms. Visitors with double pushchairs, wheelchairs and walking frames can all easily find their way into the building and the toilet means those who have travelled to be at a special event can be comfortable before the service begins.

"The hardest part was raising the funds. We were able to source 30 per cent of the money from within the congregation through donations and fundraising efforts, 60 per cent from grant awarding bodies and

"Their work supporting those living with disability and in raising awareness is a vital part of the life of the council for the promotion of the Common Good."

the remaining ten per cent came from an archdeacon's loan which we will aim to pay back over the next few years.

"It was lovely to invite some of our special guests to officially open our new facilities and hold a wonderful Songs of Praise. Lucy, one of our regular church members, talked about what the ramp meant for her, saying 'it is so great to be able to just go to church on my own, I don't have to wait for someone else to get the ramp or help me through the other doors. This means that I can help out more by being on the welcoming rota. It makes me feel like my gifts are valued by the church'."

Jo and Brendan are keen for others to join their disability network which will meet about six times a year on Zoom. Anyone who is interested should email jo.king@chichester.anglican.org or brendan.martin@chichester.anglican.org.

Jo said: "While we may not have all the answers (or a secret money tree to fund ramps), we do have resources and connections that can help you find the support you need. Please don't hesitate to get in touch. We look forward to working with you."

Bishop Will said he was delighted that Brendan has agreed to become one of the two disability officers for the diocese. He said: "Their work supporting those living with disability and in raising awareness is a vital part of the life of the council for the promotion of the Common Good. Disability affects the individual, but it also affects families, community life and cohesion. Each of us is made in the image of God and loved unconditionally by a God who equips us with gifts of grace. The Body of Christ is not complete without us ensuring that we are a welcoming church for all where these gifts can be used to build and proclaim the Kingdom of God."



How we keep people safe...

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team leads on safeguarding casework across Chichester Diocese. It provides training and support to build healthy safeguarding cultures in our parishes. The members work closely as a team, bringing together different experiences that support the work.

Colin Perkins has been the diocesan safeguarding adviser (now officer) in Chichester since May 2011. Prior to that he was senior probation officer in public protection teams in Birmingham, Sussex and Surrey.

He said: "As the DSO I hold the lead responsibility for the leadership and management of safeguarding in the diocese. Practically, this means managing the safeguarding team, overseeing both the casework and the developmental side of the work we do, which includes both safeguarding training and the development of good safeguarding practice across the diocese.

"Since arriving in this diocese 14 years ago, I have seen huge progress in our safeguarding culture and practice. There is no room for complacency, but parishes across the diocese should have confidence that they have achieved, and can continue to achieve, excellent safeguarding practice."

Vicky Taylor, a former detective sergeant with Sussex Police, has been the deputy safeguarding officer for the diocese since 2019.

She said: "My specialisms include child protection, complex sexual abuse cases, domestic violence, vulnerable adults and managing sex offenders.

"Having retired from Sussex Police I wanted to continue my vocational work. I am passionate about safeguarding and to that end have found working for the diocese immensely rewarding.

"The one message I would like to convey is don't be afraid to pick up the phone if you have a query, we are here to help."

Julie Gross is the assistant diocesan safeguarding officer. She said: "I have had this role since 2021. Prior to this I was employed as one of the independent reviewers for the PCR2 review for Chichester Diocese.

"I retired from Sussex Police in August 2020 as a detective sergeant after serving 30 years. My specialist areas were safeguarding vulnerable children and adults, investigating and supervising serious offences against children and adults, managing sex offenders and latterly

being the detective sergeant working at the multi-agency safeguarding hub – working within a multi-agency team to review, risk assess and respond to safeguarding."

Vicky Peck is an independent sexual violence adviser working alongside the safeguarding team. She is employed by a charity called Survivors' Network and before that was a probation officer in Brighton.

She said: "I offer support to anyone who has experienced sexual violence and/or abuse within the Church. I can provide emotional and practical advocacy support. I can support survivors to understand their options in terms of possible reporting to the police or making a complaint via the Church CDM procedures and many other areas.

"I can also provide support and information to clergy or others within the church who support survivors who may not want or need to work with me."

Emma Lambert joined as the safeguarding administrator last year. She previously worked in Christian charity administration in both the USA and UK for 30 years, mostly in personnel and staff development.

She said: "My role is varied and interesting. As well as organising clergy DBS checks, I also administrate these safeguarding training process and support parish safeguarding officers with safeguarding compliance and other general enquiries."

"I often say that safeguarding shouldn't be scary. There are no silly questions and no one expects you to get things right 100 per cent of the time."

Charlie Parker also joined the team last year as the learning and development officer. Her background was in education and she worked in schools for many years. She said: "I do much of the leadership training for Chichester as well as looking at ways that we can support parishes in maintaining a healthy safeguarding culture."

"Safeguarding prevention is about developing inclusive and open cultures where people feel able to share concerns and be themselves. I think it is a little like gardening - we need to do it a little often to keep on track."

Charlie also works as a consultant, supporting schools and charities with both safeguarding and better SEND provision.

The team is always happy to hear from you. It can be contacted safeguarding@chichester.anglican.org or by calling 01273 421021. Its website contains lots of support and information and can be found on our homepage [here](#)

Meet the team



Colin Perkins



Vicky Taylor



Julie Gross



Vicky Peck



Emma Lambert



Charlie Parker

Articles

THE VERY REVEREND DR EDWARD DOWLER, DEAN OF CHICHESTER

Since becoming Dean in September last year, I think it is fair to say that I have fallen in love with some of the artistic features of the cathedral, not only because of their artistic merit but because of the way they lead us towards Christ. Chichester is unusual among Anglican cathedrals in being the home to both ancient and modern artwork. The following (among many others) are particular highlights for me.

A: THE CHICHESTER LAZARUS RELIEFS

These stone wall carvings are thought to date from the early 12th century. They were hidden for many years but rediscovered behind the choir stalls and moved to their current position in 1829. They may originally have been part of a larger screen with additional scenes. Among the earliest surviving pieces of figurative art in the cathedral, they show astonishing skill in the depiction of the faces, bodies and even hairstyles of the characters depicted.

The two panels illustrate the story of the raising of Lazarus (John 11.1-44). In the first, Lazarus's two sisters, Mary

and Martha, kneel before Jesus, expressing faith that he has the power to raise their brother from the dead. In the second, to the amazement of onlookers, Christ calls Lazarus out of his tomb.

The reliefs powerfully depict the faith of Mary and Martha that God will hear and answer prayer. The raising of Lazarus also points forward to the resurrection of Jesus himself, who tells Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11.25)."

B: THE CHAGALL WINDOW

Installed in 1978, this window was commissioned by Dean Walter Hussey and designed by Marc Chagall (1887-1985). It illustrates Psalm 150, the final psalm in the Old Testament, originally used for worship at the temple in Jerusalem. The text was suggested by Dean Walter Hussey, but Chagall's own Jewish background made it a natural subject for him.

At the top of the window, the tablets of the ten commandments act like a keystone holding up the entire composition. King David, traditionally the author of many of the psalms, rides beneath them. At the centre of the window is the Menorah (the seven-branched

candlestick used within Judaism). Reflecting the words of the psalm, different people praise God, according to Jewish tradition, by singing, dancing and playing musical instruments. The ten praises of the psalm and the ten commandments are reflected in the ten panels of which the window is composed.

Hussey's original theme for the window was "The Arts to the Glory of God". Chagall said "every colour should encourage prayer" and he saw his work in stained glass as a form of prayer.

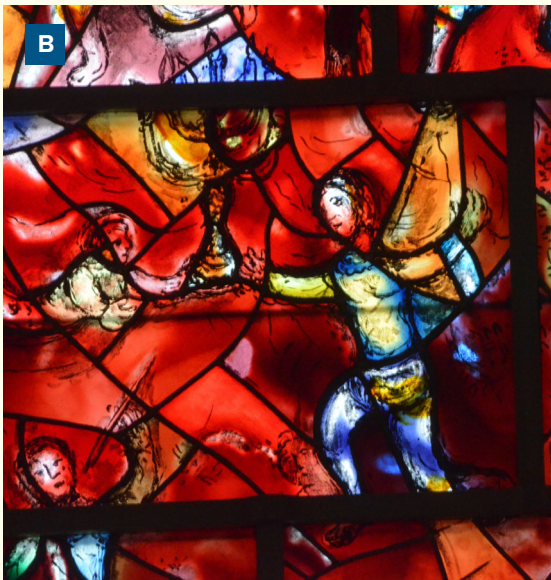
C: CHRIST ELIZABETH FRINK

Our latest acquisition, and the only work of art currently in the cathedral that is known for certain to be by a female artist, is a large bronze sculpture of Christ's head in the St John the Baptist chapel. It was made in 1983 by Elizabeth Frink (1930-1993), one of the most significant sculptors of the 20th century, and was originally part of a wider series of commissions for churches around Britain. It was given to Pallant House Gallery in 2020 and is on loan to the cathedral by kind permission of the director and trustees.

of faith.



A



B



C

Articles of faith....

MOTHER ARWEN FOLKES VICAR OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN EASTBOURNE

When I was admitted to Holy Communion at the age of seven, dressed in a white dress and veil, I genuinely thought it was the best thing I had ever experienced. After the standard

Catholic preparation and having made my first Confession, I was utterly convinced that the priest was placing the Body of Christ on my tongue and that I was a very fortunate little girl.

I admit to being a rather pious seven-year-old and so I took it very seriously when I was given a little prayer book containing an examen, prayers of preparation and daily prayers written in childlike language. This book, along with my baptism candle, reminds me of how things began and how they came full circle under the steadfastness of the God I so readily accepted and loved as a child.

The faith had been mostly shared with me by my father and his mother, my grandmother.

Nan's Jerusalem Bible held all our family birthdays and anniversaries within its pages and she would take me to Mass whenever I stayed with her. This handing on of the faith is so powerful and explains why my red rosary is one of the most important items of my faith.

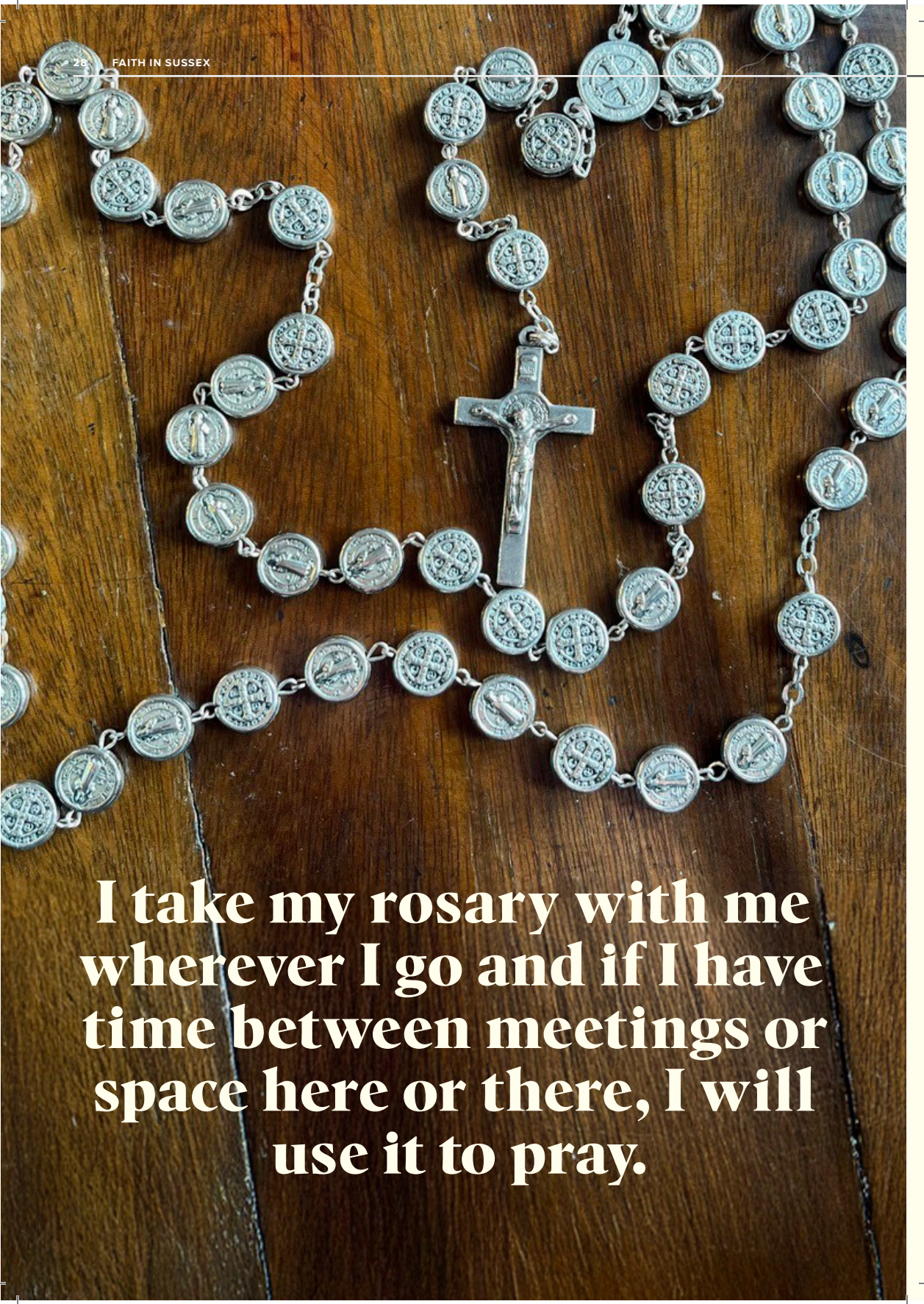
My father went on a school trip to Rome in the 1960s and while he was there, he bought his mum (my nan) a rosary, which was subsequently blessed by Pope Paul VI. In the year before she died, my nan sent me this rosary and its provenance has made it vital in my prayer life. When I pray with it, I feel the faith of generations with me in every decade prayed.

Our journey with the Roman Catholic Church came to a rather abrupt end when my parents divorced. My mother lost her faith and as we lived with her, the life of faith I had assumed as normal all but disappeared. This led to much wondering and wandering and explains why the bronzed plaque in the picture is so important to me. With an Augustinian sense of retrospect, I later saw that even though we were not "bidding God" as a family, God was still with us. I have this on my study wall so that whoever I am speaking with can also see that God is present, whatever the circumstances of their life.

Finally, the black book on the right-hand side of the picture is incredibly important to me. My father was one of the last generation of serving lighthouse keepers and we lived at The Lizard Lighthouse in Cornwall until my parents split. Down in the Engine House of the lighthouse, he came across this standard-issue Book of Common Prayer, embossed with the arms of Trinity House, the lighthouse service of England. The monarch named inside is Queen Victoria, which makes it around 150 to 200 years old. My return to Christ led me into the Church of England and fostered a great love of the Prayer Book. Again, when praying with this book, which I use often when leading services, I have that same sense of the many generations that have gone before me. Such roots are vital to my faith.



Even though we
were not “bidding
God” as a family,
God was still with us.



**I take my rosary with me
wherever I go and if I have
time between meetings or
space here or there, I will
use it to pray.**

Articles of faith....

**FATHER FELIX SMITH
VICAR OF SOUTH
LANCING AND SOMPTING
AND LANCING WITH
COOMBS**

I'm not one for keeping things. Marie Kondo - the Japanese guru on tidying - suggests

that the first step to happiness in life is discarding what you don't need. If she's right, I should be the happiest person around. In fact, I sometimes go a little too far. The children will ask where that special picture they did a few weeks back has gone, or what happened to the certificate they put on the fridge some time ago. If they can't find something, a shoe or a school bag, they mockingly call out "I expect Daddy has put it in the bin".

One child has followed my lead and her room is spotless, with everything in its place, and so all we disagree on is whether books should be ordered in alphabetical order of title or author (the former, obviously). The other has rebelled and I have to fight my way through teddies and Lego simply to open the door. I'm not one for knick-knacks, ornaments, clutter or things in general. I'm no ascetic, but things have their time and then you move on.

So, how to write an article on items that have been important to me in my faith journey?

What has been of enough personal value that it has survived the cull? It has to be something I use regularly, something worth keeping. Hmm...

Just before I was ordained I went to a meeting of clergy and laity to discuss Catholic spirituality. At the end of the meeting, we were to pray the Rosary together. If you didn't take one with you, then you had to endure the walk of shame to go to the front of the church to collect a rather tacky plastic one. This weeded out the real Rosary pray-ers from the Rosary newbies.

During the prayers, I had no idea what I was doing but would sneak a look over to the person next to me so I didn't get left behind. What bead were we on? What was a decade? Like the child who hasn't learned their words for the big final song of the school musical, I thought if I moved my lips and made it look like I knew what I was saying, I might get through this.

When I returned to my parish in Leicester, I asked to meet a local priest I knew well. "I need you to teach me the Rosary," I said rather ashamedly. It was relief from embarrassment I was hoping for, not an increase in piety. However, as he patiently showed me how the Rosary prayers worked and all began to click for me, it ignited

a love for the Rosary that has only grown in the years since. I clearly remember he gave me what he called his "third best rosary" to keep, and I have it to this day. It is from the Shrine of Lourdes in France but always reminds me of a small strip of garden in a busy estate in Leicester where I was first shown how to use it.

I take my rosary with me wherever I go and if I have time between meetings or space here or there, I will use it to pray. We pray the Rosary regularly twice a week in the parish - with different people from the congregation joining us - and so I've then taught others to pray with it too. They have often bought their own rosaries and many have taught others too, and so it's passed onwards.

Back to Marie Kondo. Her next step to happiness is discarding things in your life that don't "spark joy". My rosary passes this test for sure. It helps me to focus on prayer, reminds me that I need to pray and connects me to a time when I was taking those first steps in understanding the life of prayer which, at its heart, is a life of joy. While other items in my life may come and go, my rosary is definitely here to stay.

Fr Felix leaves his role after eight years to become Associate Director of Leading Your Church Into Growth

Articles of faith...

GREG MOORE
LAY MINISTRY TRAINING
OFFICER FOR CHICHESTER
DIOCESE

If I were to put three “things” together from my journey I would say music has played a huge role in my life so, unsurprisingly, hymns and music feature.

One is “O come, O come Emmanuel”. The sense of longing in the words, written more than 1,200 years ago, is as relevant now as it was then, focusing on the preceding days before Christmas. The melody is French and the plainsong (the beginning of all music notation) is just the perfect feeling of rise and fall when we

are in Advent. The words speak profoundly to me of God’s promise of the incarnation. I’m very incarnational – without it, I feel that nothing else would have been revealed to us.

Over to Lent and Holy Week. A hymn rarely sung in the original version (English Hymnal) is

“O come and mourn with me a while” by Fr Faber, an Anglican who became RC following

John Henry Newman and very much part of the Oxford Movement. The human angst in the words is palpable – our love and the love of God is crucified. The lines “See, Mary calls us to her side... His mother cannot reach His face; She stands in helplessness beside” are

raw human emotion and, for me, some of the most painful lines I think I have ever sung. I would encourage the reading of hymns – most of the poetry is outstanding.

A final example would be hearing my mother sing “Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia” and a whole host of other hymns, full pelt and extremely well. At the age of ten, I realised as I stood next to her that one day that lovely voice would end. As I look back at that ten-year-old, I think he was a bit ahead of the game on pathos but that brings me to the joyful hope of the Resurrection, every day.





CHORAL EVENSONG PATRONAL FESTIVAL GRANTS 2025



The Choral Evensong Trust, a registered charity dedicated to preserving this unique British tradition, offers grants to churches that have not previously held such services.

The initiative aims to bring free music to local communities while providing training and performance opportunities for young singers. The Trust's Patronal Festival Grants program for 2025 has seen remarkable success, awarding £32,000 in grants to dozens of churches nationwide. The Diocese of Chichester recorded the highest uptake of these grants, demonstrating strong enthusiasm for celebrating this tradition.

One of the churches that received a grant was The Church of the Annunciation in Brighton, which celebrated with a special Choral

Evensong service earlier this year. Fr Anthony Murley, Vicar of the Annunciation, said: "We were very excited about this event, as it was not something we've done for many years. We applied for and received a grant from the Choral Evensong Trust, which meant we could pay a professional choir - something we'd like to offer every month."

Rupert Sheldrake, a trustee of the Choral Evensong Trust, expressed delight at the response from churches and donors alike, saying the project builds on successful trial runs last year, including a festival at St Peter-ad-Vincula in Folkington, which will host its patronal festival again this year, welcoming the Bishop of Lewes on June 29.

Choral Evensong combines scripture and music in a contemplative service

deeply rooted in English heritage. It requires minimal participation from attendees, making it accessible to newcomers while enriching spiritual life for regular worshippers. The Trust hopes to continue supporting all applications for future festivals but relies on donations to sustain its work.

St James the Less, Lancing had their Choral Evensong in May, one of fifteen services to take place across the Diocese, supported by grants from the Choral Evensong Trust. Other up and coming events include St Peter's, Bexhill-on-Sea and St Peter's Cowfold, which will take place on June 29th.

You can find information about upcoming Patronal Festivals and how to support this initiative by visiting the Choral Evensong website: www.choralevensong.org/uk/

Eco Conference

A recent Diocesan Environment Conference was held at St Mary's Church in Battle, East Sussex, which drew around 60 participants from churches across the Diocese – with the majority coming from East Sussex.

The event was a great platform for creation care and featured a vibrant mix of speakers, worship, resource displays, and interactive workshops, covering topics such as eco worship, net zero carbon and community climate action.

The day opened up discussion about how the church needs to respond to the fifth mark of mission - To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth - and how doing this can be an enable of all the other four marks of mission.

Environmental organisations and local groups set up displays showcasing eco-friendly products, renewable energy solutions, recycling initiatives, and practical resources for greener living.

The workshops were well attended and offered hands-on learning about topics including the



importance of bio-diversity in our church grounds, effective environmental communication, and the role of our buildings in reducing carbon footprints.

The conference, which fostered connections between church life and environmental imperatives, was led by Buff Forbes Stone (Diocesan Environment Officer) and Steve Collins (Net Zero Manager) with contributions from Rev Liz Varley, Lisa Williamson, Karen Park, Gareth Martin, Emma Arbuthnot, Elaine Murray, Helen Hicks and great support from Rev Lee Duckett and team at St Mary's Battle.

Steve Collins said: "It was inspiring to see so many people passionate about caring for God's creation in a way that makes a real difference in our churches and wider communities."

Overall, the event highlighted the growing interest for creation care in East Sussex and provided practical tools and inspiration for attendees to take environmental action in their daily lives as well as at church and equipped them to share with their church all the helpful insights they gained from the day.



We've come a long, long way together

By Lisa Williamson

The community garden at St John's Church in Preston, Brighton, has come a long way in a short time.

The project has been a catalyst for other environmental actions and has introduced new people and groups to the church. It's incredible to see how much has been achieved through collective effort - but how did it all start?

After much publicity about the climate crisis and the imperative that churches needed to work towards carbon net zero by 2030, the PCC at St John's recognised it would require a different approach.

The church was already registered with A Rocha's Eco Church, having achieved the bronze award some years previously. The award was largely forgotten as the church had gone into interregnum. But when Emma Ham Riche was appointed as vicar, one of the things on her radar was Eco Church.

After a service last autumn she asked if anyone would step up and lead on eco church activity. To her surprise, three people put themselves forward.

New eco officers Jane Millet, Lisa Williamson and Tash Fairbanks quickly began to establish the church's "eco ethos". They thought about things people would support, what could be engaging and useful and ultimately lead to growth.

A few simple quick wins were implemented. A clothes bank was ordered and people were encouraged to donate unwanted clothes. When the bin fills it gets emptied and the church receives a payment. It has already been emptied a few times because people in the area are using it.

The officers looked at products the church used to see where it could change to more environmentally friendly versions. Flowers and biscuits were also on the list.

Most importantly, the eco officers needed a project that many people could get behind and that was open to all. Attention turned to the outside space - a neglected overgrown garden - and the idea of it blossoming into a haven of wildlife and a community sanctuary took hold.

The congregation embraced the idea of transforming the garden and it was timely as it coincided with the "Renew Preston Village" campaign.

The church is on the eastern side of the A23 corridor which splits Preston Village in two. Since the 1950s the A23 has dominated and people no longer felt part of the village, home to Preston Manor, which has just reopened after a long closure.

Rev Anna Bouch, associate vicar, developed a questionnaire to gather input from church members and locals.

The survey also shaped a grant application that could fund much-needed tools and supplies if successful. After a consultation involving feedback from 250 people, the project received overwhelming support.



A noticeboard was produced and centre stage was a garden plan, designed by a resident. The board allowed church members to see how the project was progressing and how to get involved. The vicar and PCC made sure communications contained updates on the progress, including on Facebook, in the Sunday pew sheet and the monthly parish publication.

This created a buzz and attracted other organisations that wanted to get involved. City Gate Church and Hopscotch Children's Nursery expressed interest in using the space and helping to prepare it and so a working party was formed.

Eco officer Jane said: "When spring arrived, we started fortnightly working parties to prepare the space. We cleared brambles and weeds, trimmed grass to better understand the available space and created a compost area.

"Contributions came in from church members and locals, including money, plants, benches, labour and materials like wood and a water butt.

Tash said: "The project has also fostered connections with neighbours at Tower House Resource Centre. Their men's group plan to build bird boxes for the garden. A visit from Sussex Wildlife is also planned so they can share their expertise.



Hopscotch Nursery joined the initiative after hearing about the garden. Jordan Stanley, their Curriculum Development Lead, oversaw the addition of a large wooden plant border the nursery paid for and built so the children could start to use the space.”

Emma Ham-Riche, vicar at St John’s since 2022, was enthusiastic. She said: “There has been an extraordinary start to this garden project. I’m delighted different groups in the church community have pooled their skills and energies together and have taken the ‘trowel by the hand’ literally to get on and create a welcoming community space for everyone.

“The project has brought together residents and groups using St John’s halls. They’ve prepared the ground, planted three apple trees, dug a pond, installed plant troughs and sown seeds for a meadow.”



Peter Chisnall from City Gate church was excited to be part of the community garden project. He said: “I wanted to gain more experience working outside, focusing on being more in the present moment, helping to build positive mental health.

“I have loved getting stuck in and working with a fab team. It has felt good to be part of a bigger group contributing to the community.

“Meeting so many different people from a range of groups, working together to create a new landscape has been really wonderful. I am hopeful others will benefit from this precious green space as much as I have enjoyed being a small part of its development.

“I love seeing the progress we have achieved in a small time, the blossom on the apple tree I planted is a fantastic sight.”

Church members and friends attended an open day in April to see what has been

accomplished so far and share ideas. Rev Anna and fellow associate vicar Rev Sarah Van den Driessche held a short service to bless the garden and handed out envelopes of seeds with a prayer.

The project has drawn a great response from residents: When the team were working on clearing steps outside on the busy A23, so many people stopped by to comment positively.

Now the second phase of garden clearance work begins to the south side of the church and it is hoped locals and new groups will continue to engage with a programme of events that will make use of the new spaces, starting with our summer fair on June 28.

Lisa Williamson is the Diocesan Communication’s and Engagement Officer and PCC member and Eco Officer at St John’s Church Preston Brighton.



Countdown to the South of England Show

The diocese and partners will once again be hosting **The Sanctuary at the South of England Show** in Ardingly from 6 to 8 June.

Rev Sue Wilkinson is the co-ordinator of the space, which will be staffed by Christians from churches across Sussex.

Sue said: "We are delighted to welcome you back to the showground again this year. The Sanctuary is a relaxed area staffed by a small team.

"This year, as well as operating a safe space for any lost people, we will be welcoming back the Salvation Army refreshments van. We are delighted that Mother's Union are able to join us again this year. Michele White, Mothers' union president for Chichester Diocese, and her staff, will bring a ton of cake to highlight their flagship project Ministry of

Cake but also to tell people about Away From It All, their holiday homes for families in need of a break away from it all. The two caravan sites are in Sussex. One in Winchelsea and one in Chichester.

"Together, we will be providing hospitality and an area for baby changing so that families can find a relaxed place to rest their weary feet and enjoy a refreshing drink and a sweet treat.

"The show has always been an excellent opportunity for outreach, to both visitors and stall holders. Visiting clergy come along to help take the Church out into the wider community by being present and often being asked to judge a competition, get involved in the education hub or to simply respond to questions on faith and farming.

"This year, as well as holding a prayer space with a prayer tree for visitors to leave a prayer, there will be blessing of animals for any visitor or stall holder. Rev Gary Cregeen, Diocesan Rural Officer, and Sue Greener, Lay Minister, will also be leading a short Sunday service and all are welcome."

Thank you to all the people who visit and give donations. We raised a record £3K last year which will go to support the great work of all charities involved.

Bacon rolls are on offer from The Sanctuary for all early birds. Until 11am.

This year adult tickets cost £24.30 until 29 May, and children aged 15 and under go free. You can purchase tickets from the show website [here](#)



Rogation

By Gary Cregeen, Diocesan Rural Officer

Rogation is an ancient church festival which seeks God's blessing on a community. This year, Rogation Sunday falls on May 25, the sixth Sunday of Easter.

While celebrated mainly in rural communities, Rogationtide can be adapted in any context and is a great opportunity for a church to reach the wider community, not least those who would not ordinarily attend a church service.

Rogation services tend to be outdoors and are more visible and accessible and less intimidating than going into an unfamiliar building.

The word rogation comes from the Latin verb rogare, meaning "to ask", and it involves making supplication to God for protection, to provide and bless, while acknowledging His goodness and our dependency on Him.

A Rogation service can move around locations in a village, town or farm, with prayers offered accordingly - outside a school or shop, overlooking

livestock or fields or beside the village pond or pub, as well as the church.

The three days following Rogation Sunday are called Rogation Days, leading up to Ascension Day. These can involve "beating the parish bounds" and be used to pray for the wellbeing of a community and ask God's blessing on agriculture and industry.

At the time of the Reformation such processions were suppressed but parish "perambulations" (walking around, surveying land, beating the bounds) were encouraged. In the time of Elizabeth I, a royal injunction ordered the "perambulation of every parish" at Rogationtide and two Rogation homilies were printed so clergy could tell congregations what it was all about.

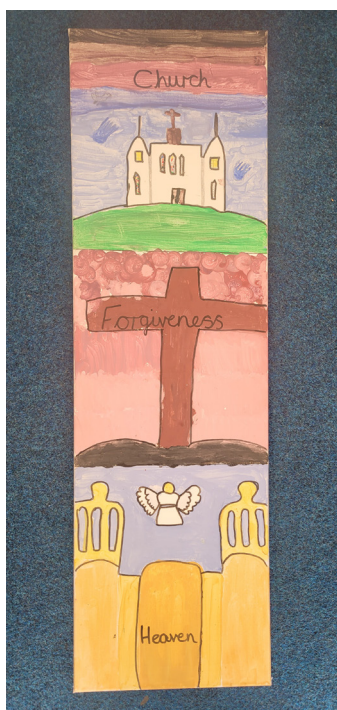
One asserted: "Behold the fields and countryside and to ask God in prayer for their fruitfulness and for seasonable weather."

Folk were reminded to be content not greedy, to avoid covetousness and look out for and fix potholes: "Your highways should be considered in your walks... it is a good deed of mercy to amend the dangerous and noisome ways, whereby thy neighbour, sitting upon his silly weak beast, floundereth not in the deep thereof...."

Rogationtide is a chance to praise the Creator God, give thanks for our food and those who produce it and pray a blessing on our villages.

For resources visit: www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk and search "Rogation". If you celebrate Rogationtide please send photos to Gary. Cregeen@Chichester. Anglican.org for Cultivate, a newsletter for rural churches.

The next Diocesan Rural Conference is on Tuesday, October 14, at Ashburnham Place, East Sussex. In this anniversary year the title will be "Celebrating faith in the countryside". More details will be available soon.



Pupils at St Andrew's CE Primary School in Crawley were inspired to create a remarkable art project that brought faith to life through creativity and collaboration.

This is the Year of Faith in the diocese, a celebration of the Christian faith across Sussex, marking the 950th anniversary of the formation of the Diocese of Chichester and Chichester Cathedral and 1,700 years since the Nicene Creed first emerged.

Headteacher Jennifer Wise and her deputy Rachel Mulliss revealed the story behind this year's Easter service and its connection to those celebrations.

Jennifer said: "Traditionally, the school's Easter service involves each class reflecting on a part of Holy Week and presenting their responses through various creative mediums. Two years ago, this tradition led to the creation of seven Holy Week paintings, which now adorn the school hall. This year, however, we decided to take a new approach by focusing on the Apostles' Creed, an ancient expression of Christian belief, and creating a frieze of seven panels inspired by its powerful words."



On the last day of term, the entire school community gathered for its Easter service that told the “Big Story” of God’s salvation plan, from creation to resurrection and beyond. Each class reflected on a section of the Apostles’ Creed, bringing it to life through Scripture readings, spoken word and art. Seven canvases were unveiled during the service, depicting key moments in Jesus’s life: His birth, death, resurrection, ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit. The children also explored themes such as creation and eternal life.

Music played an integral role in the service. Rachel said: “Each section of the service was accompanied by a worship song linked to the theme. We also have a school band and choir who performed twice. The service was a joyful journey through the core beliefs of the Christian faith, as seen through the eyes and voices of our children.”

The paintings created during the project have already begun to make an impact beyond the school walls. After attending the Easter service, Rev Richard Poole, vicar of St Andrew’s Church, requested that the artwork be displayed in the church for its Sunday’s All Together service.

As Sussex celebrates its Year of Faith, initiatives like these remind us that faith is not only about belief but also about action, expressed through creativity, unity and shared purpose.

St Andrew’s Primary School has beautifully illustrated how ancient creeds can inspire fresh perspectives in today’s world. Through their art project, they have honoured both tradition and innovation while celebrating God’s enduring story, a story that continues to resonate with believers across generations.

You can find out more about all the ongoing activities which will form part of this special year on our website [here](#).

Sussex Historic Churches Trust launch new website and logo

The Trust's main fundraising venture is the annual sponsored Ride + Stride which is taking place this year on September 13, 2025.

Chris Whittick, chair of the SHCT said: "Our website is often the first place potential supporters will check before donating, signing up, or getting involved. We recognise the need to help visitors interact more easily with the main areas of our work and mission and it was clearly time for an upgrade.

"We are delighted with the new look and ease of navigating between the various strands of the site. It is now easier than ever to register your church for the Ride + Stride event and it is also easier to find out how to go about submitting a grant bid.

Another new addition is that of the Trust logo. Chris added: "We wanted a logo that reflected the core heritage work that SHCT supports and commissioned StudioMoo, the design company behind the cathedral and dioceses 950 celebrations. We were really impressed with how they captured our ideas. The result is a fine and striking logo that represents our work with Sussex places of worship."



"We are now ready and excited about what this year will bring and we will be encouraging all the parishes in East and West Sussex and Brighton and Hove to get on board this year with Ride + Stride. We will publicise the new website as soon as it goes live. Once your church is registered for Ride + Stride you can access your details and level at which it is open to participants and encourage more sponsorship. Don't forget that individuals or groups will be raising funds of which 50% goes to a church or chapel building of their choice!"

Since its foundation, the Trust has assisted more than 500 churches in East and West Sussex. In 2024 alone, £103,000 was awarded to 14 historic places of worship. The more money the Trust receives, the more help it can give!

Thanks to the generosity of individuals and churches the Trust were able to make a number of significant grants to churches in the Diocese this year. One of those grants was to St Dunstan's in Forest

Row. Its vicar, Jamie Gater, said: "Guttering isn't perhaps the most exciting thing to ever come across a vicar's desk, but it's staggering how much can go wrong when the guttering isn't doing its job. The cast iron guttering on our church is a feature of the building which has stood the test of time, but nearly 200 years on, it's showing its age and beginning to fail. The replacement work is going to set us up for the next 200 years, making sure our building remains dry and structurally sound for all in our community who use it, and it wouldn't be possible for us without the generous support of SHCT, who have been so helpful in the application process. We've supported them for decades through the ride and stride event, and it's wonderful to see the practical outworking of why that support is so helpful and so necessary."

Grants made so far in 2025 are as follows:

Forest Row
£10,000

St Leonards Christ Church
£5,000

South Stoke St Leonard
£6,000

Steyning St Andrew
£12,000

Winchelsea St Thomas
£3,000

PARISH NEWS

ALL SAINTS, HOVE

On the following pages we share encouraging stories from our parishes starting with a look back on some of the churches that received funding from the Strategic Development Fund or were apostolic partnerships.

St Michael's Church, Eastbourne

Installed Ben Sleep as an Associate Vicar in 2021, 50% funded for 2 years by St John's Mead. Within 18 months, St Michael's grew from 50 to 120. By 2023, the worshipping community was 285 and parish share covered direct ministry costs. It is a low-cost model of growth with an excellent leader and an emphasis on 'unusual kindness' creating a loving welcoming culture. Ben equips clergy in 'The Kindling Network', with a proposal from the PPF for an innovation project of a 'taste and see' training experience.

St Peters Brighton & St Johns Crawley

In 2017 an SDF funded Apostolic Partnership between St Peters Brighton and St Johns Crawley created a church at St Johns which has now grown so that in turn it is able to resource St Peters WG, St Richards (TB) and plant two congregations into housing estates. Worshipping community increased by 300 in two years and under-18s by 75. In the year to June 2024, 114 attended Alpha and 30 were baptized.

St Richard's, Hollingdean

St Richard's, Hollingdean was closed for services but housed a food bank. An SDF funded Apostolic Partnership with St Peters Brighton led to a Planting team of 20 being sent with funding for portacabins (to expand the accommodation), operations, worship, youth, kids and families staff. The café community church launched in 2022 is now getting 100+ each week and the re-opened church saw 10 baptisms over the last year.

All Saints Hove

All Saints Hove, an inclusive Catholic church, is being revitalised via SDF funding for staff (including children's minister and operations) and for a Café built within the church. The Café is now self-funding, 'stay and play' has 80 families and 'little fishes' over 100 children per week. At least 6 new families regularly attend on Sundays and 3 baptisms of these families in the last year.

St Wilfrid's Bognor

In 2020 St Wilfrid's Bognor received the £150K proceeds of the sale of a property via the Diocesan Pastoral fund. They used the money to fund part-time staff to lead worship and children's ministry as well as operations. They launched a new contemporary service which has over 100 attendees, a community lunch for those who would normally eat alone and house a food bank.

St George's Church bicentennial celebrations

By Hilda Ruth Beaumont



It all began in July 2023 when Father Andrew Manson-Brailsford, parish priest of St George's in Kemp Town, Brighton, set up a committee, with David Young as the minuting secretary, to develop a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the church's bicentennial celebrations.

It took some time but it was eventually submitted in October 2024 and included significant building works, three seminars, four concerts, a royal visit, an open day and service of thanksgiving, celebrating the social history and community use of the church building over the past 200 years. St George's was awarded almost £225,000.

Most of the money was spent on renovations including mending plaster works, fixing the paintwork, and cleaning and repairing the flooring. This was a huge undertaking involving scaffolding and moving seating while maintaining the church as a place of worship on Sundays. There was only one Sunday when worship had to take place in a community centre room rather than the church. Without the guiding hand of Julian Vallis of Vallis and Hall Conservation Architects and the logistics co-ordination by Paul Simmons, St George's community centre manager, it is doubtful the work would have been completed to the required standard or the agreed timetable.



It was essential the appearance of the promotional materials echoed that of other materials produced by St George's and also met the criteria of the Heritage Lottery Fund. The role of designer Matthew Maxwell in producing striking and attractive posters and flyers was crucial and the widespread knowledge of the celebrations and good attendance at the events was in no small measure due to his input.

There were three heritage seminars focusing on how St George's was built and how it would be repaired. The first, "Historic building conservation and techniques", was presented by Julian Vallis. The second, presented by Hilda Beaumont, was about understanding sustainability and circular economies, how churches fit into them and how we harness the energy for change. The third, entitled "Glass, light and lead", was also presented by Julian Vallis who described the history of St George's unique stained glass and leaded lights and how they were made.

“The Heritage Lottery people were real stars. They recognised that the heritage which we were conserving for future generations was not just physical but also made up of people – individuals and groups.”

In October, November and December we held a heritage cinema club featuring *Beau Brummell* (1954) starring Stewart Granger and Elizabeth Taylor; *Brighton Rock* (1948) starring Richard Attenborough, Hermione Baddeley and William Hartnell; and *Quadrophenia* (1979) with Phil Daniels, Leslie Ash and Toyah.

The films were followed by heritage concerts including a “liberation concert” featuring the LGBTQI+ Choirs Rainbow Chorus, Resound and Brighton Gay Men’s Chorus.

On March 27 HRH the Duke of Gloucester visited St George’s and spoke individually to more than 30 people, all of who were part of life in Kemp Town and had contributed to the bicentennial celebrations.

Two days later we had the Kemp Town open day which kicked off at the church and offered music, talks, stalls, food and drink and two open-top bus tours courtesy of Brighton and Hove Buses with commentary from Hedley Swain, CEO of Brighton and Hove Museums.

The thanksgiving service took place on April 27 and was a splendid affair, a worthy climax to the celebrations. The church looked glorious decorated with flowers and displaying St George’s

banners. The choir, led by Stuart Hutchinson, church organist, was joined by some of his students and together they sang beautifully. Father James Foley read the Gospel and Father Nick Holtam gave the prayers. Brighton and Hove Mayor Mohammed Asaduzzaman attended and gave out cheques to organisations that had been awarded St George’s Day grants.

After the service there was a veritable banquet including corn beef hash, a nod to the war years, and a cake, all prepared by Louise Collins a member of the congregation, and Sandro DaMota and Jacob Stevens, managers of the St George’s Café.

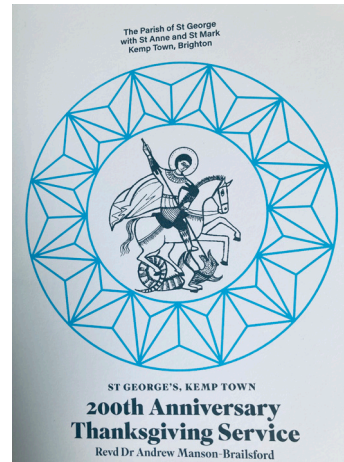
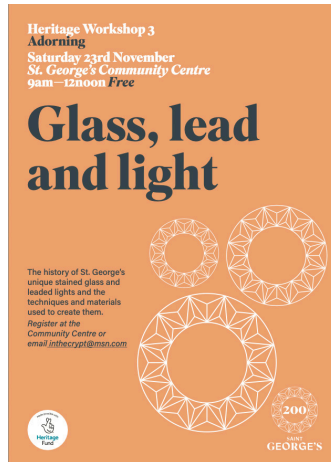
Father Andrew said:

“Reflecting on the events and work – it would have been so much easier to have shut our buildings down and let the builders get on with it. I am glad that we didn’t since it gave people using the buildings the opportunity to see what was happening and to take some ownership of the project.

“The Heritage Lottery people were real stars. They recognised that the heritage which we were conserving for future generations was not just physical but also made up of people – individuals and groups.

“The events we held were so important and they went very well. It was great to see how many people tried their very best to help us and to make the whole 200th anniversary a success. My thanks to them.





In terms of our mission and theology I can only like and endorse the events and especially our service of thanksgiving where we give out cheques to local groups to support their work, as a foretaste of Heaven.

“We gave out St George’s Day cheques to 17 groups. They included Voices in Exile which reminds us that those who are persecuted and have to flee places where they are oppressed, tortured and killed need to find a home. It seems to me as Christians we should be supporting these individuals and families rather than pointing fingers and saying that they don’t belong.

Speak Out is an organisation supporting adults with learning difficulties, reminding us that even people who are perceived to be different need their safe space among the rest of us. The Brighton and Hove Gay Men’s Chorus and the Rainbow Chorus remind us that in a world where Donald Trump can cancel concerts



and Jeff Bezos can claim that LGBTQI people are suffering from an illness, we can give dignity to people who are of different genders, sexual identities and sexual expressions.

“We also recognised those people who come together to sing, socialise and even play table tennis. How important it is to acknowledge and support all people and each other.

“What a thrilling opportunity we have had to work together and build a diverse and inclusive community – and of course the work goes on.”



Cash boost for new roof

A busy church has been given nearly £63,000 by a waste management company,

The cash will go towards refurbishing the roof of the church hall at St Symphorian's in Worthing so it can continue to be a "high quality, accessible space for the community at an affordable rate".

The £62,923 grant is from Biffa Award as part of the Landfill Communities Fund.

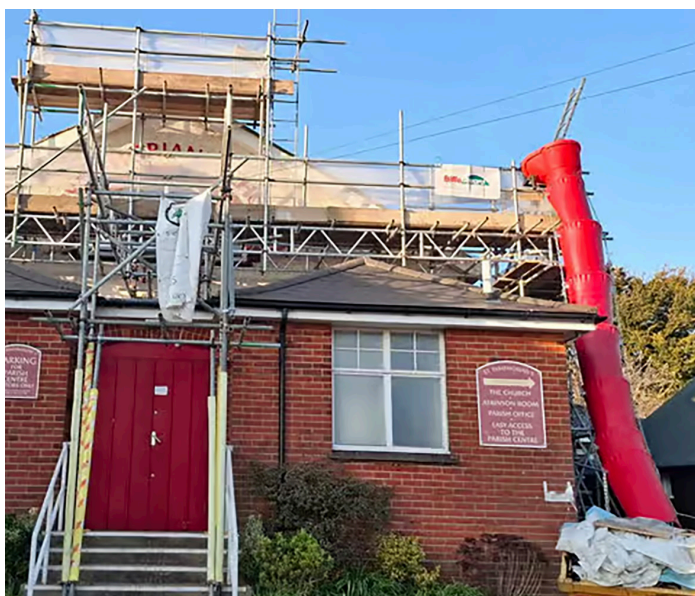
The worshipping community will also benefit, with greater opportunities to host fundraising events. Improvements such as enhanced heating for year-round comfort will help attract new regular hirers and expand the range of activities available.

St Symphorian's hall currently hosts a variety of groups and clubs including bowls, Zumba, uniformed groups, two support groups and karate. There are also regular monthly activities such as a friendship group and a book club and occasional events like coffee mornings, brunches and congregational celebrations.

Jane Winter, St Symphorian's parish treasurer, said: "Receiving the Biffa Award grant has made a huge difference to the refurbishment project at St Symphorian's Parish Centre. This award means that work can now start to upgrade the church hall roof, installing insulation and kickstarting the wider project of upgrading the facility for the whole community. Once completed, the Parish Centre will once again be a fantastic venue for everyone."

Rachel Maidment, Biffa Award grants manager, said: "By funding the refurbishment of St Symphorian's church hall roof, we are ensuring that this vital space remains accessible, welcoming and fit for purpose for years to come. Community hubs like this play a crucial role in bringing people together, offering activities, support and a sense of belonging."

To apply for Biffa Award funding visit www.biffa-award.org



Community Shop Celebrates 25 Years of Showing God's Love in a Practical Way

A Parish in the West Weald is planning to celebrate 25 years of serving its community.

The congregations of the churches of the (St Mary's Slaugham, St Marks Staplefield, All Saints Handcross and The Hub@Woodgate) have been supporting an outreach project in the village – a shop named Handcross Hardware and Craft, which operates as a space that seeks to serve the needs of the village. Its mission statement is “To show God’s love in a practical way.”

Phil Hawksley, Lay Leader of All Saints Handcross, says that over the years the project has become a foundation from which other initiatives have evolved. He explains, “The initial vision was to be ‘Church in the community’ and to ‘show God’s love in a practical way.’ Over the years, the project has become a community hub, providing a home for local community services. The Handcross community bus was launched from the project, as was ‘Help at Hand,’ which was initially set up to provide practical help to those in need. These have since become independent organisations.

“The shop has always been a place where people can come and find a friendly face, conversation, and prayer for those who ask for it. Sometimes, a visit to the shop was the only social contact some people had during the day.”

The premises also include an upstairs room, which has been used for a whole range of activities: craft nights, Morsebag making, poetry evenings, folk nights, youth activities, prayer, and worship events - all of which have built community. The shop has served the community with hardware, craft supplies, and artisan bread and cakes. People are often amazed at the range of products available. For those less able to use the internet, the shop could always get what they wanted. During COVID, the shop stayed open, providing hardware, gardening products, food, and, of course, hand sanitiser.

Phil adds, “Relationships are built with many who would not consider coming into a church, and it has been a great way of building friendships in the village through service.

“The project has always been a faith venture. Finances are often tight, but God has been faithful, and many have been generous in keeping the project going and growing.

“There was an elderly lady who often used the shop but was increasingly unable to get out. She lived on the opposite street and once told me, ‘I look out of my window, and I see the hardware shop. I feel safe, because I know that if I ring and I need help, someone will come.’”

Phil has been involved with the project for 20 years, 10 of those as a director. “I feel that this project could be an encouragement to many other church communities seeking a way to engage with their villages. It is a lot of work, but as a way of being an incarnational presence in our villages, Handcross Hardware and Craft has provided a place of service, prayer, community, and blessing to our area. I am sure that the growth we are experiencing as a church currently has a lot to do with the work that has happened here.”



The power of community, (one cup of tea at a time)

A weekly church hall cafe has become a vital community fixture since it opened nearly six years ago.

The Well-Being Cafe at St Saviour's in Eastbourne was born out of a simple conversation between Melvyn, now a regular, and Fr Mark McAulay, the parish vicar.

After a local drop-in centre closed, Melvyn approached Fr Mark with the idea of creating a new space for connection and support.

Fr Mark sought guidance from the diocese and successfully secured a grant from East Sussex County Council. He also rallied the congregation and many stepped forward to help. Thanks to their efforts, the Well-Being Cafe now runs every Tuesday from 2pm to 4pm all year round, with at least five volunteers from the church present at each session.

It is more than just a meeting place - it is a hub for referrals and support. Guests can chat confidentially with volunteers, including several priests, and are welcome to enjoy board games, homemade cakes and endless cups of tea and coffee. The atmosphere is intentionally friendly and inclusive, offering a safe



space for anyone seeking companionship or support.

Fr Mark said that at its inception the cafe was unique among Eastbourne churches and may still hold that distinction.

It has sparked a transformation in St Saviour's outreach, drawing a steady stream of guests into church services and encouraging greater involvement in church events and community initiatives.

Its impact is evident in the experiences of those who attend. Melvyn said: 'I believe that it's a fabulous place for people to come to, whether they're lonely or they've got issues. I would say it's incredibly friendly and welcoming and is thriving.'

Ian, a long-term regular, said: "Jesus said in Matthew 25 'When I was poor and sick you visited me and that whatever you did for others you did for me'. The Well-Being Cafe shows love and friendship. There's a welcoming atmosphere and we're filled with the Holy Spirit. It's creating a community. I feel like everyone accepts one another. And the pancakes are nice."

Maria, a newer guest, said: "From its origins as a response to local need, the Well-Being Café has blossomed into a thriving centre of friendship, faith and support, demonstrating the power of community, one cup of tea at a time."



Rare gem is at risk

The church of St Botolph in the tiny hamlet of Hardham, near Pulborough, is a rare gem surviving largely unchanged from its construction around the time of the Conquest.

Set beside the Roman Stane Street (now the A27 outside Pulborough), the church preserves reused Roman tiles which point to the early occupation of the site. The simple two-part plan, blocky sandstone construction and narrow lancet windows are typical of Norman architecture of the 11th century.

Surrounded by cottages and fields of grazing cows, Hardham has the air of a place which has changed little in its long history.

The church is acclaimed for featuring the earliest nearly complete series of wall paintings in the country.

Stepping into the interior, visitors are completely bathed in the images that cover every wall. The stories depicted are still legible and include a cycle of the life of Christ, the story of Adam and Eve and the earliest known depiction of the life of St George in England. The figures are imbued with great humanity and character, belying the fact that they were painted 900 years ago and were only discovered hidden behind a plaster covering in 1862.

Sadly, the future of the precious wall paintings is far from secure. The interior suffers from unstable levels of humidity which affects the delicate binders in the paint.

Sections of the wall paintings are hard to read and in some cases this is due to ongoing fading and plaster breakdown.

While the parish has long been aware of this, the practicalities of improving the ventilation and conserving the paintings are so complex that they are difficult to achieve without major investment.

Late last year Historic England included St Botolph's on its revised Heritage at Risk register, in acknowledgment of the precarious future of the wall paintings if there is no intervention soon. Inclusion on the register will increase popular awareness of the church's history and unlock further routes for funding and support.

Cash for conservation

Historic curtains at a village church have been carefully restored thanks to cash from the Church of England.

It handed out more than £260,000 last year to support the conservation of historic items and works of art in parish churches across the country.

This included the treasured curtains at St Margaret's in Ditchling which were made by pioneering 20th century textile artist Hilary Bourne.

Hilary was a renowned designer who worked with her partner Barbara Allen on a range of events from the Festival of Britain to Charlton Heston's costume in the 1959 blockbuster film Ben Hur.

The hand-spun curtains usually hang across the west door of the church and were woven by Hilary herself in 1980 in memory of her mother Hilda.

The inscription reads: "In memory of Hilda Bourne, for 46 years a member of this church who lived to be almost 103."

Jenny Kilbride said: "We are so grateful for the grant which has enabled this restoration which is an intrinsic part of the church's history. While the church is currently undergoing some major work in the choir stalls we have delayed the

installation of the curtains until the work is completed. It will be special day when it happens."

The curtains have caught the imagination of the national communications team at the Church of England which is preparing to visit the church to film them when they are re-installed.

A total of £262,980 was awarded in 2024 to 124 projects in 33 dioceses, including wall paintings, monuments, church bells and even medieval graffiti.

The conservation grants programme is administered by the Church of England's cathedral and church buildings department from funds provided by The Pilgrim Trust, The Radcliffe Trust, the Anglican Parish Churches Fund, The Oswald Allen Fund, the Gunnis Fund and the Church of England Net Zero Fund.

The total spending for 2024 has been published after the Church of England opened a new expanded pot of £4.68 million for the conservation of special historic and cultural items in parishes, financed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Emily Gee, director for cathedral and church buildings for the Church of England, said: "I am hugely grateful to our funders who



do so much to help enable this crucial conservation work and thrilled that the Church of England's conservation grants scheme is being expanded this year to help even more churches with their projects as a result of the brilliant support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

"Every precious item or monument detailed in this report is cared for by volunteers and supporters who give their time and expertise so generously to preserving the special heritage of Church of England churches. I would like to express our immense gratitude to them for their dedication to such an important shared heritage."

See the Church Times article featuring the church and Hilary Bourne connection (2023) [here](#)

FAMILY ON A MISSION

Adam Tomalin grew up in East Sussex where his father was vicar of Hailsham. The Diocesan Overseas Companion Links supported Adam and his wife Nomfundo in their studies at George Whitfield College, Muizenberg, Cape Town, with Crosslinks.

We asked Adam to share his journey and what they have been doing since he graduated.

From Hailsham to Johannesburg. From Johannesburg to Cape Town. From Cape Town to KwaZulu-Natal. Only God could script a journey like this.

I was raised in the town of Hailsham, East Sussex, where I spent nearly all my early years attending a local Anglican church. But in a longer story for another day, God, in His wisdom, led me far beyond the borders of my home town, first to Johannesburg, South Africa, where I served at a local church called Hope Church.

It was in Johannesburg that I met my wonderful wife, Nomfundo. Together, we began a new chapter, moving from Johannesburg to Cape Town, and pursued further theological studies.

The Diocese Overseas Committee played a vital role in supporting my studies during this time, for which I remain deeply grateful. By the end of last year, I had completed my degree and in March of this year, I officially graduated.



But the journey didn't end there. At the close of last year we made another significant move, this time to KwaZulu-Natal where we've started serving in a semi-rural community called Fredville.

This season has been about planting roots, learning the Zulu language and culture and preparing for long-term, sustainable ministry. We've been blessed with many opportunities to learn from the community and slowly ease into ministry in this new and unique context.

The region we serve presents both Gospel opportunities and serious challenges. Many in the community wrestle with deeply rooted issues such as ancestral traditional religion, family breakdown, substance addictions and gender-based violence, among others. Our hearts long to see the powerful, transformative word of Jesus Christ speak into these struggles, bringing hope, healing, and redemption. We desire to see the Church actively caring for both its members and the wider community and to raise up others to do the same.

Amid all this, life brought joy - and sorrow. On February 25, we welcomed our beautiful daughter, Thandiwe Elizabeth Tomalin, into the world. Both she and Nomfundo are doing well and we are overflowing with thankfulness to God for this precious gift of life. Yet just one day after Thandiwe's birth, we were struck by heartbreaking news - Nomfundo's beloved sister, Lelo, passed away suddenly. It has been a time of raw, mixed emotions, joy and grief interwoven. Through it all, we've been carried by God's grace, one day at a time.

In another exciting development, we were officially taken on as Crosslinks mission partners at the end of last year. We've been working closely with the Crosslinks team to build our support base and are incredibly thankful for God's provision through His people. We're especially encouraged to now have a partner church in the Chichester Diocese.

We'd love to build even more connections in the Chichester area, whether with churches or individuals who feel led to partner with us in prayer and/or financial giving. If you'd like to hear more about what partnership could look like, we'd be delighted to talk and explore ways to connect and collaborate. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us directly at adamtomalin@gmail.com or through Crosslinks, through the email of the mission partnerships enabler: mmcguire@crosslinks.org

Join us, join in

By Michele White, MU diocesan president

Mothers' Union works on a three-year cycle and each triennium new trustees and officers are elected. These include the worldwide president (WWP) who is the representative of the four million plus members from the 84 countries which have a Mothers' Union presence.

In Chichester Diocese we were so excited to be able to welcome the new WWP, Kathleen Snow, to our own trustee commissioning service as she shared something of her vision and the theme for the new triennium, "Join us, join in".

I must confess I struggle to remember the order of the "joins" and perhaps there is a lesson in that about how we become part of a movement or group. There are many opportunities to join in the work of the Mothers' Union and there will be those who join in the work before joining us as members. Indeed many join in the work as partners in prayer and service without ever becoming members.

Two dictionary definitions of join are "link" and "connect" which, interestingly, are the titles of our two main publications. What strikes me about these words is that they all require



partnership. As Christians we are all partners in the gospel, worldwide and more specifically in this diocese and the parishes where MU members serve their congregations and communities.

If your parish has never had an MU group, or has had one in the past that no longer meets, we would love to share with you ways in which we can link, connect or join in with the ministry in your parish and beyond.

Next year, 2026, is the 150th anniversary of Mothers' Union and a fantastic opportunity for us all to remember the roots and growth of the movement and explore new ways for us all to join in with growing God's kingdom in our 950-year-old diocese.

Please contact me if you would like any information or if you would like me to email you a copy of our members' magazine, The Link.

Michelle can be contacted via email michele.white@mothersunion.org



PLEASE SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

BY FSW CEO MARTIN AUTON LLOYD

It has been ten years since Family Support Work (FSW) sold Knowles Tooth in Hurstpierpoint, a building that had been the site of many holidays and activity days for thousands of children and families for several decades.

The sale was the catalyst for a planned period of growth, as the then board of trustees recognised there was a greater need for intensive family support throughout Sussex.

In the last ten years, FSW has undergone a remarkable period of growth. In 2015 we had a team of five family support practitioners and worked with 117 families. By 2018 this had grown to

seven practitioners and 299 families and last year our biggest-yet team of 20 practitioners worked directly with just under 800 families across Sussex.

That number is destined to increase over the coming months as our service is greatly needed by many families who have little or no other sources of support. We are also able to reach families who are normally very hard to engage with, thanks to our patient and unpressurised approach.

As an independent charity, yet one which works in the name of the diocese, we are fortunate to have received incredible support from churches which has

contributed significantly to our growth. Indeed, without the involvement of the many hundreds of volunteers and fundraisers throughout the diocese, we would not be in the position we are today where our service is accessible to more than 85 per cent of Sussex residents.

But, with a reduction this year of ten per cent of our projected income because of recent government and diocesan decisions, we will need to work harder than ever to raise funds to maintain this work. If you feel drawn to support FSW this year, whether as a volunteer, fundraiser or donor, your contributions would be extremely valued and we would love to hear from you.

HYMNS WITH REV NEVILLE MANNING

CHRIST IS MADE

the sure foundation

Build a house or property without good foundations and you are likely to have trouble. I remember a new science laboratory being built onto the school to which I once went, only for it to start moving a few months later. The reason, almost certainly, was inadequate foundations. If Christian faith is like a house it needs a good foundation and, as our hymn reminds us, that foundation is Jesus Christ.

The hymn “Christ is made the sure foundation” is one of many that we owe to the work of John Mason Neale, who was also the person responsible for the hymn “O come, O come, Emmanuel”, featured in the previous issue of Faith In Sussex. Neale was associated with our Chichester Diocese, being warden of Sackville College almshouses in East Grinstead and founder of the nursing order of St Margaret.

Many people will have heard the hymn “Christ is made the sure foundation” sung at the Coronation of King Charles III in 2023. Like many of the hymns associated with Neale (he translated some 100 hymns) this one is a translation of an earlier medieval Latin hymn, of which the hymn “Blessed city, heavenly Salem” is also part.

HERE VOUCHSAFE TO ALL THY SERVANTS WHAT THEY ASK OF THEE TO GAIN

Also, like many good hymns, “Christ is made the sure foundation” picks up biblical imagery, in this case the words of St Paul in Ephesians 2 v20 about being “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone” and the reference in 1 Peter 2 v6/7 to Christ as our cornerstone. The stone referred to is not simply a stone in the corner but the stone around which the whole building is constructed. “Christ is our cornerstone, on him alone we build” is a similar and more recent hymn.

The opening verse of Neale’s translation, about Christ as the “sure foundation”, goes on to remind us of the unity we have in him, “binding all the church in one”. The life of this “building” is marked by worship: “pours perpetual melody”. The life of the Church family is likened to a temple: “to this temple, where we call thee”. While the physical temples

of our church buildings are important they are not all, as Jesus refers to himself as God’s temple in John 2 v21, while 1 Peter 2 refers to Christians as living stones in a spiritual house or temple.

The hymn goes on to think of the gifts of grace we receive within the life of this temple: “Here vouchsafe to all thy servants what they ask of thee to gain”. The hymn concludes with the offering of praise to God as Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit.

Good hymns need to have good music to which they can be sung. “Christ is made the sure foundation” is usually sung to the tune “Westminster Abbey” by Henry Purcell, although it can also be sung to the tune “Regent Square”.

While, of course, all “old hymns” were once new, one value of a hymn like “Christ is made the sure foundation”, based as it is on a Latin hymn from centuries past, is that it reminds us that we are part of the people of God across centuries in which the hand of God has guided his church from age to age.

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

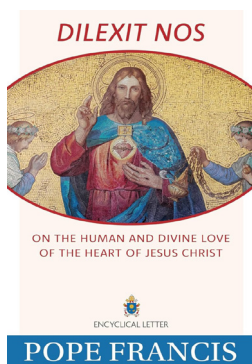
POPE FRANCIS DILEXIT NOS

Encyclical letter on the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ

The words *Dilexit Nos*, “he loved me”, come from Galatians 2:20: “I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” This deep and inspiring encyclical is a reminder that as our hearts welcome that love in complete trust and enable its fire to warm our hearts, we become capable of loving others as Christ did. In this booklet Pope Francis calls for rekindling devotion to the Heart of Jesus, linked to revelations to St Margaret Mary Alacoque 1673-5. “Mission, as a radiation of the love of the heart of Christ, requires missionaries who are themselves in love and who, enthralled by Christ, feel bound to share this love that has changed their lives.”

Canon Dr John Twisleton

Our Sunday Visitor 2024 £11.60 ISBN-13 978-1639663699
£11.60



REAL LIFE REV

A clergy survival guide by Martin Poole

For anyone being ordained, taking up their first post or moving to a new church, this realistic and entertaining guide to what you are likely to run into (which you learned nothing about in your training) will be the friend you need. It recounts real-life happenings and offers friendly advice on dealing with the realities of parish life.

Chapters include: “Things aren’t what they seem – the congregation turns out not to be so uniformly warm and welcoming as described and the accounts don’t tell the whole story... now what?”

“We all fall down – the building has problems and you have to step up to being the fabric expert – welcome to the club.”

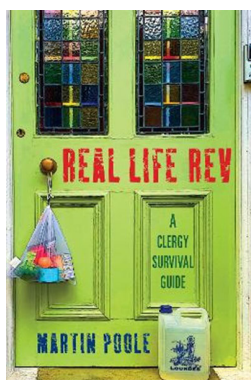
“We all build up – everyone wants more flexible church space but change means architects, faculties, dodgy decorators and angry neighbours – how to deal with these.”

“The joy of sex in church – the skills you need to manage wildly differing opinions.”

“Opening up to the community – the opportunities, the risks, the mountains of donations that no one actually wants.”

“Doorstep discoveries – vicarage life and what to do when a lorry arrives with two tons of yogurt drink for your food bank or a parishioner dumps the contents of their fridge because they’re going on holiday.” ... and much more.

Publisher: Canterbury Press Norwich. ISBN: 9781786225870
£16.99 (published on June 30)



Cathedral News

FUTUREPROOFING OUR MUSICAL HERITAGE

As Chichester Cathedral celebrates 950 years of history this year it is looking to the future with a major initiative to preserve one of its most treasured traditions - its music.

Thanks to the generosity of three anonymous donors and one foundation, an extraordinary £950,000 has been pledged as match funding, inspiring others to make a charitable donation and helping to raise an additional £950,000 to secure this unique musical heritage for generations to come.

This means that every donation made during this special anniversary year will be doubled - a gift of £10 becomes £20 and £100 becomes £200. UK taxpayers can add Gift Aid, increasing donations by an extra 25 per cent. All funds raised will go towards securing the future of music at Chichester Cathedral.

To mark the occasion, the cathedral released a recording of *The Lord Bless You And Keep You* by one of Britain's most beloved composers, Sir John Rutter, available now, and featuring the full choir.

Dean of the cathedral Edward Dowler said it was an important initiative. He said: "For 950 years, music has

filled Chichester Cathedral, uplifting worshippers and inspiring pilgrims and visitors. Cathedral music is more than an ancient tradition, it is a living, breathing part of our shared heritage and a wonderful gift to hand on to future generations. This match-funding opportunity allows us to ensure it continues for the next 950 years."

The recording can be found on the cathedral website: www.chichestercathedral.org.uk

PILGRIMAGE WITH YOUR CHURCH OR PARISH

To help church communities, groups and parishes are warmly encouraged to journey

together to the cathedral. These visits often culminate in shared worship at Evening Prayer or Choral Evensong, offering a unique opportunity to reflect as a community in this sacred space. A member of the cathedral team will be on hand to extend a warm welcome and ensure a meaningful experience.

Advance booking for groups is essential. A specially prepared pilgrimage booklet is available to download or in printed form and offers guidance for your journey. To arrange your visit contact bookings@chichestercathedral.org.uk or call 01243 813586.

CREATE FLORAL BEAUTY AT FESTIVAL

Church flower arranging teams are invited to take part in the much-anticipated 2026 Festival of Flowers at Chichester Cathedral, a cherished tradition that celebrates creativity, Community and floral artistry.

This festival, which attracts more than 10,000 visitors, has a long-standing history of welcoming contributions from parish flower teams across the diocese as well as from talented individuals, flower clubs and colleges.

Share your passion and floral flair at this special fundraising event. Whether you are a seasoned participant or new to the festival, find out how you can be part of this celebration of flowers next year. Visit www.chichestercathedral.org.uk/festival-flowers for more information. The theme for 2026 will be revealed soon but you can already get a glimpse into the imaginative vision of the talented designer Caroline Daines.

Religion, Rebellion & Reformation

EXHIBITION

Until 15 Nov 2025

An **exhibition** sharing the story of the Christian faith in Sussex, revealed through people, events and objects, from 1075 to the present day.

Open: Mon - Sat (9-5)
& Sun (12.30 - 2.30)

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Sun 8th June ~ 1-4pm

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