

FAITH IN SUSSEX

The diocesan publication reaching church communities across Sussex



Fabric, Faith, & Storytelling

Read how a commemorative work for St Luke's weaves history, faith and creativity into our sacred spaces /38-39

ST LUKE'S PRESTONVILLE 1875-2025

950TH CELEBRATIONS

/10-11

looking back with gratitude,
looking forward with joy

ORDER OF ST RICHARD AWARDEES

/12-15

Celebrating this year's
inspiring recipients

OVERSEAS HARVEST APPEAL

/18-19

Sowing seeds of hope
with a goal of £10K

CHICHESTER DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE

"One in Christ":

A Pilgrimage to Rome & Assisi

under the leadership of

The Rt Rev'd Martin Warner

- The Bishop of Chichester -

13th - 20th April, 2026



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PILGRIMAGES

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Welcome to the September Harvest edition of Faith in Sussex

In harvest season we're reminded of the powerful connections between land, community, and faith. In churches, schools, and chaplaincies across East and West Sussex, we will be praising God as the creator and sustainer of all life, and recognising him as the ultimate provider of our daily needs. While we give thanks for the blessings we enjoy, we also turn our hearts and minds to responding in generosity to those in need, both near to us and further away.

In this edition I would like to draw your special attention to the article on pages 18/19 about this year's Harvest Appeal. In partnership with Friends of the Holy Land, your donations will directly support those affected by the devastating conflict in Gaza and Israel. Please take a moment to read the piece and consider how you might respond to this urgent need. If every church and school took a collection at their Harvest Festival service, we would surely exceed our target of raising £10,000 for this trusted, non-political, ecumenical charity.

On other pages you will read stories from parishes and schools across the Diocese, highlighting the vibrant life of our diocesan family and some of the wonderful ways we have joined together to mark the 950th anniversary of the formation of the Diocese and foundation of the Cathedral. As well as stories about creative initiatives that celebrate community, we hear about the inspiring acts of service and mission from some of the people who will soon be awarded the Order of St Richard during a cathedral event this October. (Pages 12-15) We hope this news will encourage and uplift you, reminding us all of the power of our shared purpose and calling to 'know, love, and follow Jesus'.

As you journey through these pages, may you find both joy in our celebrations and inspiration to act with compassion. Thank you for being part of our Household of Faith —wishing you a blessed and fruitful Harvest.

+Ruth

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Celebrating
Faith

HERITAGE TREATS FOR RIDE + STRIDERS /24-25

There's so much more to see this year

RIDE + STRIDE

for Churches

ECO CHURCH IN ACTION/30-34

Four pages of stories,
projects and practical ideas

PARISH STORIES/36-45

Roofs raised, bells ringing,
overseas mission and
healing ministry

CATHEDRAL LIGHT SHOW & NEW PILGRIMAGE ROUTE/54-55

Discovering fresh ways
to encounter God

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

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Chichester Diocese



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Diocese of Chichester

NEWS

Funding secured for Diocesan Growth Strategy

The Bishop of Chichester, Martin Warner has welcomed the first phase of national church funding for the Diocesan Growth Strategy 2025–2035, a ten-year programme designed to bring transformation, revitalisation and missional growth to churches across Sussex.

He said: “This is really welcome news and we look forward to seeking approval for the remaining funding for our strategy.”

The Kindling Network, a pioneering national church growth project rooted in the diocese, also received support during this funding round.

Lay ministry

Autumn ALM electives begin this September, with January 2026 applications closing on November 24 this year.

Reader licensing will take place in Chichester Cathedral on Saturday, September 11, at 11am, led by Bishop Ruth.

Lay Ministry Day for ALMs and Readers will be at Holy Trinity, Hurstpierpoint, on October 25, with speakers including the Beachy Head Chaplaincy.

The Bishop’s Certificate course begins in January 2026, offering a 20-week programme of theological formation.

Canon Rebecca Swyer to step down



Canon Rebecca Swyer will step down as director for apostolic life at the end of the year after 16 years of service in clergy formation and ministry development.

She said: “It has been the greatest joy and privilege to accompany curates and colleagues in their training and growth. This decision comes through discernment of God’s call to the next stage in my ministry.”

Bishop Martin paid tribute to her, saying: “She has shaped generations of clergy, enriched theological life and championed lay and ordained ministry with wisdom, humour and grace.”

Recruitment will begin shortly to ensure a smooth transition.

Rural Conference 2025

The annual diocesan Rural Conference will take place at Ashburnham Place, Battle, on

Tuesday, October 14. The day will be led by diocesan rural officer Rev Gary Cregeen and will feature worship, workshops and shared stories of mission in rural parishes.



Deacons ordained

Hundreds gathered at Chichester Cathedral for the ordination of four new deacons following a three-day retreat of preparation.

The service was led by Bishop of Horsham, Ruth Bushyager, with Canon Earl Collins preaching.

Bishop Ruth reminded the congregation that the cathedral has, for nearly a millennium, been a place of sending out ministers to proclaim the gospel. She said: "As these new deacons go from here to their parishes we pray God's rich blessing on them, their families and their communities."

The new deacons will serve in their first parish placements:

- Andrew Elliott Dyvik-James, Clayton with Keymer
- Alexandra Ruth Estelle Barlow, Brighton, St Peter
- Monique Olivia Mendes Da Costa, Slaugham and Staplefield Common
- Jack Samuel McDonald, Aldrington, St Leonard.

Please keep them in your prayers as they begin ministries of service and witness across Sussex.

Celebrating exam success

Church of England secondary schools across Sussex have congratulated pupils on their exam results this summer.

Lesley Hurst, director of education, praised the resilience of students who began secondary school during pandemic restrictions and have now achieved excellent marks. She also thanked staff for their care, guidance and encouragement.

Join the Black History Month service

The diocese and the cathedral will be marking Black History Month in October with Choral Evensong on Sunday, October 5, at 3pm in the cathedral, followed by light refreshments.

The preacher will be Bishop Will. Please add this date to your diary and there will be more details soon.

Clergy and lay appointments

Honorary canons: The Bishop of Chichester has appointed the Rev Emma Ham-Riche (Prebendary of Thorney) and the Rev Robert Norbury (Prebendary of Hova Ecclesia). They will be installed at Chichester Cathedral during Evensong on Sunday, September 28.

New archdeacons:

Rev Emma HamRiche has also been appointed associate archdeacon for diversity and inclusion.

Rev Russell Dewhurst becomes Archdeacon of Hastings.

Rev Thomas Carpenter has been appointed Archdeacon of Chichester. His installation will also take place on September 28.

Cathedral Chancellor: The Rev Dr Earl Collins, previously vicar of St John the Baptist, Hove, has been appointed Residentiary Canon and Chancellor of Chichester Cathedral. He will oversee theological education and formation, especially for children, families and adults.

Rural deans: The Rev Ben Sleep (Eastbourne) and the Rev Shirley Tupper (Worthing).

Communications appointment: Amber Jackson rejoins the diocesan team in September as communications officer, working in a job share alongside Lisa Williamson.

Faith in Action Awards scheme

A new initiative will soon launch to celebrate young people aged ten to 18 who live out their faith in daily life.

Participants will engage in parish and community service, reflect on scripture and Christian teaching, and be encouraged to deepen their discipleship. The scheme aims to foster responsibility, service and witness among young people.

Jamie Gater, diocesan children, youth and family strategy Officer, and Lel Hurst, director of education, will present the scheme at the Clergy Conference this autumn.

Introducing the new priests

Parishes across the diocese celebrated the ordination of women and men to the priesthood this summer. They may now preside at the Eucharist and pronounce God's blessing.

On June 14, The Bishop of Lewes, Will Hazlewood ordained Timothy Newton at St Nicholas, Arundel. Later that day, Bishop Ruth Bushyager ordained Carole Darling (Sutton with Seaford), Quintin Delpont (Brighton, St Matthias) and Zoe Eborn (Bexhill, St Peter with St Michael and All Angels) at All Saints, Hove.

On June, 15 Bishop Ruth ordained Scott Canadas (Horsham), Thomas Dare (Furnace Green, St Andrew), Nathanael Gillett (Angmering) and Matthew Porter (Lindfield) at St Peter's, Henfield.

Please remember them and the parishes they serve in your prayers.



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Chichester 950

Celebrating 950 Years of Faith and Legacy in Sussex

2025 has been a year of celebration of the Christian faith across Sussex. The Diocese has been marking the 950th anniversary of the formation of the Diocese of Chichester and Chichester Cathedral and 1700 years since the Nicene Creed first emerged.

The Cathedral, parishes, schools and all parts of the Diocese have marked the event in a number of ways. You can find examples of what has been happening here.

<https://celebratingfaith.co.uk/>



As you can see the year has been filled with inspiring events across Sussex, bringing together congregations, families, and communities in joyful celebration.

Highlights include a diverse programme of services in every deanery, family camps, pilgrimages for young people, and the development of new programmes exploring the core beliefs expressed in the Creed.

In Church of England schools, creative expressions of faith flourished. A great example can be found at St Andrew's Primary School in Crawley where pupils created a frieze of seven panels inspired by the powerful words of the Nicene Creed and weaving the story of salvation into an uplifting Easter service, accompanied by Worship songs, delighting the children, teachers and parents.

Thousands of Year 6 pupils attending Church of England schools across the Diocese of Chichester attended one of the fifteen leavers' services earlier in the summer at which each child was presented with a special 950 anniversary edition of The Gospel of Luke.

The celebrations inspired a poem written by Rev Laura Darrall, commemorating the Nicene Creed, which beautifully captured the unity and enduring power of faith. The poem was widely heard across the diocese as it featured in all the deanery celebrations. It also featured

on a BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship programme marking the 1700th anniversary of the Creed.

At the heart of all these celebrations, Chichester Cathedral has been a beacon of history and living faith. The Cathedral's "Religion, Revolution & Reformation" exhibition has opened a window to 950 years of Christian heritage in Sussex, featuring stories spanning from 1075 to the present day.

The innovative Fish950 art installation, created by children from our church schools across the Diocese, symbolises both the early Christian fish emblem and the local fishing heritage taught by St Wilfrid in the 7th century. The colourful shoal adorned the Cathedral Nave throughout the summer, reminding all who visit of our shared spiritual journey.

The celebrations at the Cathedral will culminate in an immersive light and sound experience running from October 24th to 31st, bringing history and faith to life in an unforgettable finale.

The Bishop of Chichester, Martin Warner, reflected on the significance of this year: "This momentous celebration reminds us that we cannot define God. Faith is an exploration in which we risk everything to glimpse the mystery of God's glory and to discover our place in his heart of love. All of these events inspire us to know, love, and follow the Lord Jesus in 2025 and beyond."

"As we celebrate these historic milestones, we are reminded that faith is not only tradition but a living, evolving journey – one that continues to inspire and unite us in Sussex and beyond."

The Year will come to an end in November when, on Advent Sunday, a year focussing on the Gospel of Matthew will begin with the publication of a Lent Course for next year as part of what is to be called Living The Mystery of Faith.

This will run from 2026-2030 and more details will be unveiled at the November meeting of the Diocesan Synod.



IN THANKS FOR THEIR SERVICE

More than 40 lay people from churches across Sussex will be welcomed into the Order of St Richard during a ceremony at Chichester Cathedral on Saturday, September 20.

The awards, launched in 2019 by the Bishop of Chichester, the Rt Rev Dr Martin Warner, honour exceptional Christian service in deaneries, parishes and communities. Each recipient is nominated by their parish clergy and another member of their church community.

Friends, family members and supporters will gather to witness the occasion as Bishop Martin personally welcomes each award holder, presenting them with a certificate and lapel badge.

Speaking ahead of the event, Bishop Martin thanked all the recipients for their faithfulness. He said: "The Order of St Richard celebrates the quiet but transformative work of Christian discipleship. The recipients serve Christ in their parishes and communities with generosity, humility and love. This our moment to say 'your service matters — and it is deeply appreciated'."



Judy Moorey

Since moving to Wisborough Green in the 1970s, Judy has poured her energy into both parish and charitable work. At St Peter ad Vincula, she has led children and youth groups, run the Wizzytots toddler group, staffed the Xpresso coffee bar and acted as parish link for mission partners in Uganda and Brazil.

For over two decades she has volunteered with Chichester Diocesan Family Support Work (FSW), supporting families, helping with activity groups and keeping the village food bank stocked. She also assists at Dalesdown residential camps. She said: "It is a great joy to serve."



Maria Greco

Maria Greco, a member of St Leonard's, Denton, has been part of the Mothers' Union since the early 1990s, serving as prayer co-ordinator, branch leader and former trustee. She prepares resources for the annual Wave of Prayer and leads a team hosting welcoming celebrations for new British citizens in Brighton.

As a churchwarden at St Leonard's, Maria works tirelessly to foster a prayer-centred community. Quoting MU founder Mary Sumner, she said: "Dogged action and prayer will win the day."

"I was completely taken aback to be nominated for this award but my years of involvement in church and community life have given me a real sense of purpose and belonging and I hope I've given that in return."



Julie Richardson

Julie Richardson has been part of Holy Cross, Woodingdean, since she moved to the area in 1986. Her children were baptised and confirmed there and over the years she has taken on a wide range of responsibilities from church services and fundraising to the more everyday tasks that keep parish life running smoothly, even down to checking if there's milk in the fridge.

She recently retired from her NHS career and now devotes more time to her grandchildren and church activities, including helping with the tots' group.

She said: "I never expected to be nominated for this and don't feel I've done anything exceptional but it's wonderful to know you're appreciated."


Dave Yair

Five years ago, God led Dave to St Mary's, Barcombe. For 35 years, he had served God in youth work. His journey began in the church where he grew up. Faithful leaders there invested in him each week, and at age 14, he committed his life to Christ. Dave was an active member of the Boys' Brigade until he was 18.

He said: "I longed to lead in the Brigade, but God redirected me to launch a new youth group for those disconnected from church. We created a safe place to ask questions, face life's challenges, and discover Jesus. Scripture, prayer and God's truth were our foundation."

The work grew from weekly outreach to schools ministry, youth bands, after-school clubs, residential weekends, holiday camps and countless other opportunities.

Dave said: "Over the years, I've been humbled to share Christ with hundreds of young people and to serve alongside passionate leaders who love Him deeply. "Serving God over the past 35 years is the most amazing reward God could ever have bestowed on me and I am so privileged to have been His hands and feet in so many places."


Marigold and Alan Clarke

When Marigold and Alan received their letter from the diocese informing them of their nomination they were surprised and delighted.

They have supported the life of the church in Heathfield and Old Heathfield for more than 25 years. Marigold, a long-serving PCC member, became churchwarden in 2013. She has served through two interregnums, overseeing wedding and funeral administration, verging duties and sacristan responsibilities, as well as acting as a lay minister. Even after stepping down temporarily due to ill health, she returned to help guide her church through key changes, including the uniting of the two parishes in 2022.

Alan has also served faithfully, often in practical and behind-the-scenes roles. Since retiring, he has maintained the churchyard, handled grave enquiries, overseen major building and restoration works, including All Saints' clock, stonework repairs, lighting and sound upgrades, and trained others in livestreaming services. The couple agree that their work has always been "for the love of our church and its people".



Anne Granite

Anne has worshipped at St John's, Crawley, for some 50 years and her involvement has spanned a remarkable variety of ministries. Early on she began helping with the Discoverers group for children during the Sunday service, later becoming its leader, a role she still supports today. She also helps run the Friday Tots Group for pre-schoolers and their carers.

Within services, she has been an altar server, Bible reader, intercessor and Eucharistic minister. She has served twice as churchwarden, sits on the PCC and helps on the welcoming and coffee rota, a role she enjoys for its chance to connect with newcomers.

Her heart for outreach led to the launch of Turning Point Café in 2000, run from the church hall on Saturday mornings. Still thriving thanks to a committed team, the café offers tea, coffee and home-made cake to mostly elderly, often lonely visitors, some of who may not speak to anyone else all week. Through friendly conversation, mutual support and even knitting and crochet projects that make blankets for children in Romania and Ukraine, the café has become a lifeline for many.

Looking back, Anne is surprised by how much she has been involved in but for her it has always been simple. She said: "Everything I do is for the glory of God."



Jenny Walker

For almost four decades, Jenny has been at the heart of St Augustine's, Scaynes Hill. A primary school teacher by profession, she has devoted herself to children's and family ministry.

She has led Sunday School, co-ordinated "Funday Monday" after-school sessions, organised community events, overseen "Open the Book" assemblies at the local school and served as a foundation governor.

Jenny was also churchwarden for eight years, navigating the challenges of a clergy vacancy and the Covid pandemic. More recently, she has co-ordinated the church's Welcome Bag scheme for new residents and helped at the Anchor Coffee Shop.

She said: "I'm delighted and honoured to receive this award. Life at St Augustine's is busy but so rewarding. It's all about showing God's love in the community."

The testimonies of these six recipients, and the many more to be honoured this year, reflect the heart of the Order of St Richard: lay people quietly living out their Christian calling over many years, often without expectation of recognition.

Through everything from pastoral care to flower arranging, youth work to church maintenance, their faith finds expression in service. In celebrating them, the diocese also celebrates the countless others who sustain church life week by week.

Nomination forms for the 2026 Order of St Richard can be found on the diocesan website: www.chichester.anglican.org

Clergy gather for diocesan-wide conference in Kent



The Revd Professor John Behr



Professor Karen Kilby



The Revd Dr Michael Lloyd

Around 250 clergy from across the Diocese of Chichester will gather at the University of Kent in Canterbury for the a diocesan clergy conference (7-10 September)

Themed “The Mystery of Faith,” the conference gives clergy an opportunity to worship and study together as well as to hear from a series of excellent speakers. Most importantly, it is a chance for them to share in fellowship with each other as many clergy work locally and do not always have the chance to meet up with each other.

The conference reflects the Year of Faith, which the Diocese has been celebrating throughout 2025 and aims to deepen and refresh ministry through an engagement with God as reflected in scripture and the creeds.

The keynote speakers include The Revd Dr Michael Lloyd, Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford; Professor Karen Kilby, Bede Professor of Catholic Theology at Durham University; and The Revd Professor John Behr, Eastern Orthodox priest and theologian at the University of Aberdeen.

The conference program will feature a combination of plenary sessions, seminars, and opportunities for spiritual reflection, providing a rich and varied time of learning and fellowship.

Each session is designed to deepen and refresh those who minister and to stimulate new ideas.

The Bishop of Lewes, Bishop Will Hazelwood said: “As always, our time together is rooted in the Christian creeds, the

teaching of Scripture, and the Sacramental life of the Church which remain our guide and inspiration. We hope these days will both affirm your calling and enrich your journey, offering space for conversation, worship, and renewal.

“We extend heartfelt thanks to all the parishes for their ongoing support in enabling their clergy to attend this important event. Your generosity in freeing up clergy to come and refresh their calling is invaluable to the life and growth of our diocese.

“This promises to be a significant and inspiring time together as we explore faith, ministry, and mission within the Diocese of Chichester.”



The Mystery of Faith
CLERGY CONFERENCE 2025



Celebrating Service and Community at the Bishop's Palace

Over 1000 people from across the diocese have joined the Bishop of Chichester during a series of receptions held at the Bishop's Palace as part of the diocese of Chichester's 950th celebrations.

The Bishop's Marquee Series gives an opportunity for Bishop Martin to bring together and say thank you to a number of groups and individuals for their work in parishes, communities, and with groups and individuals on the fringes of society across Sussex.

Marquee receptions were held for:

- churchwardens,
- organists and lead church musicians,
- refugees and asylum seekers and those who have been supporting them,
- clergy and their families,
- Mayors and other civic representatives, the NHS and Emergency Services,
- representatives of charities, arts and sports organisations,
- lay synod representatives,

- headteachers and chairs of governors from church schools,
- members of the Order of St Richard,
- the staff and residents of St Mary's Hospital, and the staff working at the Cathedral, Bishop's Palace and Church House.

The marquee was also used for events by Chichester U3A, Friends of Chichester Cathedral, and Stonepillow and the Sussex Snowdrop Trust, two charities of which Bishop Martin is a patron.

Entertainment was provided by the Sleepy Lagoon Orchestra.

Speaking about the events, Bishop Martin said "It has been a great joy to welcome so many people to the Palace over the last month and thank them for what they do in many different ways in our churches and communities across Sussex. Saying 'thank you' is a very simple but important thing to do and it has been my privilege to do that in these events, especially as we celebrate 950 years of service to the people of Sussex".



Harvest Appeal

In the harvest season we recognise the beauty of God's creation, and His goodness as the provider and sustainer of life. As we give thanks for the blessings we so easily take for granted, we are called to respond by giving generously



and sacrificially to those in need.

This year our Harvest Appeal is for Friends of the Holy Land. The reason for this charitable focus will be plain to all of us who have been following the news since the October 7th Hamas attacks on Israel and the subsequent war in Gaza and beyond. At our most recent Diocesan Synod, the Eastbourne Deanery prompted a discussion seeking ways to support suffering Christian communities in the Holy Land. We are united in great concern and prayer for the region and the humanitarian needs of all.

Friends of the Holy Land is a UK-based, non-political, ecumenical Christian charity with a deep commitment to sustaining a hopeful future for Palestinian Christians. Rooted in the mission of supporting the Christian presence in the land of Christ's birth, the charity also works with compassion across religious lines, providing humanitarian help to people of all faiths.

The funds raised through this year's appeal will go directly to support families facing severe deprivation. Access to food, healthcare, housing, and education is increasingly limited, as Palestinian communities suffer from the ongoing impact of war, political instability and economic breakdown. Friends of the Holy Land partners with trusted local churches and organisations to provide emergency aid, food, medical care, schooling, and job opportunities. Their work is not only a lifeline to individuals and families; it is a powerful witness to Christ's love in action—bridging divides, building peace, and sustaining hope.

In Gaza City and the surrounding areas, where conditions have become desperate, £25 can provide a hygiene kit for a displaced family, and £50 can deliver food to last a week. This emergency care is being

given in addition to the long-term work of providing education, supporting employment, and advocating for the region's Christian community.

As Chair of the Diocesan Overseas Committee, may I encourage every parish and school in the diocese to have a collection at your Harvest Festival service and donate the funds through our Harvest Appeal link page below. Our target is to raise £10,000 in September and October. Would you please be part of this effort?

More details about the work of Friends of the Holy Land can be found on their website, and our fundraising link is <https://www.friendsoftheholylnd.org.uk/appeal/harvest-appeal2025>

Or simply scan this QR code to take you directly to the giving link page

May our giving be a response to God's compassion and generosity. From our abundance may we share with those in great need.





THOUSANDS TAKE THEIR LEAVE

More than 3,600 Year 6 pupils from Church of England schools across the Diocese of Chichester came together for a series of leavers' services ahead of starting their new schools this autumn.

Joined by teachers and family members, the children took part in farewell gatherings filled with joy, gratitude and reflection.

Each school was represented by a banner proudly carried by its pupils.

As part of the celebrations marking the 950th anniversary of Chichester Diocese, every child received a specially printed Gospel, linking their personal

milestone with a significant moment in the diocese's history.

Bishop Martin Warner, pictured at All Saints Crowborough with pupils from schools in the Bluebell Federation, Chailey, Forest Row and Fletching, said: "It was great to join in with all the children in thanksgiving for the education they have received with us.

"We give thanks for the hard work of all in our schools and of our dedicated diocesan schools' team for all that they do. We wish them well into the future."

SCHOOL'S GOLDEN MILESTONE

Arundel Church of England Primary School celebrated a remarkable milestone this summer, 50 years at its Jarvis Road site.

Founded in 1814, decades before education was compulsory, it is one of the oldest schools in West Sussex.

The day was filled with joy, thanksgiving and a deep sense of community as pupils, staff, parents, governors and friends gathered to honour the school's past and present.

Among the many guests were the Duke of Norfolk and Bishop Martin the Bishop of Chichester.

The anniversary began with a service of dedication closely echoing the original 1975 dedication service and even using the same hymns.

Bishop Martin led the service, speaking about the Church's vital role in shaping the principles of education. He said: "The Church was instrumental in founding schools like Arundel, not simply to teach reading and writing but to form lives rooted in Christian values. Education is one of the greatest gifts we can give, enabling children to flourish, serve and shape the future."

The school choir, led by Malcolm Hawke, sang beautifully, including a moving rendition of Make Me A Channel Of Your Peace. Father Andrew Wadsworth read from Scripture, and the church and wider community including past and present mayors filled the hall with celebration and gratitude.

Each class presented projects on life in the 1970s, while local historian Mark Phillips captivated visitors with stories of Arundel before the move to Jarvis Road.

In the afternoon, Year 6 performed the rousing musical *Newsies*, the inspiring true story of the 1899 New York newsboys' strike.

The celebrations concluded with the Duke of Norfolk's visit. After hearing powerful speeches from two Year 6 pupils about school life today, he encouraged everyone to "flourish and not take life for granted" before unveiling a commemorative plaque.

The day was a joyful blend of history, faith and community spirit, reminding all present that while school buildings may change, the mission to nurture young hearts and minds in Christ's love remains the same.



Once known as The Protestant School, Arundel CE Primary served the children of tradesmen and labourers, funded by voluntary subscriptions and with fees waived for those in need. By 1824 attendance had reached 240 and by 1900, 360 pupils were on roll.

Key developments included adopting the National Society's system in 1826, ensuring a strong Christian foundation, and a generous endowment from the 13th Duke of Norfolk in 1853. By the late 1940s the school became a primary, with older pupils transferring to secondary education in Littlehampton. In 1975, the school moved to its current site in Jarvis Road.

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

2025

Thanksgiving Service

**16 NOVEMBER
2025**

3pm, Chichester Cathedral

The Diocese of Chichester warmly invites all Parish Safeguarding Officers to a special Choral Evensong of thanksgiving for their invaluable work, with Bishop Ruth and Colin Perkins, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

“

Safe churches require great teamwork. A vital part of that team in each parish is the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

It will take place on National Safeguarding Sunday which is an annual initiative in the Church of England. It calls on congregations to spotlight their commitment to protecting all, especially the vulnerable, as a living expression of Christian faith. Held each November, it offers churches a structured chance to reflect, give thanks for safeguarding efforts, recognise those serving behind the scenes, and encourage practical improvements in awareness and practice to create safer communities for everyone.

The service in the Cathedral will celebrate and give thanks for the dedication, diligence, and care shown by Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) in keeping churches safe. It will also be an opportunity for clergy, church leaders, and congregations to recognise – in prayer and worship – the vital ministry carried out by these volunteers.

Colin Perkins says:

“Safe churches require great teamwork. A vital part of that team in each parish is the Parish Safeguarding Officer. PSOs champion safeguarding in their churches, implement good safeguarding practices, and work closely with their colleagues to ensure that any safeguarding issues are responded to. Much of their work happens behind the scenes, but without them our churches would be less safe. They do all this as volunteers, out of their sense of service to God, to the Church, and to their communities. We remain incredibly grateful for their care, devotion, and diligence, and look forward to celebrating these qualities at Chichester Cathedral later this year.”

Bishop Ruth adds:

“This service will be an opportunity to give thanks for our PSOs – and to recognise the vital ministry they undertake across the diocese. We will gather in the cathedral, be led in worship by the wonderful choir, and pray for the ongoing work of all our churches to be the safe and welcoming communities that God calls us to be.”

- All PSOs are warmly invited and may bring a guest.
- Clergy and church leaders are encouraged to personally invite and accompany their PSO(s).
- Refreshments will be served after the service.
- Resources are available for parishes wishing to mark Safeguarding Sunday locally. You can register and download resources from: www.safeguardingsunday.org/



Meet the Team:

Charlie Parker:
Safeguarding Learning and
Development Officer

On page 56 Charlie reflects on the importance of training in safeguarding



RIDE + STRIDE for Churches

EXCITEMENT BUILDING FOR 2025 RIDE + STRIDE FUNDRAISER

With just six weeks to go before this year's Ride + Stride fundraiser, excitement is building at churches right across West and East Sussex ahead of the September 13 event.

Ride + Stride plays a vital role in raising funds for places of worship and gives participants a chance to really appreciate the hundreds of gorgeous churches around our two counties.

Sponsored participants can choose to cycle, walk or even run around their planned route, visiting as many churches as possible along the way. Half the money raised goes to your nominated place of worship while the other half goes to the Sussex Historic Churches Trust, which awards grants to churches in need of urgent repair or restoration.

Ride + Stride is a nationwide event and raises more than £15 million for churches every year. This year Ride + Stride is taking place on Saturday, September 13 from 9am to 5pm.

JustGiving makes donating easy Sussex Historic Churches Trust has a JustGiving page that makes it easy to donate funds and even enables you to set up your own JustGiving page so that your friends and family can donate directly. JustGiving also makes it easy to apply Gift Aid - this is incredibly important as it enables us to claim an extra 25% on all Gift Aided donations.

Ride + Stride is essential so that the Sussex Historic Churches Trust can continue its work of preserving historic places of worship, of all denominations, throughout Sussex. In the last year, the Trust has awarded nearly £100,000 to help churches carry out essential repairs and restoration.

Ride red

For full information about this year's Ride + Stride, including route planning guidance and details on how to arrange sponsorship, just visit the website www.sussexhistoricchurchestrust.org.uk and visit the Info for Participants page. Our area by area guide will let you know which churches are open but, if you visit a church and it's closed, don't worry, it still counts towards your sponsorship total!

Ride + Stride Heroes

There are many heroes on Ride + Stride day and we are always keen to hear how fundraisers have got involved. If you have a fun Ride + Stride Heroes story or you're raising funds in memory of a loved one, just get in touch by emailing contact@sussexhistoricchurchestrust.org.uk. We look forward to hearing from you!



Heritage treats for Sussex Ride + Striders

The annual Ride + Stride fundraiser coincides fortuitously with this year's Heritage Open Day event which sees thousands of buildings nationwide open their doors to the public.

Among those churches which are "doubling down" on September 13 by celebrating both Heritage Open Day and Ride + Stride are: St Mary de Haura in Shoreham, St Mary's in Sompting, St Denys's in Rotherfield, St Thomas a' Becket in Cliffe, Lewes and Old Hamsey Church in Hamsey on the outskirts of Lewes.

Also taking part is St John the Evangelist church in Newtimber which is hosting a special memorial at 11am on September 13 to recognise the part that people enslaved on Jamaican plantations played in contributing to the wealth of the church's 19th-century benefactor Charles Gordon – see our earlier story here.

Old Hamsey Church, Hamsey, Lewes

As part of Heritage Open Day AND the Lewes Artwave festival, Old Hamsey Church just outside Lewes is hosting This Land of Ours, an exhibition featuring prints and sculptures by British artist Keith A. Pettit. Pettit's artwork draws inspiration from the natural world, particularly his native Sussex landscape. The exhibition runs from September 6 – 21. Landscape artist Paul Evans

will also be joining Keith in exhibiting his work. Keith will be on-site during Ride + Stride day from 11am to 5pm. No pre-booking needed. More info on the Heritage Open Day website

St Mary de Haura - parish church of New Shoreham

St Mary de Haura dates from 1103 and is the largest church between Brighton and Worthing. It is Grade I listed both for its historical and architectural distinctiveness. At 2.30pm on September 13, a church tour will kick off, featuring the Romanesque and transitional Gothic architecture, mediaeval graffiti, two Kempe stained-glass windows and a war memorial which honours the only RAF fighter pilot awarded the Victoria Cross in the Second World War.

St Mary's, Sompting

Sometimes known as the "Cathedral of the Downs", there's been a church at Sompting since before the Norman conquest. The oldest part of the building is the Saxon Tower, which stands around 25 metres high with walls 76cm thick. It's thought to have been built in stages, starting before 1,000 AD and the spire is the earliest example of a 'Rhenish helm' in England. Tours will run between 10am and 4pm;

St Denys's, Rotherfield

St Denys's church in Rotherfield is a medieval church with wall paintings. Although the church tours don't start until September



16, Ride + Stride participants are welcome to explore the church inside and out as well as to view an architecture-themed installation by local art and craft groups.

St Thomas a' Becket Church Cliffe

A unique opportunity to tour the church tower (up 42 steep steps) is on offer for visitors to St Thomas à Becket Church, Lewes on September 13. There's the chance to see the 17th-century clock (the second-oldest in Sussex) and an even more ancient oak bell frame and the four bells. The church was founded as a chapel and probably became a church after the martyr's death in 1170, with a 14th-century nave arcade and 15th-century tower. An introductory talk will take place before the tour. The tour is free but booking is essential.

Heritage Open Days

The Heritage Open Days initiative, England's largest festival of history and culture, is running September 12-21. There are scores of places to visit and activities to enjoy.

SOUNDS LIKE A GREAT IDEA!



People with hearing loss could soon be able to walk into their local church and have their NHS hearing aid serviced while enjoying coffee and cake and connecting with others who understand their challenges - all without needing a hospital appointment.

Hear Here is a volunteer project which is making this simple but powerful difference for those who use hearing aids.

It was started by Guildford Diocese to ease NHS pressure by providing local maintenance for hearing aids. Volunteers receive training from an NHS hospital audiologist to perform simple tasks like re-tubing ear moulds, checking and fitting aids, changing batteries and cleaning.

Clinics are held regularly in churches, offering a community space and convenient access for people with hearing impairments. Nearly 60 churches in the Guildford Diocese currently participate.

Now the Diocese of Chichester has its own champion, Maureen Warwick from St Anne's Church in East Wittering, who is keen to see the project grow here.

Maureen first heard of Hear Here in 2019 through an article published by Together In Sussex, calling for volunteers in the Chichester Diocese.

She said: "I volunteered but the project stalled due to Covid lockdowns and funding being redirected, leading to Together In Sussex folding. With a hearing-impaired daughter and grandchildren, I was determined to revive the project locally.

"After persistent efforts over four years, I connected with the Guildford lead who provided valuable guidance. In October 2024, the senior audiologist at St Richard's Hospital in Chichester trained me during two half-day clinics."

In February 2025, Maureen launched the first Hear Here clinic at St Anne's Church, East Wittering, promoting it through GP surgeries, pharmacies, the library, community centres and social media.

She said: "The need was clear: 14 people attended the first clinic and ten the next month. We keep records of attendance and maintenance done, which are sent to St Richard's Audiology Department to track how many hospital visits are saved by local access.

"My aim is to expand Hear Here throughout the Chichester Diocese as Guildford has done, encouraging churches to support people with disabilities more actively. At my clinic, attendees enjoy tea, coffee, and refreshments while connecting with others facing hearing challenges, reducing the isolation many deaf people experience."

In Guildford Diocese, where the service has been running for a few years, there are around 60 clinics with 6,000 visitors. A co-ordinator is employed two days a week and the main aim is to start new clinics and support existing ones. Training is offered every month for people who want to run a clinic in their church.

Chichester's disability officers Rev Joanne King and Rev Brendan Martin said they were excited to see the difference Hear Here is making in Guildford, offering practical support for people with hearing aids in the heart of their church communities.

Brendan said: "By bringing NHS-trained volunteers and vital hearing aid care into



Maureen adjusting a hearing aid

welcoming, familiar spaces where people can share refreshments and fellowship, Hear Here not only relieves pressure on hospitals but also addresses the isolation many with hearing loss face.

"We look forward to working with Maureen, who has already made great strides with this initiative in West Sussex, by encouraging, supporting and championing this work in our parishes, as it truly enacts Christ's love for all and honours the unique value of each individual."

Clinics for NHS hearing aid users only are held at St Anne's Church, East Wittering, on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 11am to noon. The next dates are September 24, October 22, November 26 and December 24, Christmas Eve.

Articles



“One of the things that surprised me about normal life as a parish priest, or at least what passes for normal life in my parish in Brighton, is the odd things that get left on my doorstep”

of faith.

REVD. MARTIN POOLE

One of the things that surprised me about normal life as a parish priest, or at least what passes for normal life in my parish in Brighton, is the odd things that get left on my doorstep, and I'm tempted to say the odd people that I find there as well. I've written about some of these in my latest book, the Real Life Rev, as an example of some of the things people exploring the possibility of priesthood need to be aware of.

Doorstep discoveries can be bags of toys for the church toddler group, tins of tomatoes for our lunches for those in need or a huge bag of surplus vegetables from a particularly successful growing season in an allotment. Occasionally I find a shopping bag of random food items hung on the front door knob with a little note inside letting me know that the generous donation is the contents of someone's fridge which they didn't want to go to waste as they are going away on holiday for a few weeks. While I appreciate the thought, I don't think anyone locally is so hungry that they need a half empty pot of humous or three quarters of a bottle of milk!

The item I cherish most of all is a 5-litre plastic water container emblazoned with a pale blue image of the Virgin Mary being worshipped by a woman on her knees amidst roses, a stream and a lamb, all set in front of a cathedral like building with three spires. This is a very generous donation of holy water from Lourdes.

We're not the kind of church that makes much use of Holy Water and so this gift has lasted for years and sits in my study ready for any occasion when it might be appropriate to ask for God's blessing on someone or something or to engage in some sort of cleansing ritual. Earlier this year I had the opportunity to create a service for the beginning of our local street party and with a few church folk we ventured out on the morning of the event to perform the Blessing of the Streets. Walking to the end of each street marking the boundary of the street party, I reminded people of some of the history of each location, before saying some prayers and asking a child to spray holy water liberally around that part of the parish and some of its residents. It was a lovely act of witness on a hot day which was enhanced by this water

which had been transported all the way from France by some anonymous pilgrim.

The container generally sits in the fireplace of my study and every time I look at this incongruous modern receptacle full of ancient meaning and sacredness, I am reminded of the generosity of someone who thought I would find a use for this divine contribution to my working life. I'm grateful for the recognition that this is a residence where holiness is valued and that this church and the vicarage are places where God can be found and blessing can be discovered.



THE MOMENTUM IS BUILDING!

Updates about Creation Care and Net Zero Carbon

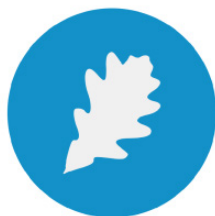
Steve Collins, our Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Programme Manager says 'The media is regularly reminding us of the growing impacts of climate change here in the UK and across the world, and the suffering this is causing.

BUT parishes across the dioceses can be confident and proud that we, and the wider Church of England, are at the forefront of organisations taking concrete actions to address the underlying causes of climate change and care for God's amazing creation that he has called us to steward.

We regularly hear of churches and of Church of England schools that are pioneering in their creation care efforts, showing that reaching NZC IS possible!

We also realise that for many others, reducing carbon emissions is challenging, and so we are developing approaches to support them in a way that makes best possible use of limited resources.

HOW TO START YOUR ECO CHURCH JOURNEY



ECO CHURCH
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT

Arocha's Eco Church initiative is proving to be an effective framework to supporting local churches to take practical action on caring for God's earth, helping leaders consider how they can do this through:

- Worship and teaching
- Buildings and energy use
- Management of any land they may have
- Their community and global engagement
- Promoting sustainable lifestyles

Take a look at A Rocha website and start your Ecom journey: <https://arocha.org.uk/>

Since January 2024, the number of parishes in the Chichester Diocese with Eco Church awards has risen from 70 to 78, an increase of

27 (53%). Our Diocesan Environment Officer, Rev Buff Stone convenes a vibrant Parish Environmental Support Network (PESN) which enables people across the diocese to encourage each other, share ideas and learn for 'guest speakers.'

"The Environmental Network provided a welcoming and resourcefully rich launching pad at the start of our eco journey as a church" David, St James the Less, North Lancing

"The church in Barcombe is inching along in its creation care journey. Whenever we flag, the Parish Environmental Network is there with enthusiasm, energy and your vast network to set an example and spur us on. Invaluable. Wonderful. Terrific."

We are also hearing more stories of how, when churches are intentional about caring for God's creation, this enables them to establish new missional relationships with people that they would struggled to engage with otherwise.

"We have established relationships with others locally that we would not have without our community garden." Rev Emma Ham Riche

DATA – BORING (FOR SOME!) BUT USEFUL FOR EFFECTIVE PLANNING

Since starting our programme in 2024 to reduce carbon emissions from buildings across the diocese, an incredible amount of useful data has been gathered to help us make better decisions.

'THANK YOU' to the 73% of parishes that have completed their Energy Footprint Tool

The EFT provides insights into energy use and carbon emissions. This information help show us where and how our limited time and resources can be used most effectively and will help us monitor the impacts of 'net zero carbon' work in years to come.

Having the EFT data also opens up potential for parishes to access grants for their NZC work.

By the end of 2025, around 50 of our parish churches (particularly those with the highest energy bills and carbon emissions) will have received free or discounted independent energy audits, enabling them to understand how best to progress towards net zero carbon emissions. Whilst this will often involve some major capital works, significant cost and carbon emission savings can also usually be achieved by simple no/low cost changes.

Rev James Hollingsworth
Vicar at St Lukes Seaford



CLERGY HOUSING PILOT PROJECT

With funding from the National Church of England NZC Programme, the Diocesan Property Team has recently completed a pilot 'decarbonisation' project in the vicarage at Seaford.

The work has involved replacing the former gas boiler with 2 air-source heat pumps, fitting 'air driven' radiators (which help circulate heat around rooms more efficiently), installing solar panels, checks to the air-tightness of doors and windows, cavity wall insulation and fitting 'heat

recovery extractor fans' in bathrooms.

James enthusiastically describes himself as a 'guinea pig', willingly stepping into the experience of having the new technologies fitted while still living and working from the vicarage. It's been very different from simply having a new gas boiler fitted and he seems to be embracing 'new rhythm of life', mentions having 'lots of hot water' and a new fascination in keeping an eye on how his smart meter changes when different appliances are switched on or off.

THE GREAT SWITCH

As part of the Church of England's Season of Creation, parishes are being encouraged to switch to renewable energy tariffs. Such a change could reduce the Church's carbon emissions by up to 78 per cent.



The initiative will launch nationally in September, with supporting diocesan resources to follow. Parishes are encouraged to make the pledge as part of the wider commitment to achieving net zero carbon by 2030.

SNAPSHOTS FROM PARISHES

A few examples of the many decarbonisation projects we are aware of parishes undertaking or planning



ST ANDREW'S HOVE - BOILER HARDSHIP GRANT

After their gas boiler was condemned just before Christmas in 2024, St Andrew's secured a £42k 'Boiler Hardship Grant' from the National Church NZC Programme enabling them to replace the boiler with an air-source heat pump and a solar panel system. The grant helped cover some of the extra costs associated with not replacing the gas boiler 'like-for-like'. Converting to greener energy was a significant part of St Andrew's wider re-ordering plans.



ST MARY THE VIRGIN, RINGMER HEATED PEW CUSHIONS

Pews in the nave have been fitted with heated cushions, supplemented by other electrical heating elsewhere. The cushions only heat up when sat on, warming the person, rather than the air around them. Zoning of controls allows cushions in different areas to be switched on independently. When it is very cold, blankets and hot water bottles are available for those that need them. The church is on a renewable energy tariff, so its carbon footprint is almost zero compared to the previous gas boiler heating system.

Anne and Rosemary from St Mary's say, "We were clear this was an opportunity to play our part in caring for God's world. Undertaking the changes in small steps enabled us to ensure the changes we were making were the right ones."



ST WILFRID, BOGNOR REGIS INFRARED 'HALO' HEATING

St Wilfrid main church building was heated by a noisy, gas fired hot air system which was expensive to run but still often left the building feeling cold. With spare parts becoming increasingly difficult to source, St Wilfrid decided to install 'halo' chandelier-style and wall mounted infrared heaters. The new heaters only have to be turned on 15-20 minutes before people come into the building and the option of reducing the net running cost further by installing solar panels on the roof is being considered.

The new system has received a positive responses from the congregation with everyone agreeing it was better than what they had before.



FOREST ROW: HOLY TRINITY LED LIGHTING

Holy Trinity is an Arocha 'Silver' Eco Church and recently received a contribution of £733 from the NZC 'Quick Win's Fund towards the costs of replacing incandescent bulbs around their sanctuary stained-glass windows with energy-efficient LEDs. This is just one small step among many other activities being considered by the church to reduce their carbon emissions and wider environmental impact.

NET ZERO SCHOOLS

Schools account for 51% of carbon emissions in the Church of England estate, therefore improving energy efficiency and reducing emissions in schools is crucial for reaching the net zero target. The Diocesan Education Department is working on building projects to support the decarbonisation of our voluntary aided schools and bringing a national campaign called 'Let's Go Zero' to help schools develop and implement 'climate action plans'.

Brian Kilkelly, Net Zero Project Officer explains "Together with the Let's Go Zero team from the charity Ashden, we have run a series of seminars to help schools develop climate action plans. The response has been excellent with many schools now implementing actions to reduce waste, cost, and carbon emissions. With further seminars planned, our goal is to have all our schools working towards achieving net zero."

Over the last two years the Diocesan Board of Education has secured over £1m of grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, delivered by Salix, provides capital funding from the

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to reduce carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels in schools and public sector buildings. Together with grants from the Department for Education and the Church of England, the funding package is enabling five schools to have new heating systems installed to move away from aging oil and gas boilers. There will also be improvements to insulation and LED lighting to reduce the schools' energy needs and solar panels will be added where possible to generate onsite renewable electricity.

Heather Broadbent, Capital Assets Programme Manager in the Diocesan Education team says "We were delighted to have secured funding which is enabling five of our schools to have new energy efficient heating systems this year and next. The first tranche of works this summer includes works at listed buildings over 150 years old and buildings in the South Downs National

Park conservation area, as well as in more typical school settings. I think this proves that we can make a difference whatever the building type, location and history."

Sarah Smith, Headteacher at Ashurst CE Aided Primary School says "To know that now we will be able to be use a renewable source of energy, using nature to heat the original building of a very old school like ours, and to know that we're able to keep everybody warm whilst not having an impact on the environment or the climate, is very important to us."

Lindsey Welstead, School Business Manager at Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, said "...on the bigger scale, preserving the planet, at least helping to do that, is the macro, and the micro is keeping [the children] warm."

The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme is run by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and delivered by Salix.



Sarah Smith, Headteacher, Ashurst CE Aided Primary School.
Lindsey Welstead, School Business Manager, Ashurst CE Aided Primary School



Come Ye Thankful People, Come!

These words will be sung in many of our churches in the coming weeks, as we acknowledge that 'the earth is the Lord's and everything in it.'

Harvest offers an opportunity to give thanks to God for His goodness and generous provision for all our needs. It is a time to remember those less fortunate than ourselves – at home and abroad – and to show our thanks by our generosity, imitating God's generosity toward us.

Harvest is also a time to give thanks to God for our farmers, both those who produce crops and those whose farms involve livestock. Farming has traditionally been a way of life and not just a job – and this way of life is currently, for many, under threat as perhaps never before, for a variety of reasons. Added to this, a poor harvest is anticipated this year. The combination of a record-breaking warm and dry spring, following a very wet winter, has created challenging conditions

for crops, according to the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit. Many of our farmers are 'feeling it' right now and need our prayers.

Yet, despite these setbacks and uncertainties, our farmers can be an example to us. As soon as harvest is over they focus on establishing crops for the next year – even though weather and commodity prices may be against them. They press on, not allowing past disappointments, failure, or fears for the future to delay their plans. In essence, they sow in faith – and as Christians, we are called to do the same.

In one of the best-known parables, the Parable of the Sower, Jesus describes what would be familiar to anyone involved in farming – that the soil in which seed is planted is variable, and likewise, so is the resulting crop. In using this example, Jesus prepared His first followers (and us) for the task entrusted to them – to teach and preach the 'seed' of God's

Word. Some seed will fall on barren ground, which can cause disappointment, yet we are not to lose heart. For other seed will fall on fertile ground and produce a harvest.

For our part, we are called to be faithful and generous sowers of God's Word, and He will take care of the rest:

*'Even so, Lord, quickly come,
Bring thy final harvest home;
Gather thou thy people in,
Free from sorrow, free from sin.
There, forever purified,
In thy presence to abide;
Come, with all thine angels come,
Raise the glorious harvest home!'
Amen.*

Revd Gary Cregeen,
Rural Officer for East Sussex
& Rector of Ashburnham with
Penhurst.

Roof Restorations in Sussex

Two historic Sussex churches are celebrating major roof repairs, supported in part by grants from the Sussex Historic Churches Trust (SHCT).



**All Saints
Danehill**

All Saints, Danehill – a Grade II-listed church built in 1892 – is undertaking a £127,000 restoration project on the north side of its roof. A drone survey revealed severe weather damage, water ingress, and decayed mortar, leaving tiles dangerously insecure. The Revd Paddy MacBain explained that the south side had faced similar problems in 2011, when replacement Welsh slate was installed. This new phase of work aims to stop further leaks and prevent damage to the church's interior. Thanks to local fundraising, support from the Friends of All Saints, and various grants – including £11,000 from the SHCT – the full cost has now been met.

St John the Baptist, Westbourne, a Grade I-listed medieval church dating back to the 13th century, has also completed a critical re-roofing project. The north slope of its tiled roof, last fully replaced in 1950, was suffering from decaying battens and “nail fatigue,” where rusted fixings no longer held tiles securely. By 2023, replacement was unavoidable.



**St John the Baptist
Westbourne**

Treasurer Stewart Taylor noted that heavy rainfall and high winds were worsening the deterioration. The church launched a major fundraising drive in early 2024, combining grant applications with local awareness campaigns and a “Help Save Our Roof” roadside banner. The project was aided by an £8,000 SHCT grant. Encouragingly, most of the roof timbers proved sound, many original tiles could be reused, and matched second-hand tiles completed the covering. New battens, nails, and bat-friendly felt were also installed.

St John the Baptist was one of nine churches awarded SHCT grants in April 2024. Since then, a further 10 churches have shared nearly £100,000 in additional funding.

The church also takes part in Ride + Stride, the annual fundraising initiative for Sussex churches. Open again for this year's event on September 13, St John's raised nearly £900 last year through the effort.

You can read fuller versions of these stories on the SHCT website.

Ripe roof appeal smashes target!

There are celebrations in Ripe after the village church smashed its ambitious target of raising £53,000 to repair the roof.

St John the Baptist's remarkable achievement is a testament to the generosity, determination and community spirit of everyone who contributed, from residents to supporters further afield with ties to the East Sussex parish.

Thanks to the fundraising campaign headed by Margaux Allfrey, work will soon begin on the beautiful medieval church which is a treasured local landmark dating back to the 13th century.

The project, which aims for completion within the current tax year, will not only preserve an important piece of Sussex heritage but also make the church warmer and more welcoming for worshippers.

The PCC has set its sights on reopening the doors in time for the much-loved Christmas Eve services, ensuring the congregation can gather beneath a sturdy new roof, safe from the winter chill.

Thalia Ratcliffe, churchwarden, said: "Margaux, whose father had

been churchwarden for many years, is very involved with regular village activities, campaigns and events. It has been wonderful for us to have this young energetic member of our community step up to be Fundraiser for our parish church in Ripe."

The Archdeacon of Brighton and Lewes, Martin Lloyd Williams, said: "I'd like to add my sincere congratulations and thanks to Margaux and all who have led this fundraising campaign. I am aware of how creatively this project has been approached and how very committed the team have been.

"This is a fantastic achievement. Ripe church is a much-loved place at the heart of the community and I am delighted that these repairs and upgrades will continue to enable all in the village to experience the fresh hope found in Jesus Christ."

St John the Baptist is rich in history, with its distinctive tower proudly bearing the Sussex Pelham Buckle carved into stone. This emblem,

linked to the coat of arms of the Earl of Chichester – once Baron Pelham of Stanmer – harks back to the past to the Battle of Poitiers in 1356. According to tradition, the buckle symbolises those from the surrendered sword of King John of France, making it a rare and tangible connection to medieval chivalry and England's wartime history.

Adding to the air of excitement, the parish has welcomed Stephen Osei-Mensah as the newly appointed rector of the benefice of Laughton, Ripe and Chalvington. Fr Stephen, together with his wife Emma, will be moving into Laughton Rectory this August, with a formal induction service scheduled for late September. His arrival marks the beginning of a new chapter for the local church community, one that combines protecting historic heritage with nurturing a vibrant and active ministry.

With the roof repairs secured, a new rector in place and the spirit of the congregation stronger than ever, Ripe's St John the Baptist is set for both a practical and spiritual renewal.

The future has rarely looked brighter.



Stitching Faith into Fabric

The Textile Art of Helen Jewell

By Lisa Williamson

In 2025, as St. Luke's, Prestonville marked 150 years since its doors first opened in Brighton, the community gathered to unveil a very special piece of textile art—an artwork resplendant with colour, texture, and meaning. Created by Hove-based mixed media artist Helen Jewell, this beautiful piece does more than commemorate a historic moment: it stitches together faith, landscape, and the spirit of the church.

"I am a mixed media/textile artist living in Hove, East Sussex," Helen explains. "I started my textile artwork 20 years ago, after I had my children and after I left London and my design career behind."

A CAREER REWOVEN

Before settling in Sussex, Helen worked in London fashion design, travelling widely and building what she calls a treasure trove of fabrics, prints, patterns, embroideries, photographs and papers from across the world. These materials, drawn from both urban and natural landscapes, now resurface in her layered and abstract textiles. She describes her process as instinctive and free-flowing:

"I work often in an abstract, unstructured way—building layers, colours, textures together, with a landscape in mind, to create a feeling of warmth, colour, mood to suit the subject of the picture."

That pull toward the shifting hues of sea and land is constant. "The love I hold of the sea and landscape of my home in Brighton and Cornwall feeds every piece of work I make. My deep and visceral love of nature drives and informs my creativity. I feel most at peace when I am out in nature—it's where my faith comes alive."

SACRED COMMISSIONS

Over the years, Helen has been drawn into the quiet resonance of church spaces. "I have found a particular love and interest in churches and cathedrals. I am drawn to the quiet, the light, the peace, the deep history... and the exquisite nature of the craftsmanship. The stained glass, and the stories they tell."

It's no surprise, then, that her commissions for churches have felt particularly significant. At St Andrew's Church in Hove, where Helen was part of the church community for a number of years, and sung in the church choir, she was commissioned to create an Alter Cloth, and other liturgical items, using treasured pieces of material donated by members of the church.

For St. Luke's, Prestonville in Brighton, she created a commemorative cover for the unveiling of the foundation stone celebrating the church's 150th anniversary, and a personal piece for the vicar, Rev. Martin Poole.

"Helen creates the most exquisite art which defies categorisation," Martin says. "It's a mix of sewing, collage, wonderful textures and meaningful symbolism which often has a religious theme. She created a stunning stole for me when I became the vicar of St. Luke's Prestonville and most recently a cover for the unveiling of a foundation stone to celebrate 150 years since St. Luke's was first opened."

FABRIC, FAITH, AND STORYTELLING

Helen's approach intertwines faith and creativity, both personal and collaborative. Alongside her own exhibitions and projects, she works with individuals to transform their stories into cloth:

"I work with clients, hearing their stories, using their words, memories, loves,

dates, fabrics—creating and stitching a unique piece of work, elevating their personality through the process, and being able to give them a bespoke piece of art that holds all their own special feelings and meaning."

For her, the act of layering fabric is never just decorative—it is spiritual. "For me, the feel of textiles, the layering of different fabrics, colour upon colour, watching the shades and the mood change, deepen or lighten, and building a story, a composition, and a feeling through that colour with depth and texture... There's an emotional connection and joy between feeling at one with nature, and being able to create it back onto an art surface."

A JOYFUL COLLABORATION OF MEDIUMS

What shines through most in Helen's reflections is the delight she takes in the fusion of materials and meaning: "There's a beauty in the collaboration of nature with fabric, paint and paper, words and photography—collaging and feeling the

joy of the mediums coming together. Mixing the colour and texture of light, sky, clouds, ocean, trees, wind, rain, woodland, sunshine, through paint and stitching into cloth, is my way of experiencing faith and love."

A LIVING LEGACY

Helen Jewell's anniversary textile art now rests at the heart of St. Luke's, not just as a mark of a milestone, but as a living expression of faith, community, and creative joy. In its threads are woven sea and sky, story and spirit—a testament to the power of art to both honour the past and inspire the future.

Welcoming New Church Commissions

Helen is passionate about creating meaningful art for sacred spaces and warmly welcomes commissions from other churches. She can be contact on helenjewell@btinternet.com





Let's talk about healing

By Rev. Sarah Upchurch

In this Year of Faith for the diocese it is only natural to talk about healing because when there is a “boost of faith” often it is accompanied by healing of body, mind and spirit.

Healing was a key part of Jesus's ministry, the visible sign of the arrival of God's kingdom. It was what he sent his disciples out to do as part of proclaiming his kingdom. If we are disciples of Jesus, then surely praying for healing is what we are called to do. Our churches, sometimes without even knowing it are places of healing, healing in its widest sense.

About seven years ago a deanery healing network was set up in the East Grinstead Deanery in West Sussex by a few clergy and lay people after Rev. Liz Logan had the hope of making the healing ministry more visible as a vital aspect of our Christian witness.

We were people with a heart for healing who wanted to meet to support and encourage one another. This has led to us aiming to be a resource and to encourage all churches in our deanery.

We run an annual healing service, usually on the closest Sunday to the festival of St Luke, the Gospel writer who is also known as a doctor of medicine. We have organised a workshop with Bible-based teaching on the healing ministry.

Together we have explored courses on prayer and prayer ministry, researching the “triangle of prayer, healing and faith” in order to recommend them after having tried them ourselves.

We are keen to promote the ministry of prayer for healing and maybe help with a bit of myth busting.

Many people may have had the experience of praying for others or being prayed for themselves and have not been healed. Unanswered prayer is an area which we study and are following a course, led by Pete Greig who said; “Sometimes we want God to airlift us out of our problems, but He more often than not parachutes in and joins us in the midst of it.”

We acknowledge that sometimes we are not healed, which can be distressing, confusing and difficult at many levels. This

requires a deep tenderness and sensitivity. As such we recognise the topic of unanswered prayer is far ranging and beyond the limits of this article.

People can be afraid of healing and of the work of Holy Spirit. Perhaps this is related to past experiences when strange happenings have occurred at events. We have seen evidence of gentle healing, after all, gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit.

We are reminded that there is a constant tension throughout the Bible of the need for the fear of God whose first words to people are often “don't be afraid”. Our response is: “Yes, God is powerful beyond our comprehension - fear is natural and right, however God is good, and God is love, so we do not need to be afraid, and we can trust in God completely”.

If you are interested in the healing ministry or are actively involved in this ministry in your churches already, we would love to hear from you. Contact Sarah Upchurch at vicarstb@worthparish.org



WORKING TOGETHER FOR FAMILIES IN SUSSEX

BY FSW CEO MARTIN AUTON LLOYD

Over the summer, Family Support Work (FSW) has provided our families with activities for the whole family with fun days spread across the Diocese.

The pictures say far more than I can about the enjoyment and fun that is to be had at these events, be it swimming at Warnham Park, archery at Agmerhurst House, or crafts and drawing at Berwick Church.

For some of the families attending, these events are lifelines to them, the cost of summer clubs and activities being beyond their means. Building positive and happy memories are a part of ensuring the whole family's wellbeing.

During the year 2024/25 we have worked with more families than ever and supported 3,458 children,

with increases in numbers in every age group. The need for our work is ever growing and changing. Whilst hardship and the cost of living crisis figure in most of our families lives it is in the areas of Special Educational Needs and parental mental wellbeing that we are seeing significant increases in referrals. With long waiting lists for statutory services in these areas our Practitioners offer families a real lifeline.

Of course, this is only possible because of all that our friends in the Diocese do to support us.

This summer we have seen an increase in fundraising events reaching new people but of course our partnership with the Diocese is essential in all that we do. As we look forward to the next three months this partnership is

brought to the fore, with so many of you in your churches and congregations collecting for us with food and harvest, toys and treats at Christmas, and special cash collections too. Our families really do need all the support you can provide, and we can give.

Reflecting this strong partnership, the Trustees and all of us at FSW were very pleased when Bishop Ruth stepped forward to join the Board of Trustees as the DBF Trustee. This is a further sign of the close bonds between FSW and the Diocese.

IF you would like to know more about our work and discover the many different ways you can choose to support us as an individual or as a Church, please check out our website

www.familysupportwork.org



THE BAND OF 80-YEAR-OLD RINGERS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: CHRISTINE BALDOCK, RACHEL EDWARDS, LOUISE PINK, IAN VAUGHAN, IAN ORAM, IAIN DAVEY, DAVID SMITH, MIKE CATTELL

We'll keep ringing as long as God grants our knees strength

Eighteen bellringers in their 80s gathered on the eighth day of the eighth month to celebrate reaching their eighth decade.

The Octogenarian Sussex bellringers rang eight bells at St Mary's Parish Church in the Causeway, Horsham, to mark the great occasion.

Some of the ringers have known each other for 60 years and have met regularly to celebrate each decade of their birth.

They rang Grandsire Triples on the bells and were later joined by other 80-year-old bellringers and friends.

After more ringing they made their way to Horsham Sports Club for well-earned refreshments.

One of the ringers, Mike Cattell, said: "There is something very special about being a member of a bellringing band who have been your friends over many years and share their love of the sound of bells. In the words of the Ringers Hymn, we call all faithful Christian people to worship, prayer and praise; we ring with joyous gladness when man and wife are blessed; We peal in muted sadness for loved ones laid to rest.

"One day, during Sunday service ringing, three of us in our 80s thought we would ask other ringers in their 80s to come to Horsham to join us and celebrate reaching their eightieth year. Most of us have been bellringing for many years and we shall continue to ring with as much enthusiasm as when we started although we will climb the stairs a little slower.

"You are never too old to learn, you are never too old to teach others, you are never too old to share the gift of friendship. We will keep on ringing as long as God grants us strength to the feeble knees."



Lindfield Bells

It has been six years since All Saints Church, Lindfield, installed its new peal of bells as part of a major refurbishment of the building. In that time, they have marked countless occasions – calling people to worship on Sundays, celebrating weddings, bidding farewell at funerals, and sounding out for national events such as the passing of Queen Elizabeth II and the coronation of King Charles III.

Since their installation, 19 quarter peals have been successfully rung, but until now no one had attempted a full peal on them. The previous occasion a full peal was achieved at All Saints was back in 2002.

A full peal is a true test of skill and stamina. The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR), defines a full peal of bells as a performance meeting strict criteria. Key points include:

- A full peal consists of a minimum of 5,000 changes (permutations) on seven or more bells. For seven bells, it is traditionally 5,040 changes.
- The ringing must start and end with rounds, which are the bells sounded in numerical ascending order.
- The ringing is continuous without any intervals.
- No sequence of changes (row) can be repeated.
- Every bell must be rung on every change throughout the peal.
- Each bell must be rung continuously by the same person or persons.
- Physical or memory aids and external assistance are not allowed.
- Errors must be corrected immediately, and the ringing band strives to maintain a high standard.
- The performance typically takes about three hours to complete.

This long awaited challenge was set for 10am on 31 May, coinciding with Lindfield Village Day, with completion expected around 1pm. If the weather was still or the wind northerly, the sound was likely to carry across the Common as stalls were set up and early visitors browsed the day's offerings.

The event was historic for the church – the very first full peal on the new bells was successfully completed. Among those in attendance was Hugh Parkyns, captain of the All Saints bell ringers in the 1970s, who recalled that only two full peals were ever rung on the old set of bells.

This special ringing also had a commemorative purpose: it was dedicated to the 80th anniversary of VE Day, marked on 8 May, and visitors to Village Day were encouraged to stop by the Royal British Legion stall in recognition of the occasion.



The first Jojo in place

WHAT A JOY TO SEE FRESH WATER GUSHING FROM THE NEW TAPS'

By Rev Michael Turnbull, Deacon at St John the Evangelist Hastings

Imagine no sanitation, a failing borehole (British built in 1955), no access to medical help and a severe drought which has destroyed all your crops and means of finding food/income.

In early 2023 two members of our congregation, Lesley Ann and Alistair Dawes, were on holiday in South Africa. As part of the trip they visited the Victoria Falls area in Matabeleland, a remote part of western Zimbabwe.

They had a chance encounter with some villagers and were moved to hear how they struggled to survive in a very rural and isolated part of the country. In particular they were struck by details of the daily struggle to gather water from remote and dysfunctional bore holes.

They met one of the village elders, Happiness Mnkandla, explained how difficult life was. On their return to Hastings the couple were determined to "actually do something".

This led to the founding of Village Force Africa in the summer of 2023. Fast forward a few months and we assembled a small board comprising members of our congregation and we become a UK registered charity and registered Zimbabwean Trust.

There are more than 50 villages in the area so we decided to initiate a pilot project in the worst-affected one.

In the early months of our links being built, a severe drought struck the area and for more than a year we fed the orphans and vulnerable by means of a monthly collection at church.

Thankfully at that stage we had trusted financial links so we knew the money would be used to buy grain and other food basics.

We then resumed fundraising for our new borehole. By June this year we had the £15,000 needed for the borehole installation with storage tanks, solar panels powering the pump and outlets near to homesteads, with secure fencing and anti-elephant measures around the perimeter.

It was a great joy to all of us to watch the scenes, via WhatsApp, of fresh clean water gushing out of the newly installed taps and to know the whole area would now have fresh water all year round.

The women and children are now free from carrying water uphill every day (20 litres per person in homesteads with up to eight children) and the youngsters will be free to attend school in a much more full-time and structured way.

It is a very small project at present but when we consider how it has grown in two years from nothing, we are all extremely proud of what we have achieved as a parish.

The parable of the mustard seed and its meaning often comes into my head: the need for perseverance to enable growth and to work with nature within God's creation.



Providence a 12 yr old orphan from the cluster of villages the group were working with

I am very proud to be part of the board of trustees and, having overcome many bureaucratic barriers both in this country and in Zimbabwe, I feel we are very well placed to slowly build on our success.

We have a template we can use in other villages and now that fresh water is on hand, it will allow the people there to improve both their agriculture and animal welfare. It will allow the community to pursue new self-sufficiency projects and grow small "nutrition plots", giving basic crops to sustain life, even in a drought.

The arrival of fresh water is truly life changing for the community and in turn will be a driver for other projects.

We have made several links with community development specialists to introduce efficient agricultural and husbandry methods to improve stock and crop production.

It is our hope that the young people will stay in the village and in the longer term that we can assist them to expand their small enterprises for example providing lodges with ready meat and fresh mushrooms.

Tourism is very small currently but has a great potential for growth. We will continue to develop initiatives including community transport (currently there is none), and a community/medical/learning centre.

Later this year five sewing machines will arrive, donated by Tools With A Mission. These will be used to start a sewing group in the village and initiate a link with Pathways charity in Victoria Falls, giving women a dependable monthly income and chance to expand their enterprise.

We have also linked into the local branch of Lions International, thanks to contacts with the Hastings and Bexhill branches.

So far all this has been achieved through the generosity of our community in West St Leonards and inventive fundraising events.

It has been remarkable to see what can be done in such a short space of time. Without doubt none of this would have been achieved without the extraordinary determination, drive and dogged enthusiasm of Lesley Ann, wonderfully supported by husband Alistair. They have lived and breathed this project almost every day for the past two years.

Please visit our website <https://villageforceafrica.org/> to find out more.

On Fire for God

St Andrew's Youth Return from Mexico

St Andrew's Church in Burgess Hill continues to live out its heart for mission—supporting charitable organisations both locally, nationally, and around the world. A vital part of this is encouraging young people to step out in faith and experience mission for themselves.

This summer, 20 young people and 4 leaders from St Andrew's embarked on the adventure of a lifetime—a 13-day mission trip to YWAM (Youth With A Mission) in Cancún, Mexico. YWAM is a global Christian movement committed to knowing God and making Him known, working across cultures, age groups, and traditions to serve communities and share the gospel worldwide.

For the youth at St Andrew's, this trip marked another step in God revealing his heart for those in need physically and spiritually around the world and in the local area. Over the last couple of years, they had stepped out on smaller mission opportunities—from Hereford, to France, and now, to Mexico - with every penny of funding provided through incredible generosity and the young people's own fundraising efforts.

Once in Cancún, the trip quickly became more than just a mission project—it was a life-changing encounter with God. The group threw themselves into every opportunity:

- Evenings in the community: taking to local parks with creative street evangelism through skits, dances, puppet shows, face painting, and prayer.
- Practical service: helping at a school run by YWAM with painting, cleaning, and upkeep, and even journeying to the edge of the jungle to help prepare the site for Noah's Ark, a planned orphanage, medical, and community centre, serving remote villages.
- Encouraging local believers: joining a local church on Sunday, helping run children's and youth groups, blessing families with groceries and prayer, and introducing young people to prophetic art, where they expressed what they felt God was saying through creativity.



Reuben Zaragoza, age 17, summed up the experience beautifully:

“Every person on the trip grew in their faith and in their spiritual gifts. Lives were changed—not just the people we met, but ours. There has been a positive transformation in us.”

Dean Gargano, Youth Pastor at St Andrew's, said: “The short-term mission trips we have done with the youth over the past few years have been incredible. Joining in with God's work in different places around the world not only boosts the mission work of people in those places who have dedicated their lives to bringing the gospel to the nations, it also opens young people's eyes to what God is doing and increases their heart for mission overseas and back home.

“We had high expectations of seeing God's power at work during this trip to Mexico and we have come back transformed and on fire for Jesus and his mission back home in Sussex.”



FAITH IN THE FIELD

by Rev Daniel Valentine, vicar of Cuckfield

From 16–23 August, over 250 cadets aged 13–18, supported by more than 80 adult volunteers, gathered at Okehampton Camp on Dartmoor for the annual Sussex Army Cadet Force summer camp. Alongside adventurous training, fieldcraft, and shooting, the pastoral care of the camp was supported by priests serving in the Diocese of Chichester, myself and two other chaplains – the Rev. George Butterworth and the Rev. Sarah Upchurch.

This summer camp is a highlight of the cadet year – a week of living and learning together, often the longest time many teenagers have spent away from home. The presence of chaplains is a visible reminder that whole-person wellbeing – body, mind, and spirit – is central to cadet life.

ACF chaplains serve in a voluntary capacity while continuing their parish ministry. Holding the rank of Chaplain to the Forces, they

wear uniform but serve in a purely pastoral role, there for all, offering worship, prayer and a listening ear.

The programme brimmed with challenge and adventure, from flights in a Chinook helicopter to rock climbing, archery, and exercises across Dartmoor's rugged terrain. Each morning began with Holy Communion, well attended by cadets and staff – for some, their first experience of Anglican worship. In the evenings, the padres held relaxed hot chocolate gatherings, where questions about faith and life could be explored in a safe space.

Perhaps the most powerful ministry happened in the ordinary moments – waiting in the cookhouse queue, chatting on exercise, or walking across camp. As Rev. Sarah reflected:

“These conversations matter. A word of reassurance, a short prayer, or simply being there in uniform can

open a door to God's love for someone who has never known it before.”

The padres also supported the officers and instructors, who shoulder great responsibility for the young people in their care. As Rev. George noted:

“When you stand alongside young people and their leaders – whether knee-deep in Dartmoor mud or cheering them on at the range – you share Christ's love by being present.”

The week was a vivid reminder that the Church's presence in the Army Cadet Force is both a blessing to the young people of Sussex and a living witness to the gospel in the most unexpected of places.

You can find out more about the Sussex Army Cadet Force on the website: www.armycadets.com and becoming an ACF chaplain, online here: www.army.mod.uk

Autumn Opportunities for Parishes

Sarah Rogers and Molly Reuter, Diocesan Parish Advisers, share some upcoming events and opportunities that they hope you will get involved in.

As we look ahead to the autumn, we are excited to spend more time visiting parishes, equipping you with strong foundations in finance, governance, and stewardship to support the mission and ministry in your community.

PCC Training - We are so grateful for the number of people who have stepped up this year to serve on their PCC. For some, this may be the first time in such a role.

To help you feel equipped, we are offering training for new PCC secretaries, treasurers, and trustees. These sessions will take place via Zoom and will include time to ask any questions you may have. Our aim is to give you the knowledge and confidence to feel empowered as a valued member of the PCC.

If you are interested in attending one of these sessions, please contact Molly Reuter, who can send you the booking link (molly.reuter@chichester.anglican.org).

Legacies - Our churches have been blessed by the generous giving of those who have passed on before us, and many still exist because of this enduring generosity.

If you are considering running a legacy campaign in your church, we warmly invite you to our **Legacy Webinar on Tuesday 23 September at 1:00 pm via Zoom**. This session will help you explore how such a campaign could work in your parish.

Cornerstone - Cornerstone is an online platform designed to help you focus your resources where they will have the most impact in fostering a culture of generosity in your church. It offers easy-to-follow, step-by-step actions (called Pathways) and includes an extensive grants database with guidance on writing strong applications.

Since its introduction in our diocese earlier this year, Cornerstone has received very positive feedback. Churches have reported gaining a greater focus on generosity and have found the Pathways to be valuable tools. One parish has already established a legacy policy and is preparing to run its first legacy campaign this autumn.

Autumn Workshop - This autumn, we will host another workshop that will bring together small groups from parishes to explore their church's generosity profile.

This profile is based on financial and missional statistics from the Church of England portal, along with responses from a generosity survey completed by your congregation. During the workshop, we will also identify practical ways to grow generosity locally.

In the busyness of parish life, these focused conversations are not always possible, so we hope this will be a valuable opportunity for parishes to reflect and plan together.

If you would like to attend the autumn workshop, please contact Molly Reuter (molly.reuter@chichester.anglican.org) to express your interest.

We look forward to working with you in the months ahead and to seeing the positive impact these opportunities will have in our parishes. Sarah and Molly



Lighting the way for 150 years

By Michele White, President, Mothers Union Chichester

You might have heard that Mothers' Union is 150 years old in 2026 and of course as with any anniversary, there follows a raft of resources and branding.

As I perused the resources sent by our headquarters Mary Sumner House to promote the 150th anniversary celebrations of the founding of MU, the logo pictured stirred a memory. A memory of a group of children presenting a challenge, in song, to the adults in the room.

This was their song:

"Who will tell us? We're the next generation.

Who will show us, if it isn't you?

Generation to generation, hear good news and pass it on.

By our words and by our actions, that's how it is done."

MU has been lighting the way and passing on the good news of God's love, justice and mercy for 150 years by demonstrating Christian care for families in words and actions.

How this is done has varied as needs and circumstances have changed with each generation, but the good



a wonderful garden party was hosted by West Chiltington and Storrington Branch. An opportunity for fellowship, fun and fundraising.

news remains the same and is beautifully expressed in the Nicene Creed which predates MU by 800 years.

How will we pass on this good news to this and the next generation? I know it's not just through MU that we pass on this good news, so much is being passed on to the next generation in our diocese through special events such as May Camp, Family Camp, youth and young adult pilgrimages and holiday clubs, not forgetting the regular children and family activities that take place week in, week out, throughout the year.

Let's remember that we are partners in the Gospel, all children of the same heavenly Father and part of the body of Christ.

I am writing this from an interdenominational youth camp run by Kidz Klub

Brighton and Hove and I'm very aware that being an MU member does not stop with the branch, the parish or the diocese but infuses all aspects of our service as we seek to show our Christian care for families.

"I am constantly challenged when I hear about the multitude of ways in which MU members serve their parishes and communities in prayer and action. The prayer of Mary Sumner our founder says it all: 'All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee; and every life I touch, do thou by thy spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I lead'."

150 YEARS OF
Mothers UNION
Join us, Join in



There has never been a better time to discover the timeless tradition of choral evensong.

Thanks to the Choral Evensong Trust, a charity devoted to preserving this unique aspect of British heritage, churches across the country are being given the opportunity to bring the uplifting service to their communities for the first time.

The trust's Patronal Festival Grants programme aims to make the wonder of live choral music freely accessible to all, while providing valuable training and performance opportunities for young singers.

This year's initiative has already awarded £32,000 nationwide, with the Diocese of Chichester leading the way in enthusiastic participation.

One such success story is St Anne's Church in East Wittering, which recently hosted its inaugural choral evensong, made possible through the trust's support. The service, themed around finding rest, refreshment and hope in Jesus, brought together reflective and inspiring music in a moving celebration of the patronal festival.

Christopher West, choirmaster at St Anne's, said: "We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Choral Evensong Trust and its supporters for making our first patronal festival choral evensong possible.

"The service began with the ringing of the church bell and the hymn I Heard The Voice Of Jesus Say inviting all to find rest and light through faith. Highlights included an uplifting

rendition of Psalm 121 and the beautiful Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C minor by Dyson. Our anthem, Look At The World by John Rutter, inspired us to reflect on the beauty of creation and our responsibility to care for it.

"The service concluded with the hymn Be Still My Soul, a reminder of the peace and hope found in God, even through life's challenges.

"It has been a delight to see our choir flourish, welcoming new singers of all ages and backgrounds. We're excited to continue growing and making choral evensong an annual tradition."

SWEET SUCCESS AT FESTIVAL OF PUDDINGS

St Mary's Church, Storrington, marked its patronal festival in honour of the Blessed Virgin

Mary with a choral evensong, bringing together choir, congregation and community in celebration.

Steve Bloxham, director of music, said: "Since 2022 we have started to mark our patronal festival - Blessed Virgin Mary - on the closest Sunday to August 15. We have a patronal

Eucharist celebration in the morning and in the evening a special service followed by A festival of puddings, fitting since Mary is the patron saint of fruit and herbs.

"This year we had a patronal choral evensong, although we have not sung a proper choral evensong for many years. I secured funding from the Choral Evensong Trust towards a drinks reception and publicity materials which contributed to a great gathering on Sunday evening.

"Fr Jonathan Swindells, our new rector, led both services. The moving service, supported by the church's talented choir and organists, was followed by a delicious festival of puddings and a drinks reception in the church hall. Homemade puddings helped to raise funds to support the projects of the Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Chichester, helping families and communities both locally and further afield.



THE EVENT BROUGHT TOGETHER CHOIR, CONGREGATION AND COMMUNITY IN CELEBRATION

"My heartfelt thanks go to all who took part, from the choir, musicians and bakers to servers and guests, for making the day a special celebration of worship, community and generosity."



HOMEMADE PUDDINGS HELPED TO RAISE FUNDS FOR MOTHERS' UNION

St Laurence Guestling also received a grant to enable it to celebrate its patronal festival with choral evensong. Vicar, Sandi Wickens said: "It has been many years since an evensong and there was much excitement about it."

If your church has never hosted a choral evensong, now is the perfect opportunity to get involved. With the support of the Choral Evensong Trust you can bring the magic of this deeply moving and quintessentially British tradition to your community, offering both spiritual enrichment and unforgettable music for all.

For more information on how to apply for a grant or get involved, contact the Choral

Evensong Trust at www.choralevensong.org and help keep this beautiful tradition alive.



HYMNS WITH REV NEVILLE MANNING

I COME WITH JOY

To Meet My Lord

I COME WITH CHRISTIANS FAR AND NEAR

The hymn we are thinking about in this issue is one I first came across some years ago in a church using Hymns Ancient and Modern New Standard. What I did not realise until I did a little bit of research is how many hymns have been written by Brian Wren - about 250.

Among other hymns by him many will know *There's A Spirit In The Air*.

Wren, born 1936 in Romford, Essex, served in the British Army, attended Oxford University, obtained degrees in modern languages and theology and obtained a doctorate of philosophy in the theology of the Old Testament.

In 1965 he was ordained in what is now the United Reformed Church. He became minister in Hockley and Hawkswell Congregational Church and also became involved in issues of social justice and in the World Development Organisation.

Many of his hymns reflect those concerns. This hymn, *I Come With Joy To Meet My Lord*, was written to follow a sermon at Holy Communion on the presence of Christ. The wording in some editions is slightly different. However, the predominant note of the hymn is joy, as in the opening words "I come with joy to meet my Lord" and later "and thus with joy we meet our Lord".

Joy, not to be confused with happiness which is fleeting, is something promised by our Lord and was clearly evident in the Early Church, for instance in St Paul's Letter to the Philippians, where the Apostle calls his readers to "Rejoice in the Lord always" (4 v4).

Interestingly joy for C S Lewis was something that points us to the reality of God, so he titled his spiritual autobiography *Surprised By Joy*.

Wren's hymn begins with the individual "I come with joy to meet my Lord...his life laid down for me". It then widens from the individual emphasis to a corporate one as we share the bread at Communion: "I come with Christians far and near... and strangers now are friends." That is possible through "The love (of God) that made us, makes us one".

Whatever certain people may say, at the Eucharist we are certainly not an island of strangers. As Archbishop Donald Coggan would have said, Christian experience is always corporate experience.

The final verse makes clear that from our worship together, for instance in the Dismissal at the Eucharist, we are sent out into the world as Christ's people to "live and speak his praise". As the liturgy ends the service (in the world) begins.

The hymn is often sung to the tune *St Botolph* by Gordon Slater, though it can also be sung to the *Winchcombe* by Leonard Blake.

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

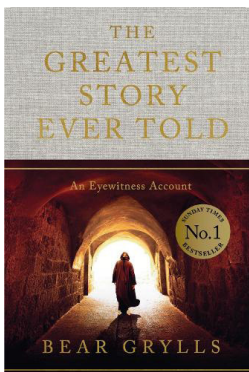
THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD - AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

Bear Grylls

'The Greatest Story Ever Told' presents imaginatively how Mary, Thomas, Peter, John and Mary Magdalene who feature in Jesus' story might tell that story. Bear Grylls, adventurer and TV presenter, has assembled a persuasive and accessible version of what might have been eyewitness accounts of Jesus. By use of recent paraphrases of Scripture like *The Message*, this gifted writer makes the Jesus he has discovered tangible to us. I liked his careful, imaginative use of poetic licence as in an incidental portrait of Mary Magdalene's past life of panic, fear and despair resonating with many today. I will be commending reading *The Greatest Story Ever Told* to people who ask me about Jesus. It communicates his warmth and truth, is easy to read and leaves readers open to make their own judgment on a true story.

Canon Dr John Twisleton

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FRAGMENTS OF DEVOTION

Encountering Faith Through Manuscript Beauty

The online exhibition *Fragments of Devotion* presents the spiritual richness of medieval illuminated manuscripts in a digital format. Created in partnership with the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Barber, and the Cadbury Research Library at the University of Birmingham, the exhibition explores the ways in which manuscripts conveyed and fostered experiences of faith.

The works on display—many of which have not previously been accessible to the public—reveal evidence of centuries of devotional use. Images of saints, worn by touch and veneration, marginal notes left as personal reflections, and playful illustrations in shimmering borders all testify to the ways these books were engaged with beyond their written texts. Each page reflects the collaboration of scribes, artists, and generations of readers who interacted with these volumes as part of their spiritual lives.

The exhibition also highlights the devotional roles these objects once held. Manuscripts functioned not only as repositories of sacred text and art but also as devotional companions: carried in processions, kissed in acts of reverence, or preserved as relics when cut into fragments. They serve as reminders that devotion was practiced through tangible, sensory means as well as through thought and prayer.

Fragments of Devotion offers opportunities for both scholars and general audiences to engage with Christian heritage as expressed through art, craftsmanship, and embodied worship. The online exhibition is open to explore until 30 June 2027, inviting visitors to encounter the devotional and artistic traditions of the past within today's digital setting.

Cathedral News

LIGHT, SOUND AND NINE CENTURIES OF HISTORY

Chichester Cathedral to host spectacular immersive installation

Chichester Cathedral is set to close its landmark 950th anniversary year with a breath-taking finale - an immersive light and sound experience that promises to transform the ancient building like never before. Taking place from 24th to 31st October 2025, the event is being created by Luxmuralis, the internationally acclaimed artistic collaboration led by sculptor Peter Walker and composer David Harper.

The Chichester950 Light Experience will turn every corner of the Cathedral, from the medieval Nave to the South Transept, into a vibrant canvas of colour, story and sound. Thousands of archival images, drawn from the Cathedral's own collection and that of West Sussex Record Office, will be projected onto the ancient walls, offering visitors a moving visual journey through 950 years of history, inspiration and faith.

"This event will not only be an extraordinary conclusion to our anniversary celebrations," says Rebecca Lewry-Gray, Visitor Experience Manager at Chichester Cathedral, "but also a vital fundraising initiative supporting the preservation of our sacred spaces and thriving community. We're thrilled to work with Luxmuralis to bring something truly unforgettable to Chichester."

Building on their previous autumn exhibitions including Peter Walker's Peace Doves in 2023 and Luke Jerram's Mars in 2024, this new work from Luxmuralis, who are renowned for transforming sacred spaces with multimedia storytelling, promises to be on a whole new scale.

"This installation is a tribute to the remarkable nine centuries of Chichester Cathedral's history," said Peter Walker. "We're exploring the archives to

unearth powerful stories and imagery, and bringing them to life through our blend of light, sound and emotion."

Tickets are on sale now with family and student concessions available, please visit chichestercathedral.org.uk. Groups can also book to experience this unique event with free entry for coach drivers attending as part of a group of 10 or more. To make a group booking please email rebecca.lewrygray@chichestercathedral.org.uk. Please note that there is a 5% booking fee for tickets purchased by email.

Proceeds from the event will support the ongoing work of Chichester Cathedral (Registered Charity No. 1205740).

NEW PILGRIMAGE ROUTE LAUNCHED



Retracing the ancient journey from Selsey to Chichester Cathedral

A new pilgrimage route has been launched by Chichester Cathedral to mark its 950th anniversary. Created in partnership with the British Pilgrimage Trust, Chichester950 Way invites walkers to follow in the footsteps of history from Selsey to the heart of Chichester. The nine-mile walking route through West Sussex's beautiful coastal and rural landscape, is inspired by the original journey made when the Cathedral was relocated from Selsey to Chichester 950 years ago, in 1075.

WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SAINTS

The route begins at St Wilfrid's Chapel in Selsey - believed to stand near the site of the original cathedral founded by St Wilfrid in 681. From there, the path winds through the tranquil surroundings

of Pagham Harbour and the village of Sidlesham, where pilgrims can pause at St Mary's Church for a moment of stillness and reflection.

Travelling north, the pilgrimage route follows part of an old Roman road, continuing through the historic manor of Hunston and past St Leodegar's Church. From here, pilgrims head towards Turner's Bridge, where they can enjoy the spectacular view of Chichester Cathedral immortalised by the artist J.M.W. Turner. The final stretch follows the peaceful canal towpath into the city.

Pilgrims are encouraged to enter Chichester Cathedral in the traditional way - barefoot, through the Cloisters - before arriving at the Shrine of St Richard. At journey's end, pilgrims can receive a commemorative stamp or purchase a specially designed Chichester950 pilgrim's patch, created by Liturgical Artist James Blackstone and available at the Cathedral Shop.

PILGRIMAGE IN CONTEXT: THE CHICHESTER950 EXHIBITION

Pilgrims arriving at the Cathedral are encouraged to explore Religion, Rebellion and Reformation, a major exhibition running until 15 November 2025 as part of the Cathedral's anniversary celebrations. The exhibition traces the story of Christian faith in Sussex across nine centuries through a remarkable collection of objects and artefacts.

A JOURNEY FOR ALL

Whether drawn by history, heritage, or personal renewal, all are warmly invited to walk the Chichester950 Way and experience this unique path through time.

For more information visit ChichesterCathedral.org.uk/pilgrimage.

Safeguarding

Charlie reflects on the importance of training on safeguarding

Safeguarding in the Church of England is about protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse. The Chichester Diocesan Safeguarding Team offers training and support to help parishes build a healthy, safe culture. Team members draw on their diverse experiences to work effectively together.

Charlie Parker became diocesan safeguarding learning and development officer just over a year ago. Though she also works in education and leadership consultancy, she calls this role her favourite so far. “I have had the privilege to meet many people this year who have taught me so much, often through safeguarding leadership training,” she says.

Safeguarding training for church roles has grown into a vital part of safer recruitment and onboarding. Parker acknowledges that “everyone knows why we need safeguarding training,” but the challenge is making training meaningful, not merely ticking a box. “Can we approach training with ‘joyful effort’?” she asks, referencing a former teacher.

Some people resist training due to past negative experiences, such as uninspiring or irrelevant sessions. “Death by PowerPoint is certainly not pleasant and is something we



are aiming to avoid,” Parker notes. She believes feedback is crucial and is open to passing suggestions along to the national team, as was recently done with domestic abuse awareness training.

Parker is most curious when people claim training isn’t necessary. “Those of us who have worked in safeguarding for many years know the importance of training: to refresh knowledge and provide a space to talk.” She explains that safeguarding is fundamentally about prevention—which makes its impact less visible. “We can’t always know what we have prevented, so we tend to focus on what we have to deal with instead. This can lull us into thinking, ‘we don’t need safeguarding here.’ But as a colleague once said, ‘everything is always fine until it isn’t.’ When something happens, training is there to support, but even more importantly, it’s the prior impact of that training that matters.”

Some believe their professional experience makes further training unnecessary, but Parker urges everyone to consider the specific context of church safeguarding. After joining the Chichester team and completing her own training, she realized, “Years of experience don’t give ‘Jedi mastery’ in Church safeguarding.” The aim is to learn how to share concerns and build healthy cultures in multi-generational settings where everyone is welcome. Volunteers may include both survivors and perpetrators of abuse, requiring special sensitivity and adaptation.

Chichester’s uptake of safeguarding training is strong, and Parker sees its positive impact across the diocese. Feedback often includes, “that was far less painful than I thought it would be.” She concludes, “We’ll keep making training less painful—but I’m still aiming for that ‘joyful effort’.”

For support, contact the team at safeguarding@chichester.anglican.org or call 01273 421021. Their website offers guidance and resources: www.safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org

By Charlie Parker -
Safeguarding Learning and
Development Officer

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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Charity Number: 1205740



FAMILY
TICKETS
AVAILABLE

Fri 24 – Fri 31 Oct 2025

950th Anniversary Light Experience

Experience an **immersive light and sound installation** by the internationally acclaimed Luxmuralis, unveiled to mark **Chichester Cathedral's 950th anniversary**.

TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

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